

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

4 JUNE 2014

AGENDA ITEM C1

FEATHERSTON TOWN CENTRE

Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the development of the Featherston Town Centre

Recommendations

Officers recommend that Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Approve placement of the donated Trust House liquor store building on the site of the Featherston Town centre, set back but facing Fitzherbert St.*
3. *That a landscape architect be retained to advise on the best location for the donated building.*
4. *Approve the construction of a landscaped "hard surface" area as described in the attached draft plan and undertake further consultation on the design with Featherston Community Board and the public.*
5. *Set aside the balance of the land as shown in the attached plan for commercial development.*

1. Executive Summary

Council resolved at its meeting of 26 June 2013 to swap 1064 sqm land owned by SWDC and leased to Trusthouse with 1082 sqm land owned by Trusthouse.

Trusthouse donated the old bottlestore building to the Featherston Menz shed organisation.

Council sought feedback on options for the site, the draft proposal included locating the donated bottlestore building on the newly acquired site, a hard surface "form up" area in the vicinity of the donated building and skatepark and this area to be appropriately landscaped. The feedback also sought input into the usage of the balance of the land.

2. Discussion

Of 1,200 feedback forms circulated to Featherston urban and rural residents, 150 were returned.

In general terms, the feedback indicated support for the donated building to be located on that site, for a hard surface landscaped area, and commercial development.

The following tables summarise the feedback received:

To the question "do you support the suggested town square?"	Percent
For	58%
Against	38%
Don't know	3%
Other	1%

To the question relating to the positioning of the donated building:	Percent
On the proposed site	39.2%
On Fox St	17.3%
Community Centre	8.5%
Other Location	16%
Against Donated building	16%
Can't establish	3%

The analysis of the feedback forms is that there is support for the town square development, and that the preferred site for the donated building is the town square development.

Further analysis of the feedback highlighted a preference for:	Percent
The original proposal	40%
Commercial	32%
Park/Town Square	20%
No other option stated	5%
Sell	2%
Community/Visitor Centre/Library	1%

The Featherston Community Board considered the feedback data and resolved:

FCB2014/39	<p>FCB RESOLVED (FCB 2014/39) to recommend to Council that the next step for Council is to consult with the Featherston community before any decision is made regarding the Town Centre and Menz Shed location. (Moved Beattie/Seconded Carter) Carried</p> <p>Cr Robertson voted against this motion. Mr Thomas voted against this motion.</p>
FCB2014/40	<p>FCB RESOLVED (FCB 2014/40) to recommend to Council that a partnership be formed with the Featherston Community Board and that the Community Board is consulted on all aspects of the Featherston Town Square. (Moved Carter/Seconded Beattie) Carried</p> <p>Cr Robertson voted against this motion.</p>

There is a level of urgency in that Trusthouse do need the donated building moved from its current location shortly.

3. The Proposal

As described in the draft plan it is proposed:

- The donated building face Fitzherbert St and be set back as far as appropriate, which will allow for the hard surface to also utilise some of the space between the donated building and Fitzherbert St.
 - The donated building is currently a retail building and will fit in well with the balance of the scheme, and could easily revert to a commercial building if the need arises.
- The hard surface be formed and landscaped following further consultation.
- The balance of the site, approximately 1,300 sqm be made available for commercial development

4. District Plan and Good Town Planning Protocols Analysis

All of the land shown in the picture has a commercial zoning under the District Plan.

An overlay exists on the land covered by the Clifford Square Management Plan identifying it as a public reserve. This identification has no statutory effects under the DP, it is simply identification. The commercial zoning allows the use of the land it covers for a wide range of activities, but it promotes commercial use and development as its primary purpose. The

indicative shops (Numbered 1 to 7) shown on the plan would be fully consistent with that purpose.

Care needs to be taken though insofar as any shops have to meet the development standards set out in the DP for commercial activities, this including provision of parking and heritage design. Because the development is adjacent to a state highway, particular emphasis would be placed on the parking (location and number provided) and access to those spaces. NZTA would probably claim to be an affected party because of this. Some consultation with NZTA would be required even if they were not deemed an affected party.

With regard to the heritage provisions, I do not see a major issue as the land is bare at present. Suitable conceptual designs for a new building(s) can be readily achieved for consent purposes under the DP heritage provisions by a properly trained designer in liaison with Planning staff. This could be a design that clearly reflects heritage designs or even approval to depart completely from a heritage design and provide something entirely new, innovative and highly appealing.

The placement of the Menz Shed further