

NORTHERN RESIDENTIAL ZONE

District Plan Review



Urban Design Report

**Prepared for Napier City Council
by
Urban Perspectives Ltd**

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1 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

As part of the District Plan review Napier City Council is undertaking a review of the Napier's current 'amenity character' areas. The review is a step towards achieving "Great Urban Areas" - one of the six key outcomes adopted by the Council for the District Plan Review process.

The Operative District Plan includes three 'amenity character' areas - Napier Hill Character Zone, Marine Parade Character Zone and the Northern Residential Zone. These zones and associated planning provisions were established to recognise the different pattern of development in each zone compared to that in the typical residential suburbs of the city (zoned "Main Residential" in the Operative District Plan).

PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

- (a) identify and evaluate the existing built environment characteristics for each zone
- (b) review/assess:
 - the appropriateness/effectiveness of the current development controls for each zone to maintain/enhance the identified built environment characteristics;
 - the current zones boundaries to establish whether they are still relevant to the respective zone;
 - assess whether there continues to be a clear differentiation in character between each 'amenity character' area and Napier's Main Residential Zone.¹

Urban Perspectives Ltd has been engaged to carry out the review.

This report provides a review of the Northern Residential Zone. The two other zones - Marine Parade Character Zone and Napier Hill Character Zone are covered in separate reports.

STUDY AREA BOUNDARIES

The Northern Residential Zone (study area) covers two geographically separate areas - Westshore and Battery Road (the properties along and in the immediate vicinity of Battery Road). The study area boundaries are identified in the Operative District Plan Maps and indicated on the Cadastral/Aerial Map (next page).

¹ The Council is also undertaking this exercise for the Main Residential zone, including revising the design assessment criteria for multi-unit developments to ensure quality design outcomes including reasonable levels of safety, security, connectivity, daylight and sunlight access, and privacy.

Northern Residential Cadastral Map



SCOPE OF REVIEW

Scope of character evaluation - Character is typically defined as a combination of natural and built features and characteristics which collectively determine the distinctiveness or local identity of an area and contribute to its sense of place. These contributory features and characteristics include those in both the public and private domains.

The scope of this review is focused primarily on the 'private domain' built characteristics. However, it also provides an overview of key 'public domain' features (landscape setting, spatial structure, streetscape patterns and building character).

The specific characteristics covered in this review include:

- General 'public domain' characteristics and streetscape patterns
- Building age/character
- Lot size
- Building height
- Site coverage
- Frontage setbacks & separation distances
- Front fences and front yard planting
- Access/parking/location of garages
- Recent development - type and scale of recent development to identify trends and issues with an emphasis on multi-unit and infill development.

METHODOLOGY

The review/assessment is based on a combination of the following research methods:

- (a) Streetscape appraisal - an expert's field study of the area to identify predominant development patterns and important streetscape features as seen from the street;
- (b) Use/analysis of Council's data and GIS information to determine patterns of building age, building height, site coverage, frontage setbacks and lot size based on records/information from the Council's database and GIS and Land Information NZ (LINZ);
- (c) Measurements of typical front and side yards within a sample of selected blocks (scale 1:1000 and 1:500) to establish predominant dimensions of frontage setbacks and separation distances; and
- (d) Review of resource consents for the last 10 years (with an emphasis on multi-unit and infill development) to identify common issues and development trends and how these might have affected the local character of the area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Urban Perspectives Ltd are grateful for the assistance of Catherine Reaburn and Dean Moriarity of the Napier City Council Policy Team who sourced information from the Council's database, produced all the maps and helped with obtaining background information.

2 SUMMARY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CHARACTER OVERVIEW - GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Located to the north/west of Napier Hill, the Northern Residential Zone comprises two distinct geographically separate sub-areas - Battery Road and Westshore. The sub-areas differ in terms of size, context/landscape setting, spatial structure and building character. There are also some slight variations with regard to lot size and site coverage patterns. However, both sub-areas have a linear character, memorable settings and a strong sense of place, and both have largely retained their original/historic street layout and subdivision patterns.
- Compared to Westshore, consistency of built character is more pronounced in Battery Road which is the smaller and more compact of the two sub-areas. The consistency is derived from the relatively large number of pre-1940s buildings, many of which are clustered together forming distinctive rows of similar in age/scale buildings sited uniformly with respect to the street. While the historic/streetscape value of these rows warrants a degree of protection/management,² the character of the Battery Road sub-area as a whole does not require any special 'built character' controls. Notwithstanding that, managing the impact of new multi-unit and infill development is important to ensure the characteristic 'fine grain' pattern of development is acknowledged. Relative to Westshore, predominant lots sizes are slightly smaller, predominant site coverage is slightly lower and the percentage of single storey dwellings is higher.
- The built character of Westshore - a much larger area with an extended linear structure - is generally diverse. Compared to Battery Road, it contains a lower number of pre-1940 buildings and a larger percentage of multi-unit and infill developments and, as a whole, it has undergone a higher degree of change during the years. It also has a slightly higher site coverage and larger lot size pattern. Apart from individual dwellings with heritage and/or character significance (identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study), Westshore as a whole does not warrant special character management, other than ensuring new development, particularly multi-unit/infill and travellers' accommodation, contributes to the quality and safety of the streetscape and does not compromise the residential amenity of its neighbours.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

- A review of recent resource consent data for the last 10 years established that there has been more development in Westshore compared to Battery Road, but the rate of new development across the Northern Residential Zone as a whole has been low.
- Recent development trends are characterised by small scale multi-unit and infill development (mostly for two units). None of the proposals have raised significant issues with regard to breaches of current District Plan provisions, and most of infill subdivisions are well below the 'maximum density' provision. The current provisions have not been tested extensively in the context of larger multi-unit developments that maximise the development potential anticipated by the District Plan.

DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS

- The current District Plan provisions for the Northern Residential Zone are the same for both sub-areas and, compared to the Main Residential Zone, provide for an increased density (e.g. higher maximum density and no requirement for a minimum on-site landscaped area or front yard planting). This is to acknowledge the proximity of the areas to the foreshore and wider recreational network and surrounding commercial nodes (Ahuriri mixed use precinct, West Quay and Bridge Street).

² The heritage/streetscape value of those groupings has been identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study prepared by Salmond Architects, November 1994 (Port Ahuriri Heritage Study). The study was commissioned by the Council and some of the buildings identified in the study have been included in the District Plan Advocacy Areas, Appendix 13A.

- The character evaluation showed that the current District Plan provisions for the Northern Residential Zone are generally aligned with the study area's predominant patterns with regard to yards, open space and height. The remaining provisions relating to site coverage, landscaping, minimum notional lot size and fencing will require amendments to achieve a stronger fit with the underlying character and amenity value of the study area.
- The current District Plan provisions for the Northern Residential Zone differ from the Main Residential Zone provisions in respect of: (a) maximum density/minimum notional lot size; (b) front yard landscaping requirement; and (c) minimum landscaped area. The character evaluation established that the predominant patterns of the Northern Residential Zone, with regard to the differing provisions, are generally comparable with those of the Main Residential Zone. However, the location and landscape setting of the sub-areas and their local characteristics suggest that zone-specific provisions (with regard to maximum density/minimum notional lot size, site coverage, open space and multi-unit development) could be justified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building character

- Consider statutory character provisions for the protection and management of the individual buildings and groups of buildings identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study.
- If the Advocacy Areas (Appendix 13A) are to remain part of the District Plan, consider:
 - correlating the boundaries of the Battery Road Character Area (Appendix 13A) with the boundaries of the Battery Road Character Zone (District Plan Map F7) to avoid confusion; and
 - providing incentives to encourage the retention/refurbishment of the identified buildings in Appendix 13A.

Minimum lot size/maximum density

- Retain the current provision for multi-unit development but increase the minimum notional lot size for single-unit development to 350m², if the predominant amenity values are to be retained; or alternatively
- Retain the status quo if the intensification of the zone is prioritised over amenity character.

Front yards and front yard landscaped area

- Retain existing provisions for 3m front yards and 5m setbacks for garages.
- Introduce front yard landscaping requirement for a minimum landscaped/permeable area (e.g. 30% of the front yard). This should include a requirement for: (a) tree planting of appropriate type and scale (e.g. minimum of one specimen tree per unit); and (b) use of paving or other textured surface materials to mitigate the impact of large vehicle-access areas along the street frontage.

Side yards and rear yards

- No changes to the current provisions.

Building height and height in relation to boundary

- No change to maximum permitted height.
- Amend 'height in relation to boundary' provision to exclude its application along the street boundary of new dwellings on sites with a street frontage.

Site coverage

- Consider reducing the site coverage to 40%-45% if the predominant character of the Northern Residential Zone is to be retained, or alternatively
- Retain the current site coverage provision if infill development as well as redevelopment of smaller lots is to be encouraged.

Landscaped area

(maximum change)

- Increase the minimum landscaped area from 20% to 30% and supplement this to include a requirement for a minimum of one specimen tree within the open space of each dwelling unit.
- Regarding new development on the southern side of Battery Road, consider a new landscape condition to ensure the effects of large visible retaining structures are mitigated through appropriate landscape treatment.

(minimum change)

- If increasing the minimum landscape area is not to be pursued, implement, as a minimum, the recommended requirement above for tree planting for both residential development and travellers' accommodation.

Travellers accommodation on Meeanee Quay/landscape provision

- Amend Condition 17.15 (b) to include a requirement for tree planting of appropriate scale within the required 2m wide landscaped area along the road boundary (e.g. one tree per every 5m of the site's road frontage as a guide).

Open space

- Retain the current provision for single unit development.
- Amend the open space requirement for multi-unit development to a minimum area of 50m² that can accommodate a 5m diameter circle or 4.5m x 4.5m square and is linked to a living area of the dwelling.

Fencing

- Reduce maximum height of front fences and the visible parts of side fences (e.g. the first 3-5m from the street boundary) to 1.2m, but allow for a potential component of taller permeable fencing in situations where this is required for privacy (e.g. the development includes private open space within the front yard). Apply the same fencing provision at the boundary with the street, walkways, reserves and other public spaces.

Carparking

- Consider reducing the parking provision to a single parking space per dwelling unit.

Multi-unit development

- Retain the 'controlled activity' status for multi-unit development for up to 3 units, but change it to 'restricted discretionary' activity for development of more than 3 units.
- Review the current assessment criteria for multi-unit development to comprehensively address the full range of issues associated with that type of development and apply them to both controlled and discretionary activity proposals.
- Consider including an Appendix to the assessment criteria that outlines the area-specific character and amenity features of the Northern Residential Zone. This is to provide context for and facilitate the application of the neighbourhood character assessment criteria.
- Require resource consent applications for new multi-unit development to provide: (a) an appraisal of the surrounding streetscape character and explain how the proposal has applied the assessment criteria to respond to that character; and (b) a landscape plan showing hard and soft landscape features.

3 CHARACTER EVALUATION

3.1 CHARACTER OVERVIEW: GENERAL PUBLIC DOMAIN & STREETScape CHARACTERISTICS

The Northern Residential Zone is comprised of two distinct sub-areas separated by the inner harbour - Westshore and Battery Road. While the two sub-areas share similar historical settlement patterns, they are different in terms of landscape context/setting, visual prominence and site-specific built characteristics.

This section of the report provides an overview of the general public domain characteristics and streetscape patterns that collectively make up the physical character of each sub-area.

BATTERY ROAD

Location and natural setting - located on the western tip of Bluff Hill at the interface with Port Ahuriri, Battery Road traces the original shoreline of the inner harbour at the foot of the hill with initial development there dating back to 1887.

Approximately 1.2km long, the Battery Road sub-area is defined by the cliff to the south and the railway line and the wider Ahuriri mixed-use precinct to the north. As an integral part of the Bluff Hill landscape, the southern side of Battery Road has a steeper topography while its northern side is flatter and closely associated with the history of Port Ahuriri and the land reclamation in that area.



View to Battery Road from Kowhai Road, Napier Hill

Spatial character: street/block pattern & street character - the spatial character of Battery Road is based on the historic street/block layout and original subdivision patterns which have been largely maintained.

Key factors that have influenced the area's spatial character include its landscape setting, the land reclamation and the constraints imposed by the railway corridor.

Main characteristics:

- compact linear structure with long blocks confined by the hill on the southern side and larger and irregular in shape blocks on the northern side at the interface with the Ahuriri mixed-use precinct;
- streets with footpaths on either side devoid of street trees/planting, except for the area in the vicinity of Battery Road/Shakespeare Road and Waghorne Street intersection where some trees and planting are found; and
- street views along Battery Road enclosed by the hill on one side and open towards the Ahuriri industrial landscape on the other.

Building character and intensity of development - the Battery Road sub-area has a relatively low density. Its built character is based on predominantly single-storey stand-alone dwellings on individual lots mixed with two/three-storey multi-unit developments and some infill development on rear lots. A pronounced cluster of multi-unit developments with varied scale and appearance is located mid-way along the southern side of Battery Road.

Many of the stand-alone dwellings are pre-1930 homes. The eastern end of the area, around and to the west of the junction with Waghorne Street, accommodates some of the oldest surviving houses in Port Ahuriri.³

While there is no pronounced consistency of building character across the entire area, there are some notable groupings of buildings of similar age/style and scale with many of them sited uniformly with respect to the street. These, together with some very old individual buildings of heritage significance (some listed heritage buildings), contribute to the area's historic character.

Non-residential buildings are limited in number including an office-type building at the northern end of Shakespeare Road adjacent to the railway line and several health/well-being type studios.



62-66 Battery Road, row of pre-1940 dwellings



146-152 Battery Road, row of pre-1940 dwellings



Battery Road/southern side, multi-unit development



13-15 Battery Road

³ Port Ahuriri Heritage Study prepared by Salmond Architects, November 1994 (Port Ahuriri Heritage Study)

Streetscape/street edge conditions - streetscape character varies across the area as well as on the different sides of the same street. However, the general streetscape pattern is based mostly on:

- generally deep front yards with some mature front yard planting;
- street edge defined by fences of variable type/height with predominance of low or no front fencing; and
- building entrances and windows facing the street.



Junction of Battery Road and Waghome Street



Views to the foreshore Norfolk Island pines



The area is part of the Bluff Hill landscape and has a strong association with Ahuriri industrial landscape

Local character, identity and sense of place - the area's local identity and sense of place are derived from:

- the natural setting and immediate presence of Bluff Hill;
- association with and proximity to the historic Port Ahuriri and its industrial landscape;
- block/lot pattern tracing back to the original subdivision of the area and the subsequent land reclamation to the north; and
- historic street alignment and notable groupings of generally well-maintained pre-1930 dwellings with a consistent age, form and scale.

WESTSHORE

Settlement on the sandspit known as Westshore at Port Ahuriri dates back to 1850s. Westshore's physical isolation from the Port was overcome by the construction of the first bridge (late 1870s) which was later replaced by a footbridge and when that collapsed the only connection was by ferry. A road bridge was constructed in 1961.

Location and natural setting - the larger of the two sub-areas, Westshore is defined by State Highway 2 (SH2) and the estuary to the west, and the foreshore reserve at the edge of the spit to the east. The railway corridor (Palmerston North/Gisborne line), which runs parallel to parts of SH2, provides the immediate western boundary for part of the area. The topography slopes gently down to the west.

Napier Airport is located to the north/west of the Westshore and its operations, together with the operations of the State Highway network, nearby Port and the railway line, have influenced the amenity of the area. The southern half of Westshore has a strong association with the inner harbour and Ahuriri/West Quay, which enhances its character and amenity value.

The close proximity of the foreshore reserve contributes an enhanced sense of space and amenity with the properties fronting the Esplanade and Ferguson Avenue enjoying direct views to the ocean and surrounding landscape.

Located along SH2 - an entrance route to the city and a main link to the Napier Airport and defined by the foreshore reserve - Westshore is a visually prominent area that shapes not only the experience of local residents but also that of the wider public, including foreshore users and those travelling along SH2.



View to Westshore from Napier Hill (corner of George Street and Chaucer Road/North)

Spatial character: street/block pattern & street character - the spatial character of Westshore is based on the historic street/block layout and land subdivision patterns which have been largely maintained.

The area's spatial character has been influenced by its landscape setting and the constraints imposed by the railway corridor, which is particularly evident in the northern part of Westshore.

Main characteristics:

- extended 3km+ long area with linear structure, one-to-two blocks wide;
- some exceptionally long blocks (up to 1.2km long) at the northern end with the railway corridor limiting opportunities for cross streets and frequent views to the ocean when travelling along SH2;
- generally regular block pattern of similar in size blocks (120-200m x 70-90m) at the southern end;
- a street network comprised of long slightly curving north/south oriented streets following the layout of the spit and short east-west cross-streets providing views to the foreshore and the ocean;
- a street character based on intermittent berms and no established pattern of street trees for the area as a whole, except for parts of SH2 and some of the streets at the south/east end of Westshore;
- public open space is represented by a continuous foreshore reserve along the eastern boundary of the area and the sense of openness characteristic for the area is further enhanced by the 'gap reserve' at the northern end associated with the airport operations.



The foreshore reserve is an integral part of the area's character and amenity value

Building character and intensity of development

- Westshore has the character of a seaside resort which has progressively changed to a permanent residential suburb.⁴ The area as a whole is a relatively low-density environment with an open character dominated by one and two-storey stand-alone dwellings on individual lots. However, there is an emerging pattern of small-scale multi-unit development and infill development creating additional 'rear' units through the subdivision of existing larger lots.
- The collective built character of Westshore is diverse. The number of surviving pre-1940 'character' buildings is relatively low with the majority of existing development occurring post-1950. Stand-alone houses, which appear in a variety of scales and architectural styles, are mixed with some multi-unit developments and motels of variable design appearance.
- Non-residential buildings are limited to the local school, nearby commercial node and travellers' accommodation located predominantly towards the southern end of the area along Meeanee Quay.



Diversity of building character

⁴ Port Ahuriri Heritage Study prepared by Salmond Architects, November 1994 (Port Ahuriri Heritage Study)

Streetscape character/street edge conditions - streetscape conditions vary depending on the location/orientation of the specific street. The area exhibits three broad streetscape patterns:

- streets along the foreshore characterised by expansive views, a high degree of openness and larger homes (Ferguson Avenue/The Esplanade);
- 'internal' streets with a more typical suburban feel (e.g. Charles Street); and
- vehicle-dominated streets along the western boundary of the area associated with taller front fencing and travellers' accommodation (SH2, Domain Road, Meeanee Quay).

The general streetscape characteristics that are common across Westshore as a whole include:

- relatively large front yards many with front yard planting;
- street edges defined in various ways but characterised mainly by low, permeable or no front fencing;
- no established pattern of garages built at or close to the street boundary; and
- building entrances and windows typically facing the street.



A pattern of relatively large front yards



Vehicle-oriented frontages, Meeanee Quay

Local character, identity and sense of place - the area's local identity and sense of place are derived from:

- its visual prominence, natural setting, open/seaside character;
- association with the historic development of Napier, the inner harbour and Ahuriri;
- characteristic views to the surrounding and wider landscape (inner harbour/Ahuriri, Napier Port, Napier Hill and the distant Western Hills);
- proximity to the foreshore reserve and wider walkway network enhancing the area's amenity and recreational opportunities; and
- street alignment and block pattern dating back to the original subdivision of the area.



South/east end of Westshore: views to Napier Hill

3.2 BUILDING AGE & BUILDING CHARACTER

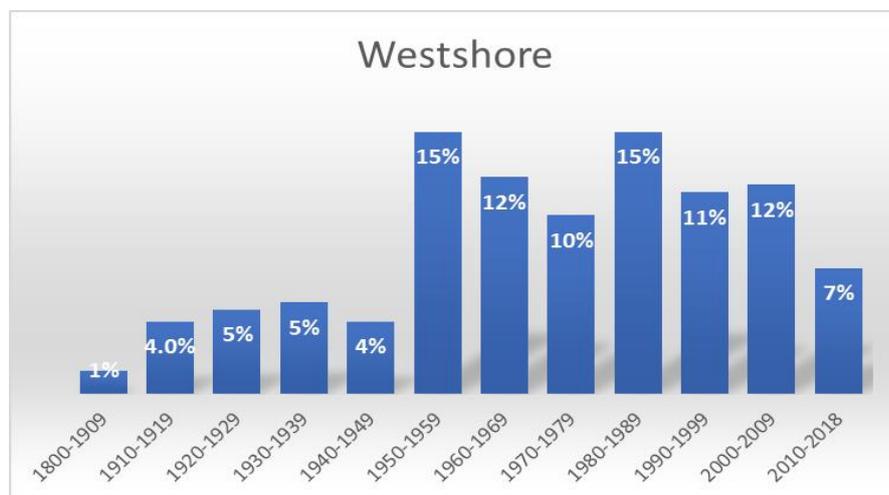
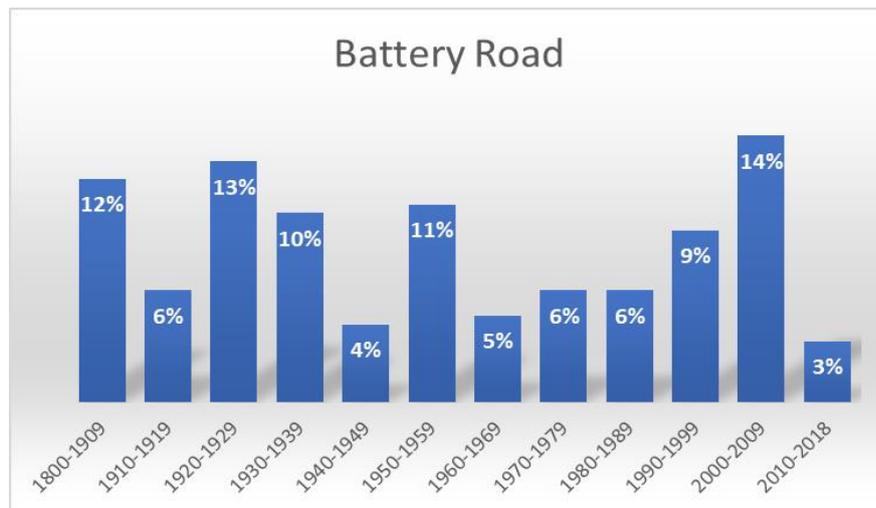
Building Age Profile

Building age (date of original construction) provides information on architectural character and the stages of development throughout different time periods. Consistency of building age can be correlated to consistency of building type and style, particularly for construction prior to 1940. This is because up until this point the range of construction techniques, materials and building styles were limited.

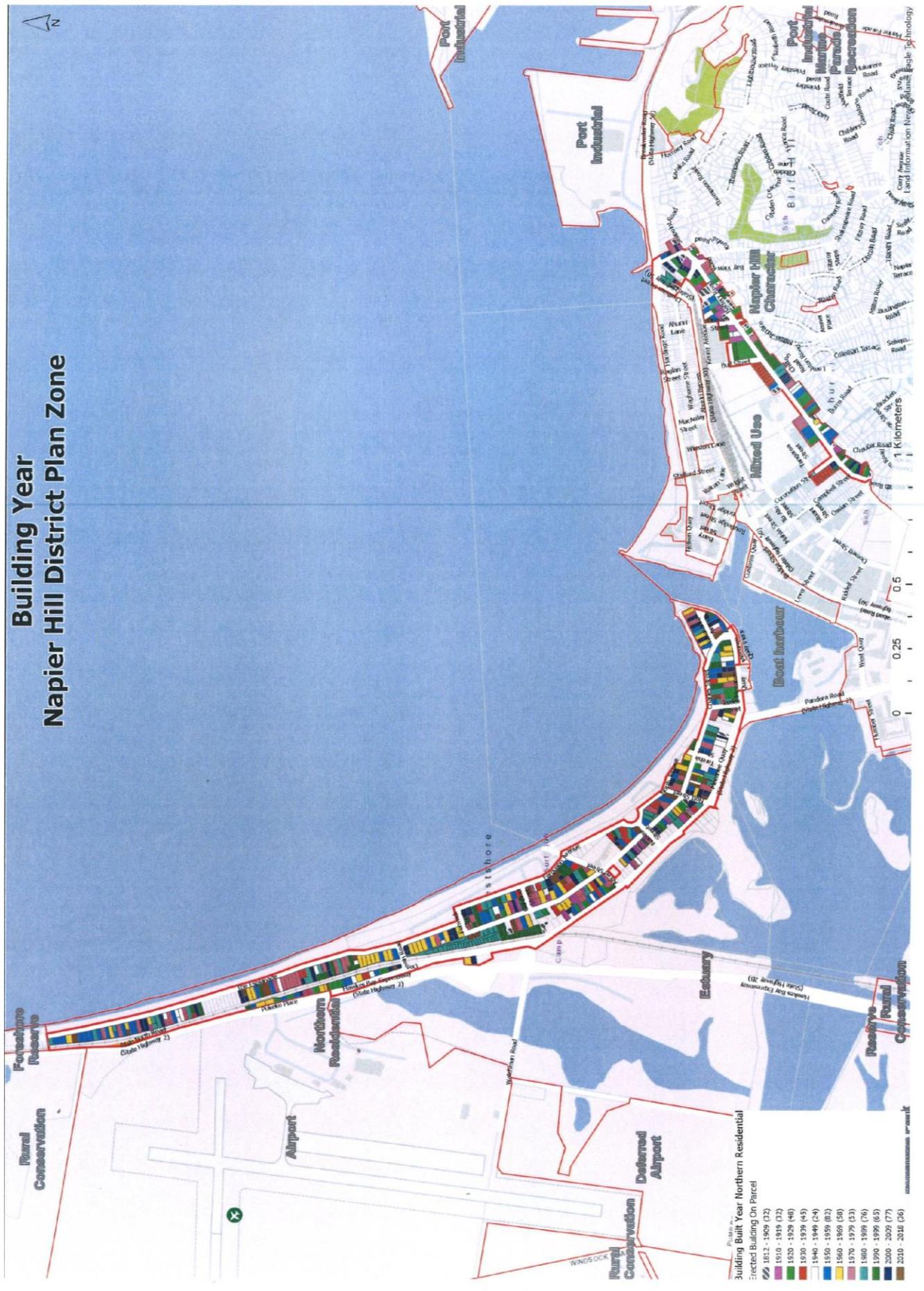
Building age has been recorded within twelve categories (within a 10-year time period, apart from the first category which relates to a longer period). The distribution of buildings built within the same time period is indicated on the building age map (next page).

Analysis of the building age profiles informs about the number and location of buildings built in the same time period. This helps to: (a) establish whether there are predominant building types/styles throughout the study area and, if so, what are their key features that new development might need to consider; and (b) identify groups of buildings and stretches of streetscape with consistent character representing historical patterns of development that might warrant special protection or management.

The building age patterns of the two sub-areas (recorded as a percentage of buildings built within the same period) are illustrated on the charts below.



Building Year Napier Hill District Plan Zone



For simplicity, the building age can be summarised in five broad categories corresponding to the following time periods:

Year of construction	Battery Road	Westshore
Pre-1940	41%	15%
1940-1960	15%	19%
1960-1980	11%	22%
1980-2000	15%	26%
2000-2018	17%	19%

Observations

- The age profiles of the two sub-areas differ. Compared to Westshore, the Battery Road sub-area contains a larger number of pre-1940's 'character' houses representative of typical architectural styles characteristic prior to 1940.
- The pre-1940 buildings in Battery Road comprise over 40% of the overall stock with approximately a third of those buildings built prior to 1910. In comparison, pre-1940 buildings in Westshore represent only 15% of the stock in this area and include an insignificant number of pre-1910 buildings (1.2% of all buildings).
- Most of the development in Westshore occurred after 1950 with a generally similar number of buildings built in each decade between 1950-2009 with peaks during the 1950-1960 and 1980-1990 periods. However, development in the last 10 years has been slow.
- In comparison, development in Battery Road after 1940 has been less steady with the development peaks occurring in the two decades between 1950-1960 and 2000-2010. Similar to Westshore though, there has been little development in the last decade 2010-2019.

Building Character

Both sub-areas include a mix of building ages/types and styles. However, compared to Westshore, where the character is expressly diverse, the Battery Road sub-area exhibits a level of consistency derived from the larger number of pre-1940s buildings there.

Battery Road sub-area: main characteristics

- A degree of consistency derived from the larger number of pre-1940s buildings.
- Building character based on three main building types/ages:
 - pre-1940s 'character' houses representative of typical architectural styles prevalent prior to 1940 (villas, cottages bungalows);
 - stand-alone 'non-character' (post 1940) dwellings of variable style and scale spread throughout the area; and
 - multi-unit development of more recent years - duplexes and terraced housing (notable cluster in the vicinity of 74-98 Battery Road).
- Pre-1940s 'character' houses tend to be clustered together forming identifiable rows or groupings that express the history of the place and contribute to its streetscape character. The most notable groupings are indicated in District Plan Appendix 13A: Advocacy Areas - Coronation Street and Battery Road Character Areas and their heritage/streetscape value discussed in Port Ahuriri Heritage Study.
- The junction of Battery/Shakespeare Roads and Waghorne Street, marked by the historic tram shelter/public toilet (a relic of the tram system that operated 1913-1931), and distinguished by surrounding old buildings and mature trees, is one of the port's most important urban spaces that

makes a considerable contribution to the history and character of the area (refer Heritage Study 1994).



Views to the Battery/Shakespeare Roads and Waghorne Street junction

- The vast majority of the pre-1940 buildings are in a good state of repair. While they have a different degree of originality, all of them have retained their primary form and some have also retained some of the original stylistic detail. Considering some form of statutory protection/management of the buildings identified in Port Ahuriri Heritage Study groupings is warranted.



6 Battery Road, recently renovated building (left: street frontage, right: back of the building)



50-52 Battery Road



29-33 Battery Road



51-65 Battery Road



4 -10 Coronation Street

- Currently, there are only 2 listed heritage buildings in the area (6A Battery Road and 20 Battery Road) with no statutory provisions for managing any of the other identified buildings/building groupings. The Battery Road sub-area is included in two of the District Plan Advocacy Areas (Appendix 13A/partly within the Battery Road Character Area and partly within the Coronation Street Character Area). However, the absence of statutory provisions cannot ensure the desired degree of character management for those groupings. This is illustrated by the demolition of some pre-1910 buildings in the vicinity Battery Road/Shakespeare Road and Waghorne Street (nos. 174 and 177 Waghorne Street and nos. 4 and 9 Battery Road). This has eroded the integrity of an identified prominent building cluster around an important urban space with streetscape and heritage value.



View towards the vacant site of the demolished pre-1910 building at 9 Battery Road

- Except for the identified groupings, the building character of the Battery Road sub-area as a whole does not require any special character management. However, it is important to ensure that larger scale multi-unit development (more than 2 units) reflects the predominant scale/grain of development characteristic for the area (e.g. through appropriate design assessment criteria).

Recommendations

- Consider statutory character provisions for the protection and management of the notable individual buildings or groups of buildings identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study.
- If the Advocacy Areas (Appendix 13A) are to remain part of the District Plan consider: (a) correlating the boundaries of the Battery Road Character Area (Appendix 13A) with the boundaries of the Battery Road Character Zone (District Plan Map F7) to avoid confusion; and (b) providing incentives to encourage the retention/refurbishment of the identified buildings in Appendix 13A.
- Introduce neighbourhood character assessment criteria for multi-unit development that allows management of new development in relation to the specific local characteristics of Battery Road.

Westshore sub-area: main characteristics

- The character of Westshore, the larger of the two areas, is generally diverse with regard to building character and compared to Battery Road, contains a larger percentage of multi-unit and infill developments.



Westshore contains a large number of multi-unit development

- Surviving building styles associated with the earlier stages of development include late 19th century villas and early 20th century transitional villas (1890-1910); some 1930s buildings, including bungalows and moderne (art deco) houses and some post-modern dwellings, as well as alterations of earlier houses. These are dispersed throughout the area with a noticeable concentration of moderne houses at the northern end of The Esplanade (nos. 24, 33, 35, 52, 65, 68, 70 and 73 identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study). None of these buildings are listed in the District Plan. The buildings at 24, 52 and 65 The Esplanade have already been demolished.



Pockets of pre-1940 buildings (left: 12-15 Meeanee Quay, right: 45 Meeanee Quay)



33 The Esplanade



35 The Esplanade

- Except for the buildings identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study, Westshore as a whole does not warrant any special building character management, other than ensuring new multi-unit/infill developments and travellers' accommodation contribute to the quality and safety of the street, and do not compromise the residential amenity of their neighbours.



70 The Esplanade



73 The Esplanade



Diverse building character (left: 6 Charles Street, right: 34-36 Charles Street)

Recommendations

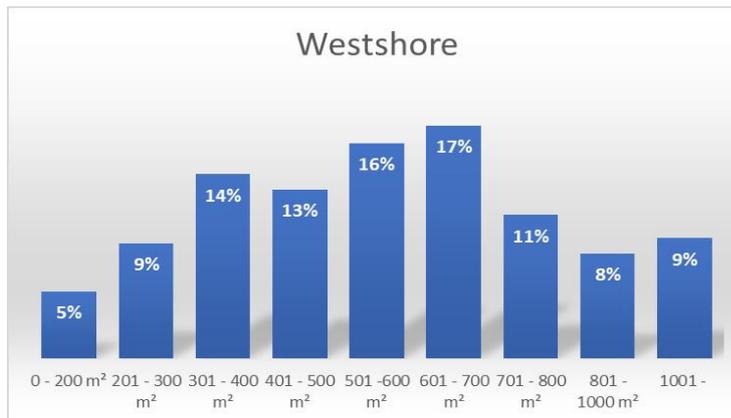
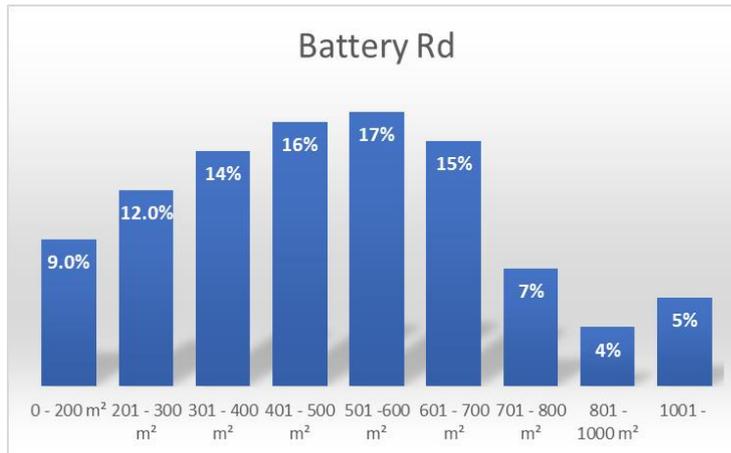
- Consider statutory character provisions for the protection and management of the individual pre-1940 buildings identified in the Port Ahuriri Heritage Study.

3.3 LOT PATTERN

Lot size provides information on the density and grain of development in a given area (measured as a number of the units per residential lot).

Information on lot size for the study area was recorded within nine lot size categories. The geographical distribution of the lots within the individual categories is indicated on the Lot Size map (see next page).

The charts below show the relative percentage of lots within each category.



For simplicity the lot sizes are summarised (percentage of the total) under four broad categories:

Lot size		Battery Road	Westshore
Very small lots	up to 300m²	19%	14%
Small lots	301-500 m²	30%	27%
Medium lots	501-700 m²	32%	33%
Large lots	701-1001 +	16%	28%

Lot Sizes Northern Residential District Plan Zone



Observations

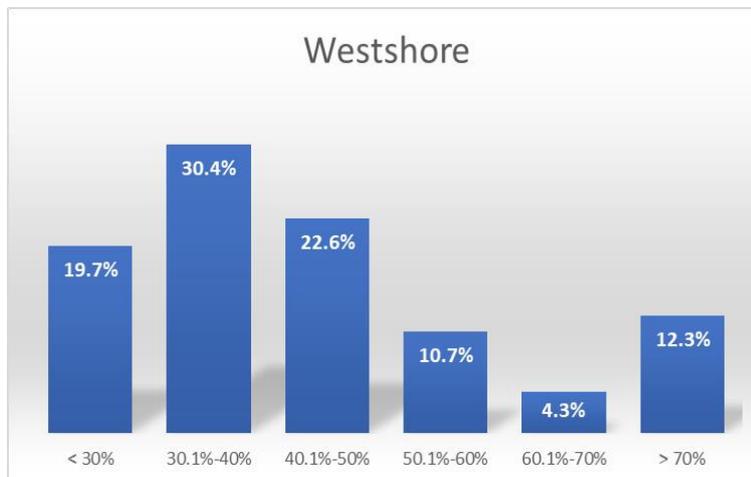
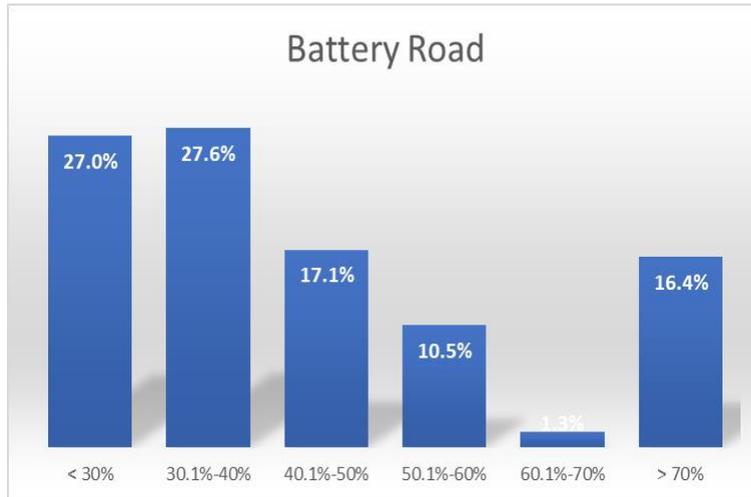
- The lot size patterns in the two sub-areas are similar with regard to small and medium size lots (with 60% or more of the lots in each sub-area within the 300-500m² and 500-700m² bracket (with almost equal percentage of lots in each bracket).
- However, the patterns relating to very small (<300m²) and large lots (700m² -1000+m²) are slightly different with Battery Road containing a higher percentage of very small lots and a lower percentage of large lots compared to Westshore.
- The majority of the lots in both sub-areas have a rectangular shape and most are long and narrow with some very deep lots in the Battery Road sub-area.
- Typically, lots of identical size and proportions are grouped together and some accommodate buildings of similar type, form and scale.

District Plan - there are no explicit District Plan provisions for a minimum lot size in the Northern Residential Zone. However, a notional minimum lot size of 250m²/per dwelling is implied under the code of practice for land subdivision and development for the Northern Residential Zone (Chapter 66 of the District Plan). This notional minimum size does not reflect and is below the predominant lot size patterns in both of the sub-areas.

3.4 SITE COVERAGE

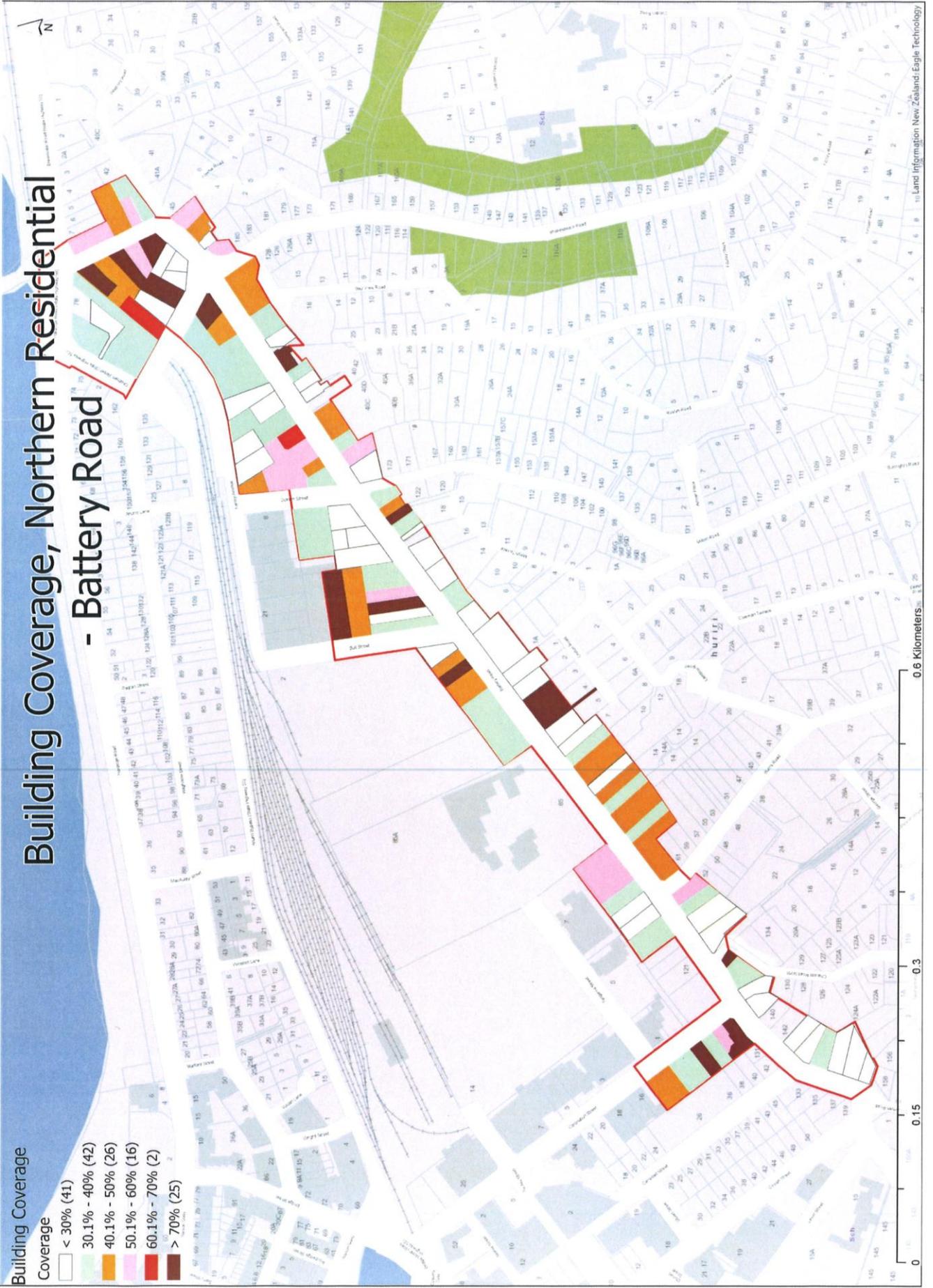
Site coverage is an indicator of development intensity and is closely related to the amount of on-site open space and associated sense of amenity.

The GIS information on site coverage has been recorded within 6 categories within a 10% interval. The percentages of lots within the same category are indicated on the charts below and their geographic distribution plotted on the Site Coverage maps (see next pages).

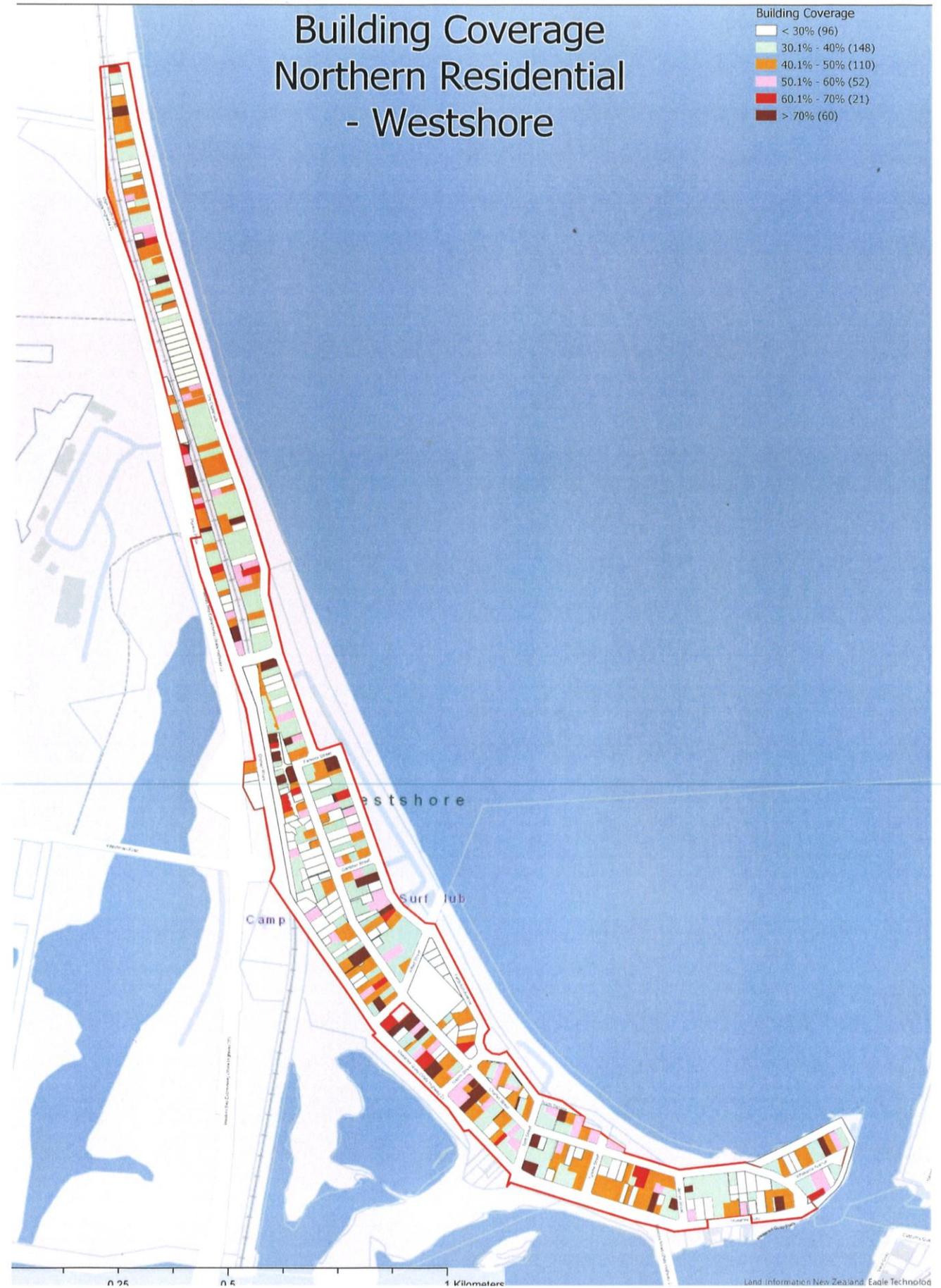
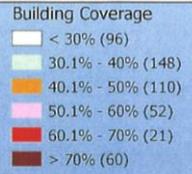


Site coverage (%)	Battery Road	Westshore
40% or less	54.5%	50.1%
50% or less	71.7%	72.7%

Building Coverage, Northern Residential - Battery Road



Building Coverage Northern Residential - Westshore



Observations

- The data shows that the predominant site coverage in the Battery Road sub-area (for more than half of the lots) is below 40%, with a similar percentage of sites with site coverage of up to 30% and 30.1%-40% respectively. This is followed by site coverage of 40.1%-50% (approximately 17% of all sites).
- In comparison, the predominant site coverage in Westshore (for half of the lots) is slightly higher - 30.1%-50% with most of those sites in the 30.1- 40% bracket. This is followed by site coverage of up to 30% (approximately 20% of all sites).
- The site coverage maps show that lots with similar site coverage often correspond to lots of similar size that tend to be grouped together.
- Site coverage is closely related to the amount of on-site open space and the ability to undertake landscaping. The rear yards of the properties along the southern side of Battery Road are steep and heavily vegetated as part of the Bluff Hill landscape. Many of the properties in Westshore have generous rear yards and some accommodate established vegetation.

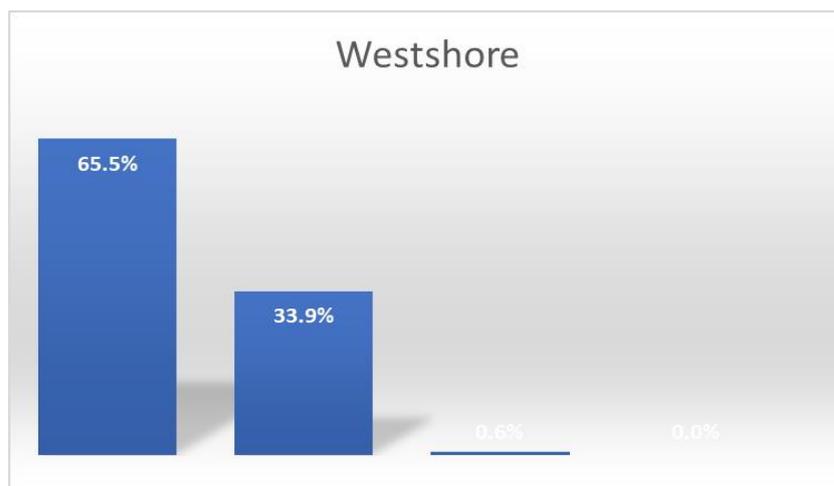
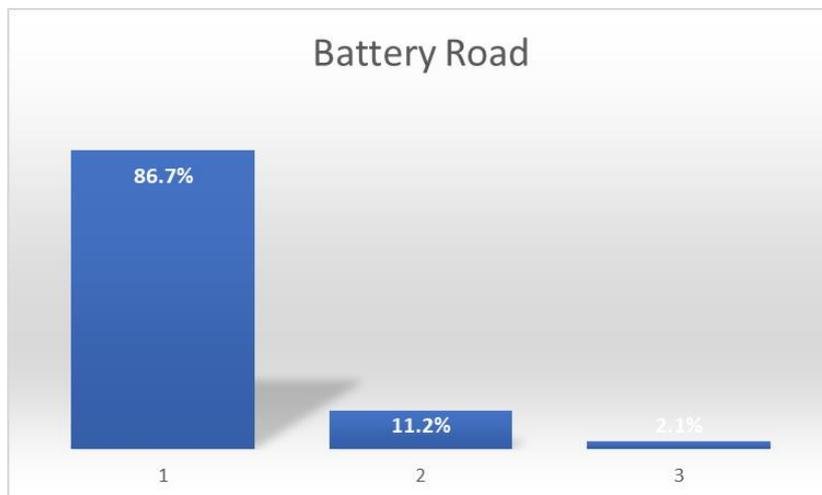
District Plan - the permitted site coverage in the District Plan is 50% for both sub-areas. This is higher than the predominant pattern.

3.5 BUILDING HEIGHT

Building height measured as the number of storeys had been recorded within 3 categories corresponding to one, two and three storeys. The percentages of buildings within each category is indicated on the charts below and their geographic distribution plotted on the attached maps (page 29 and 30).

The information on building height shows:

- The predominant pattern within the Northern Residential Zone as a whole is of single-storey buildings. However, the individual patterns in the two sub-areas are slightly different, with the percentage of two-storey buildings in Westshore being much higher (34%) compared to Battery Road (11%).
- The number of three-storey buildings in either of the sub-areas is not a pronounced. However, their percentage in the Battery Road area is slightly higher compared to Westshore. The majority of three-storey buildings are multi-unit developments.





Most of the pre-1940 buildings in the Battery Road area are single storey



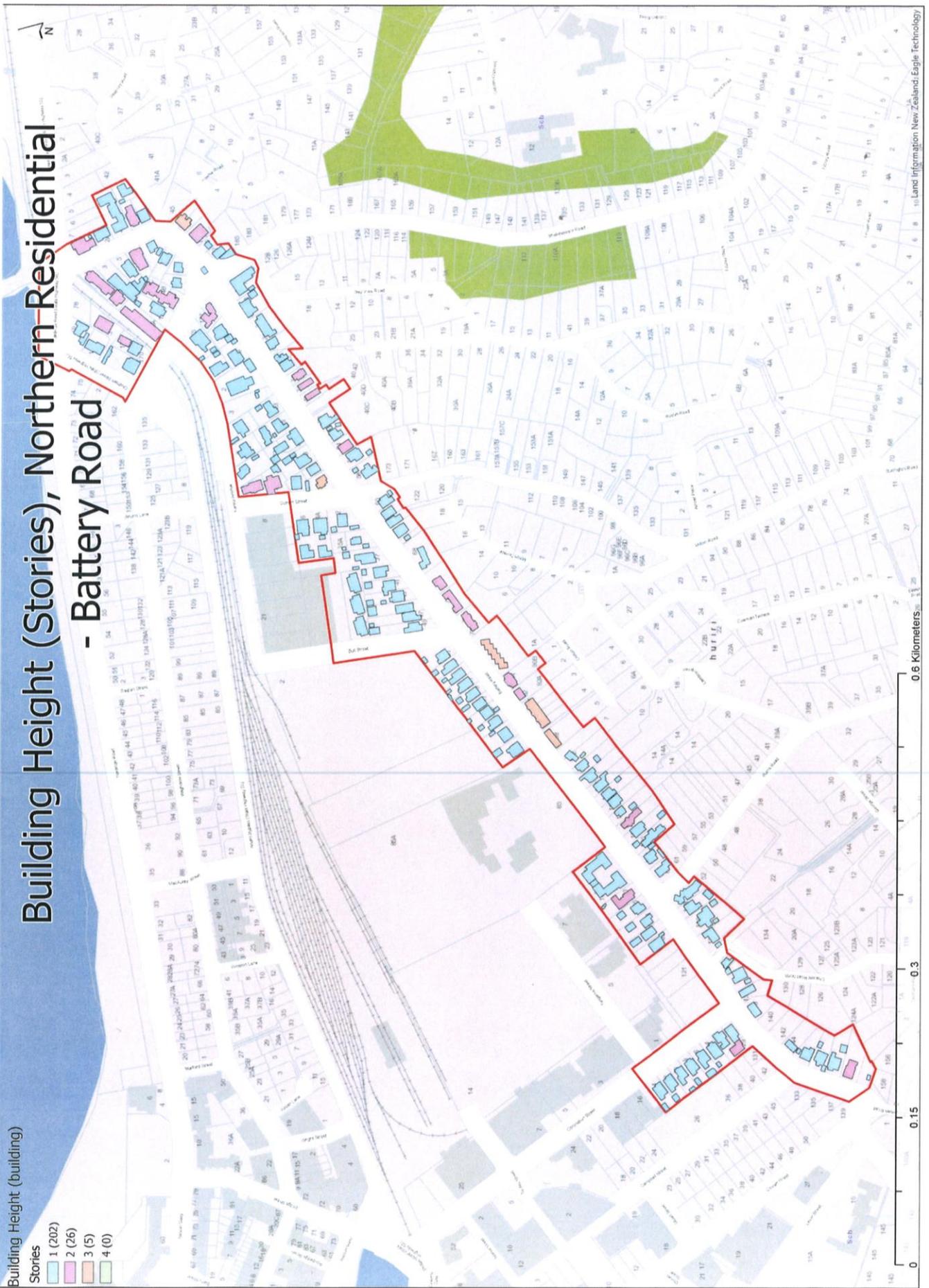
Battery Road: new development is typically 2 storeys. Applied on sloping sites the District Plan 'rolling height method' allows for three-storey buildings following the contours of the land



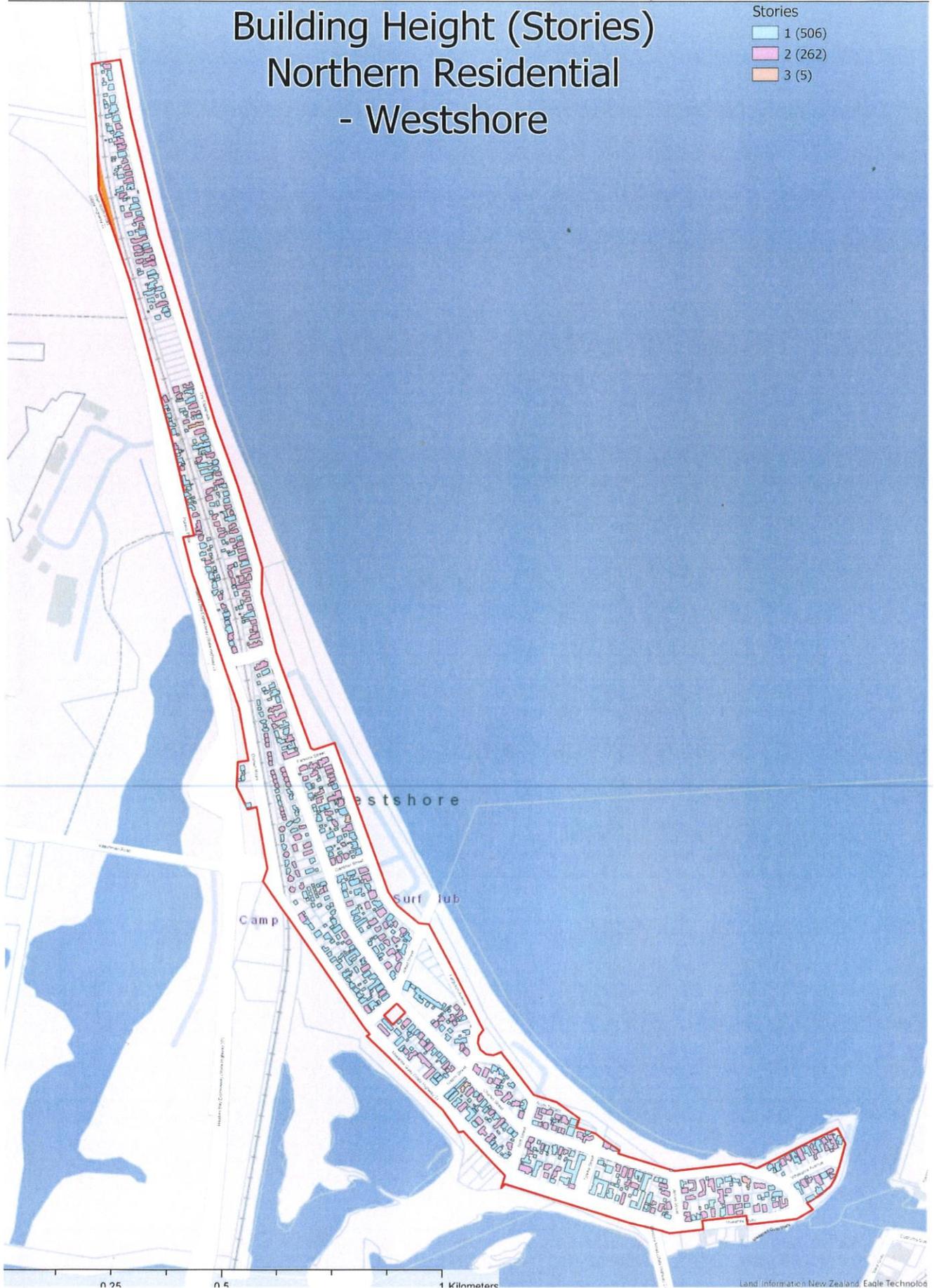
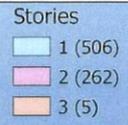
Westshore contains a larger number of two-storey buildings compared to Battery Road

District Plan - the District Plan height provision is 8m which equates to 2 storeys. This is higher than the predominant pattern but is a standard height typical for suburban residential development.

Building Height (Stories), Northern Residential - Battery Road



Building Height (Stories) Northern Residential - Westshore



3.6 STREET EDGE CONDITIONS (FRONTAGE SETBACKS, FRONT YARD PLANTING AND FENCING)

Street edge conditions are defined by frontage setbacks, fencing and front yard planting, as well as any parking or garages within the front yard. Street edge conditions are important as they have a direct influence on the streetscape quality and character of an area.

Frontage setbacks (front yards) & front yard planting

Battery Road & Westshore

- most buildings have generally deep frontage setbacks, typically 3m-5m+ (refer to front boundary distance maps, following pages). The distance boundary map records the setbacks of all buildings, including those on rear lots, as well as outbuildings. This can explain the large number of buildings with frontage setbacks deeper than 5m. Frontage setbacks on internal lots are not critical in 'character' terms.
- there are a relatively small number of buildings with shallow setbacks or buildings which are built to the street boundary - these are found towards the eastern end of Battery Road and at the northern end of Westshore on the western side along SH2;
- many of the front yards accommodate vegetation including some mature trees. There is a pronounced pattern of front yard planting at the southern end of Westshore;
- many multi-unit developments and some of the recent standalone dwellings do not provide front yard planting; and
- large retaining walls, whether along the street frontage or at the rear boundaries are present in a limited number of properties on the southern side of Battery Road.



Battery Road: most buildings have generous front yards and accommodate front yard planting



Westshore: some of the newer buildings have shallower front yards

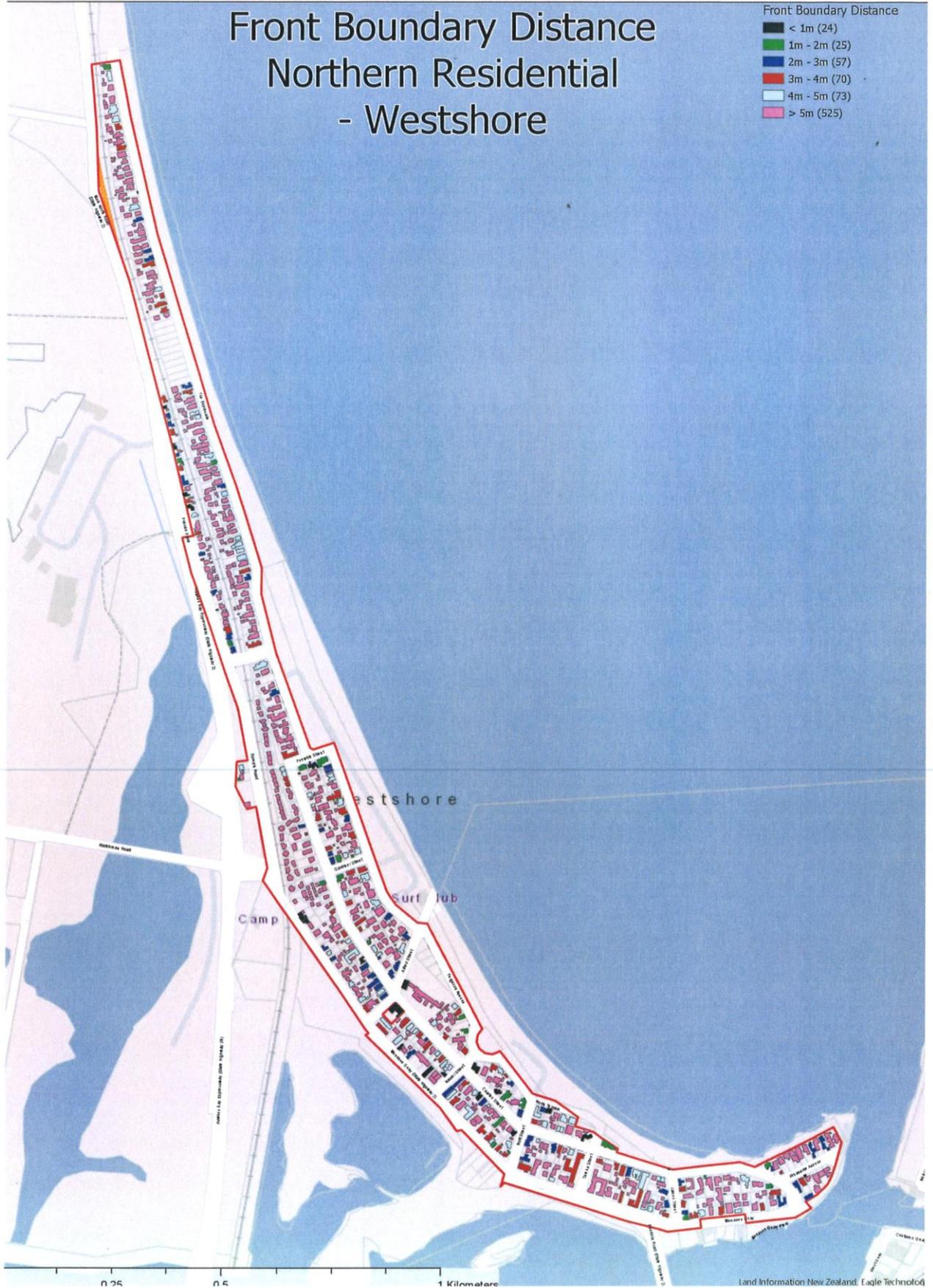
District Plan - the District Plan requires a 3m front yard. This is slightly shallower than the prevailing pattern, but standard across all residential areas in the city.

There is no requirement for front yard planting. This does not reflect the prevailing pattern and seems to encourage hard-surfaced and impermeable front yard treatment, rather than promote an attractive streetscape.

Front Boundary Distance Northern Residential - Westshore

Front Boundary Distance

- < 1m (24)
- 1m - 2m (25)
- 2m - 3m (57)
- 3m - 4m (70)
- 4m - 5m (73)
- > 5m (525)



Location of garages and parking arrangements

Battery Road & Westshore

- most of the old dwellings do not have garages and some have parking spaces within their side yards, or garages to the rear of the dwelling;
- garages built to the street edge in both sub-areas are not common; and
- most of the newer developments have integrated garages and in some of the larger multi-unit developments garages and vehicle access dominate the street frontage (this is more pronounced in the Battery Road sub-area which accommodates a larger number of terraced-house developments).

District Plan - the District Plan requires 5m setbacks for garages fronting the street. This is a standard requirement across all residential areas in the city.

Front and side yard fencing

Battery Road & Westshore

- front yard fencing is variable in height and design. However, older dwellings and larger multi-unit developments (terraced housing) tend to have no, low or permeable fences, while many newer houses tend to have taller fences, most of which are of good quality. Tall front fences are also found along the internal streets of Westshore, or along some of the properties along SH2 and
- prominent tall side boundary fences are not a dominant streetscape feature for the Northern Residential Zone as a whole, with many properties having low or no side boundary fencing.



Predominant pattern of low or permeable front fences

District Plan - the District Plan provides for 2m tall fences along all site boundaries. This does not promote a safe and attractive streetscape and does not reflect the typical patterns in the Northern Residential Zone as a whole.

3.7 SEPARATION DISTANCES (SIDE AND REAR YARDS)

Battery Road & Westshore

- separation distances between adjacent dwellings vary throughout the study area. However, as seen from the street, adjacent houses for most of the study area appear well separated from each other. This pattern is interrupted where multi-unit developments with terraced housing front the street. Typical separation distances vary between 2m-5m;
- consistency of separation distances is more apparent between buildings of similar age and scale;
- typically, larger separation distances most often occur adjacent to rights of way or between adjacent buildings on larger lots; and
- rear yards are hugely variable throughout the area with houses on larger lots typically associated with generous rear yards, some with mature vegetation. This pattern is especially pronounced along the southern side of Battery Road for the properties at the foot of the hill, and within the southern parts of Westshore.

District Plan - the District Plan requires 1m side and rear yards which is standard across all residential areas in the city. The predominant pattern of side yards is generally comparable with the provision, but lower than the typical rear yard pattern.

3.8 RECENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS/ISSUES

This section of the report provides a review of the resource consents issued in the last 10 years (period between 2009-2019). The purpose of this review is to identify development trends occurring in the study areas to help determine whether the existing District Plan policy and rule framework is still appropriate and/or how it might need to change. The review of the recent consents is focused on infill and multi-unit development, as those have the greatest influence on density, character and amenity.

The data records the number of consents reviewed, land use activity, scale and intensity of development and District Plan standards not complied with (refer to table prepared by Napier City Council, Appendix 1).

Battery Road

There has been little development in the Battery Road sub-area with only 2 resource consents issued in the last 10 years. Both consents were for subdivision/infill development.

Each proposal sought to create two lots with a potential unit on that lot. No standards have been breached and the proposed lot sizes were in excess of the minimum notional lot size of 250m².

Observations

- Recent development in the Battery Road sub-area has been slow involving small-scale infill development. Based on the limited number of recent consent applications, there is no indication that current provisions create any issues.



140 Battery Road 2-unit development under construction



68 Battery Road infill, creating an additional lot

- The current provisions have not been tested in the context of recent larger-scale multi-unit development. However, the earlier large-scale multi-unit developments on the southern side of Battery Road exhibit some of the issues typically associated with multi-unit development - e.g. vehicle dominated street frontages with little opportunity for planting, repetitive unit design and unbroken roof forms.
- Existing multi-unit developments which include some planting along their street frontage and/or vary the surface treatment of their 'front yard' vehicle areas manage to integrate well with the streetscape (see local examples on page 39). This suggests that a provision for appropriate 'front yard landscaping' is justified. This is further supported by the existing pattern of front yard planting typical for the area.

Westshore

There have been 14 resource consents in Westshore over the last 10 years, including 5 consent applications for multi-unit development and 9 for subdivision (some of which were associated with the multi-unit development consent applications).

Multi-unit developments:

- the consent applications were for two-unit developments except one, which involved four units;
- dwelling typologies include: stand-alone houses, semi-detached dwellings/duplexes and terraced houses. All development are 2 storeys;
- standards breached relate to:

- HIRTB infringements (4 developments)
- relatively small infringement of site coverage (4 developments)
- open space provision (2 developments)
- vehicle access/on-site manoeuvring (1 development)
- maximum building height (1 development)
- landscaping (1 development)

Subdivision/infill development:

- 5 of the 9 applications related to the subdivision of recent consents for multi-unit development
- all consent applications were for 2-lot subdivisions, except one which involved the creation of 3 lots
- all of the proposed new lots were well above the minimum notional lot size of 250m² (most 350m² - 500m²+), except for one development associated with existing use rights, where the lot size was below 250m².



17 Ferguson Drive 2-unit development



190 Charles Street, 4-unit development

Observations

- Recent development trends indicate a pattern of small-scale infill and multi-unit development (mostly in the form of stand-alone dwellings) that does not appear to raise any significant amenity concerns. Notwithstanding this, the recent 4-unit terraced housing development at 190 Charles Street highlights issues with regard to streetscape quality and building design. This suggests that the current assessment criteria are not robust enough with regard to medium-density typologies.
- The review indicates that the density associated with recent development is lower than the maximum density under the current District Plan provisions. The relatively small infringements of current District Plan standards indicate that those standards do not create major issues for new development. However, the current provisions have not been extensively tested in the context of larger multi-unit development.
- Demand reasons aside, difficulty in acquiring multiple sites for larger-scale redevelopment might be the most likely hurdle for developers to undertake commercially viable multi-unit developments.

Comments Northern Residential Zone as a whole

The review of recent consent applications indicates that existing provisions do not create significant issues for small-scale multi-unit and infill developments. However, this might not be the case for large-scale developments that utilise the full development potential allowed by the current provisions.

Potential issues of larger scale multi-unit developments are particularly relevant in the context of the 'controlled activity' status for such developments, and the lack of sufficiently robust assessment criteria to manage potential effects on streetscape character and/or on-site amenity.

To address the issue, some amendments to the current multi-unit development provisions will need to be considered (see recommendations in Section 4.11 of this report).

4 DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS ASSESSMENT

This section of the report assesses the appropriateness of the current District Plan 'bulk and location' provisions (Chapter 7/Condition Table) against the findings of the 'character evaluation', with reference to the identified built characteristics of the Northern Residential Zone.

4.1 MINIMUM LOT SIZE / MAXIMUM DENSITY

There is no density requirement and no explicit District Plan provisions for a minimum lot size in the Northern Residential Zone (Condition 7.19). However, a development which exceeds a density greater than one dwelling 250m² per net site area requires a concept plan to show how a single dwelling or multi-unit development is able to fully comply with the conditions for permitted activities. This indirectly implies that a minimum notional lot size of 250m² can be taken as a general reference to the expected outcome in respect of maximum development density. This is confirmed by the maximum density provision under the code of practice for land subdivision and development for the Northern Residential Zone (Chapter 66 of the District Plan).

Discussion

A 250m² minimum notional lot size does not reflect the predominant lot size pattern within the Northern Residential Zone as a whole, where the percentage of lots below 300m² is low in both sub-areas (Battery Road - 19%, Westshore - 14%).

The predominant pattern across the Northern Residential Zone is based on lot size between 301m² - 700m². This contributes a sense of openness which is an integral part of the character and amenity of the zone.

Recent development in the study area (last 10 years) shows that the vast majority of the newly created lots are in the 340m² - 500m²+ bracket. The only exception relates to a specific multi-unit development (82 Meeanee Quay based on existing use rights) where the proposed lots (below 250m²), lead to breaching other standards (e.g. site coverage, open space and/or height in relation to boundary).

The notional minimum 250m² lot size is suitable for medium density typologies such as 2-3 storey duplexes and terraced housing and/or apartments. However, it is less suitable for single unit-development in terms of flexibility of site and building layout and/or providing certainty in respect of amenity outcomes.

Encouraging intensification of the Northern Residential Zone is appropriate for the foreshore location of Westshore and associated open space/recreational opportunities and the proximity of Battery Road area to nearby commercial and recreational network. However, if the predominant lot pattern and associated sense of amenity (which is part of the zone's character) is to be maintained, an increase of the notional minimum lot size to 350m² for single-unit developments would be appropriate to consider. Such an increase will also reflect recent development trends of small-scale intensification.

Recommendations

- Retain the current provision for multi-unit development but increase the minimum notional lot size for single-unit development to 350m², if the predominant amenity values are to be retained; or alternatively
- Retain the status quo if the intensification of the zone is prioritised over amenity character.

4.2 FRONT YARDS AND FRONT YARD LANDSCAPING

District Plan Condition 7.20/a requires a 3m front yard, which increases to 5m in relation to garages, to provide a vehicle standing bay and reduce impact on the streetscape. There is no requirement for front yard landscaping.

Discussion

The provisions reflect the general pattern in Westshore but are slightly less aligned with the predominant pattern of larger front yards in Battery Road, where deep frontage setbacks (5m+) are often associated with rows of dwellings with a consistent character.

The current front yard provision of 3m is generally appropriate for the zone as a whole, except for some parts of Battery Road where, in specific cases, it can create streetscape character issues. For example, where new multi-unit development sits adjacent to or amidst an existing row of identified pre-1940 dwellings with consistent character, including consistent deeper frontage setbacks. Such issues can be addressed through: (a) protecting the character of identified rows of buildings; and (b) introducing character management provisions for multi-unit development adjacent to such buildings. This is to ensure that new development fits in with and respects consistent built character attributes.

The lack of a front yard landscape requirement does not reflect the amenity and character in either of the sub-areas where most properties incorporate front yard planting with some mature trees. The lack of a front yard landscape requirement seems to encourage hard surfaced/impermeable front yard treatment, rather than promote an attractive streetscape. This is particularly relevant for multi-unit developments of terraced housing type where the absence of front yard landscape requirement results in extensive hard surfaced vehicle-dominated front yards, with little contribution to streetscape character. This also raises a potential issue regarding the need of surface permeability for storm water management reasons.

The requirement for a 5m setback for garages is aimed at providing on-site a vehicle standing bay and avoiding garages at the street edge and, as such, reflects the existing pattern and is generally appropriate from a streetscape perspective.

It is recognised that a front yard landscape requirement might not be easily achievable for all multi-unit or infill developments. However, a requirement for a minimum front yard landscaped/permeable area including tree planting of appropriate type and scale is justified from a 'streetscape' character perspective along with a requirement for the use of textured surface materials for any vehicle-dominated frontage. The positive impact of trees and the use of paving materials is illustrated in some local examples (see photos below).



Battery Road: tree planting along street frontage reduces the impact of bulk and aids the integration of large buildings to the streetscape

Recommendations:

- Retain the current provision for 3m front yards and 5m setbacks for garages, but incorporate an assessment criterion to manage the relationship of multi-unit development adjacent to identified building rows with consistent character (where front yards are deeper than the required 3m).
- Introduce a front yard landscaping requirement for a minimum landscaped/permeable area within the front yard (e.g. 30%). This should include a requirement for: (a) tree planting of appropriate type/scale (e.g. one specimen tree per unit); and (b) use of paving or other textured surface materials for large vehicle-access areas along the street frontage of new developments.

4.3 SIDE & REAR YARDS

The District Plan (condition 7.20/b) requires a minimum of 1m side and rear yards and 6m relative to a watercourse or drain.

Discussion

The provisions regarding side yards are generally consistent with the existing pattern of separation distances characteristic for the study area, but lower than the typical rear yard pattern. However, the side/rear provisions are standard across all residential areas in the city and work in tandem with the other provisions to ensure amenity between adjacent dwellings is appropriately managed.

Recommendations

- No changes to the current provisions.



Battery Road; an established pattern of rear yards



Westshore: pattern of rear yards is more pronounced at the south/east end of the area

4.4 HEIGHT & HEIGHT IN RELATION TO BOUNDARY

The District Plan Condition 7.21 provides for 8m high buildings (or up to the streetscape height of adjacent buildings as determined in accordance with Appendix 8). The maximum height of 8m promotes 2 storey dwellings.

The height in relation to boundary provision (Condition 7.22) is based on a building envelope constructed by drawing planes along all parts of all site boundaries. The planes commence 3m above ground level at the site boundary and must be inclined to the horizontal at a 45 degrees angle. These provisions are the same as per the Main Residential Zone.

Discussion

The Northern Residential Zone as a whole is a mixture of 1, 2 and a limited number of 3-storey dwellings, with single-storey buildings being the largest in number. The current height provision is appropriate in relation to the predominant patterns and the low-rise character of the zone and promotes development that can be a storey taller than most of the existing single-storey buildings.

The review of recent developments (last 10 years) does not indicate any significant issues relating to either the height or the height in relation to boundary provisions. Therefore, there is no reason to change the current provisions, except for reviewing the need for height in relation to boundary provision along the street frontage. Streets within the zone are wide and together with the 3m front yard provide a good level of separation from the street, without creating visual dominance issues or excessive shading effects over the street.

Recommendations

- Retain the status quo but amend the height in relation to boundary provision to exclude its application along the street boundary of new dwellings on sites with a street frontage.

4.5 SITE COVERAGE

The permitted site coverage in the District Plan is 50% (Condition 7.23) and, along with the notional minimum lot size, is aimed at encouraging intensification.

Discussion

The current provision is above the predominant site coverage pattern for Battery Road (site coverage for more than half of the lots is below 40%) but slightly better aligned with the predominant pattern in Westshore (predominant pattern between 30%-50%). Recent development over the past 10 years does not indicate any significant issues relating to the current site coverage provision. However, a 50% site coverage will create a development of higher intensity compared to the predominant character. If the predominant character is to be retained, reducing site coverage to 40-45% should be considered. Alternatively, the current provision can be retained if infill development as well as redevelopment of smaller lots is to be encouraged.

Recommendations

- Consider reducing the site coverage to 40% - 45% if the predominant character is to be retained.
- Retain the current site coverage provision if infill development as well as redevelopment of smaller lots is to be encouraged.

4.6 LANDSCAPED AREA

The District Plan Condition 7.24 requires all new development to provide a landscaped area of not less than 20% of the net site area. There is no indication of the type/scale of landscaping required. It is noted that there is no requirement for front yard landscaping (see further comment under point 4.2 above).

Based on field work and an analysis of aerial maps, this provision seems to be on the lower side, especially given that there is no requirement for front yard planting. The landscape character of the individual sub-areas, although based on different natural attributes, forms an integral part of the study area's amenity and sense of place. The current provision does not seem to reflect and/or reinforce that character. This is of particular concern regarding larger multi-unit development and infill housing, especially when there is no indication of the envisaged type and scale of landscaping required under Condition 7.24.

Large scale vegetation and trees in particular are effective in reducing the perception of density associated with infill and multi-unit development. They help to enhance the separation between adjacent houses, aid the integration of buildings to the site and contribute to the amenity of their wider setting.

New development on the sloping sites along the southern side of Battery Road raises potential issues associated with the extent and treatment of visible retaining structures. Appropriate landscape treatment can be effective in mitigating the visual impact of such structures.



New development on sloping sites typically requires large retaining structures

Recommendations

(maximum change)

- Increase the minimum landscaped area to 30% and supplement this to include a requirement for a minimum of one specimen tree within the open space of each dwelling unit.
- Regarding new development on the southern side of Battery Road, consider a new condition to ensure the effects of large visible retaining structures are mitigated through appropriate landscape treatment.

(minimum change)

- If increasing the minimum landscape area is not to be pursued, consider, as a minimum, the recommendation for tree planting.

4.7 TRAVELLERS' ACCOMMODATION ALONG MEEANEE QUAY / LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENT

Regarding travellers' accommodation along Meeanee Quay there is a special requirement to provide a 2m wide landscape strip along the road boundary (Condition 7.15/b). However, the type and scale of envisaged landscaping is not specified. In the absence of such a specification, many of the existing motel developments have treated the required 2m wide strip as a grassed area free of any planting. A grassed strip alone is not sufficient enough to provide effective screening or to soften the impact of tall front fences, and/or to provide an appropriate transition between the road and the larger motel buildings (see photos below).



Meeanee Quay: Existing travellers' accommodation typically does not include trees/large scale planting within the required 2m wide landscaped area along the street frontage

Meeanee Quay is an entrance route of city-wide significance with a visually prominent road frontage. The quality/character of this road frontage and its street-edge conditions are important as they affect the experience of locals and visitors alike. To achieve a positive outcome, larger scale planting, including trees of appropriate height/scale would be required.

Recommendation

- Amend Condition 17.15/b to include a requirement for tree planting of appropriate scale within the required 2m wide landscaped area (with a minimum of one tree per every 5m of the site's road frontage as a guide).

4.8 OPEN SPACE

The District Plan Condition 7.25 requires each dwelling to have an amount of open space of not less than 50% of the gross floor area of all buildings on the site, except that a minimum of 50m² per dwelling unit must be provided. Any open space should be able to accommodate a 6m diameter circle and have a minimum dimension of 3m (measured at right angles to the perimeter of the area). Open space can comprise more than one area and must be directly accessible from the unit to which it relates.

Discussion

Condition 7.25 aims to ensure that the size of open space is commensurate to the size of the dwelling unit. It also implies that the anticipated outcome re 'usable open space area' required for each dwelling unit is approximately 28m² (area of a 6m diameter circle).

The current open space provision generally reflects the existing predominant patterns and is appropriate for the study area's character, which is based primarily on stand-alone dwellings on individual lots well above 300m². The review of the recent consents does not indicate any significant issues associated with that provision. However, all recent consent applications were for small-scale mainly 2-unit developments and for subdivisions that are well below the maximum density provision (new lots above 340m² - 500m²+).

For development that maximises development density, the current open space provision might be difficult to achieve. An example of that is the recent multi-unit development at 190 Charles Street where the 'usable open space' area cannot accommodate the required 6m diameter circle. For a single unit development on lots that maximise density provisions, compliance with the open space requirements may also be an issue. This means that while the current open space requirement reflects the spatial character and amenity of the study area, it is not tailored to reflect the maximum density and site coverage provisions. It is noted that the open space provision for the study area is the same as that for the Main Residential Zone, where the maximum density is 350m² per unit.

As a general observation, while the size of the open space is important, its quality is equally if not more important. Open space quality is determined by a range of factors such as: open space proportions and minimum dimension, its gradient, the level of sunlight access and its accessibility from the main living areas of the dwelling.

Recommendations

- Retain the current provision for single unit development.
- Amend the open space requirement for multi-unit development to a minimum area of 50m² that can accommodate a 5m diameter circle or 4.5m x 4.5m square, and which is linked to a living area of the dwelling.

4.9 FENCING

The District Plan (condition 7.29) allows for 2m high fences along all site boundaries. The condition does not include requirements for the type of fencing.

Discussion

The current provision does not reflect the general pattern of low, no or permeable front fences. It is not appropriate for the character of either sub-areas and will create poor streetscape outcomes. High fences, particularly along street frontages and open spaces do not support informal surveillance (do not allow visual connections from within the dwelling to the street/open space) and create undesirable street enclosure that is detrimental to streetscape amenity/quality.

Recommendations

- Reduce the maximum height of front fences and the visible parts of side fences (e.g. the first 3-5m from the street boundary) to 1.2m, but allow for a potential component of taller permeable fencing in situations where this is required for privacy (e.g. the development includes private open space within the front yard). Apply the same fencing provision at the boundary with the street, walkways, reserves and other public spaces.

4.10 PARKING

Chapter 61/Transportation (61.14.A/vehicle parking space) requires one vehicle parking space per unit, plus one additional vehicle parking space clear of the road between the entrance to any notional garage or carport and the road frontage. These provisions are applied consistently across all residential zones in the city.

The requirement for two on-site parking spaces creates vehicle-dominated street frontages with double garages facing the street - an issue particularly relevant for multi-unit development of terraced housing type (see comments under 4.2 above). To address this, an amendment to the parking requirement to a single on-site parking space would be helpful.

Recommendation

- Consider reducing the parking provision to a single parking space per unit.

4.11 MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The District Plan defines multi-unit residential development as development comprised of two or more household units, regardless of the building typology. New multi-unit development in the Northern Residential Zone is a controlled activity provided that it complies with the relevant standards and terms in the zone's Activity Table and Condition Table. Council's discretion is over matters referred to in Rule 7.16, including the assessment criteria in Chapter 12.

Chapter 12 (Residential Environment assessment criteria) includes assessment criteria for multi-unit development (section 3). These criteria cover some of the key matters associated with multi-unit development. However, the criteria are general, rather than specific, and do not provide a robust assessment framework and/or a clear guidance on the expected outcomes. These criteria are relevant to resource consent applications for discretionary or non-complying activities only. Therefore, they are not applicable to the Northern Residential Zone where resource consent applications for multi-unit development are a controlled activity, unless the development breaches some of the standards, and as a result, becomes a discretionary activity.



Recent multi-unit development 190 Charles Street, Westshore

The review of recent resource consents showed that multi-unit developments in the Northern Residential Area are limited in number and comprise primarily small-scale 2-unit developments, most of which are stand-alone dwellings. The review also showed that these developments did not involve any significant breaches of the current standards.

However, this might not be the case for large-scale developments that utilise the full development potential allowed by the current provisions. This is especially relevant in light of the controlled activity status of such developments and the absence of robust assessment criteria to effectively manage the full range of potential effects. Some of the existing larger multi-unit developments highlight this issue.

Recommendations

- Retain the 'controlled activity' status for multi-unit development for up to 3 units, but change it to 'restricted discretionary' activity for development of more than 3 units.
- Review the current assessment criteria for multi-unit development to comprehensively address the full range of issues associated with that type of development and apply them to both controlled and discretionary activity proposals.
- Consider including an Appendix⁵ to the assessment criteria that outlines the area-specific character and amenity features of the Northern Residential Zone. This is to provide context for and facilitate the application of the neighbourhood character assessment criteria. Similar Appendices could be developed for the remaining character amenity areas to assist the interpretation of the assessment criteria relative to the specific context and character of the individual residential areas.
- Require resource consent applications for new multi-unit development to provide: (a) an appraisal of the surrounding streetscape character and explain how the proposal has applied the assessment criteria to respond to that character; and (b) a landscape plan showing hard and soft landscape features.

■ ⁵ A good example of using area-specific descriptions of local character (in the form of appendices) to supplement the general design guidelines for multi-unit development is the Residential Design Guide in the Wellington City District Plan.

5 APPENDICES

5.1 APPENDIX 1: RECENT RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS: SUMMARY TABLE

The summary table below was prepared by Napier City Council.

BATTERY ROAD

No multi-unit developments.

Infill Subdivisions

Address	Date	Proposed lot size	Number of units	General characteristics	Provisions breached
35 Battery Road	February 2016	Lot 1 - 529m ² (existing dwelling) Lot 2 - 300m ² (vacant rear lot)	2	Creation of a vacant rear lot only	None - Controlled activity
68 Battery Road	December 2017	Lot 1 - 680m ² (existing dwelling constructed in 1977) Lot 2 - 253m ² vacant lot with-frontage	2	Concept plan for an apartment provided. Lot 1 to also accommodate a Pilates studio and supplementary unit	None - Controlled activity

WESTSHORE

Multi-Unit Development

Address	Date of consent	Number of units	General characteristics	Provisions breached
83 The Esplanade	February 2013	2	2 x two storey houses	Open space
47 Charles Street	June 2014	2	One additional dwelling	Compliant (Controlled activity)
1/31 Meeanee Quay	March 2015	2	Two double storey town houses	Onsite manoeuvring and vehicle access onto a State Highway Site Coverage (52%) Yard (0.6m from eaves only) Height in relation to boundary
190 Charles Street	March 2016	4	Attached dwellings, two-storey three bedroom units. Each unit has an integrated double garage at ground floor	Site coverage (by only 2.34m ²) HIRTB
168 Charles	August 2016	2	Additional two storey dwelling	HIRTB

Address	Date of consent	Number of units	General characteristics	Provisions breached
Street			near the front of the site. Small portion of roof eaves and spouting HIRTB infringement	

Infill Subdivisions

Address	Date	Proposed lot size	Number of units	General characteristics	Provisions breached
76 The Esplanade	July 2012	Lot 1 – 463m ² Lot 2 – 388m ² Lot 3 – 318m ²	3		
23 The Esplanade	August 2012	Lot 1 – 339m ² Lot 2 – 367m ²	2		
83 The Esplanade	January 2013	Lot 1 – 422m ² Lot 2 – 343m ²	2		
70 The Esplanade	November 2014	Lot 1 – 486m ² Lot 2 – 298m ²	2		
82 Meeanee Quay	October 2017	Lot 1 – 153m ² Lot 2 – 149m ²	2 x two storey attached townhouses	Relied on existing use rights from previous building on the site (Fish and chip shop)	Landscaping Open Space Site coverage Maximum height HIRTB
17 Ferguson Avenue	July 2012	Lot 1- 466m ² Lot 2 – 402m ²	2 x two storey attached townhouses/duplex facing the street		
25 Pukeko Place	June 2013				
47 Charles Street	June 2014	Lot 1 – 506m ² Lot 2 – 509m ²	2	Compliant	Compliant
1/9 Meeanee	December 2015				

Address	Date	Proposed lot size	Number of units	General characteristics	Provisions breached
Quay					
168 Charles Street	August 2016				
3/190 Charles Street					
83 Charles Street	May 2017	Lot 1 - 393m ² (new vacant lot) Lot 2 - 910m ² (769m ² net) (existing 2 storey dwelling)	1 additional vacant lot	Compliant vacant lot subdivision	None controlled activity -
170 Charles Street	February 2018	Lot 1 – 501m ² Lot 2 - 587m ² (502m ² net)	2 vacant sites	Removal of existing dwelling and garage to enable vacant lot subdivision	None controlled activity –
21A Ferguson Avenue	June 2018				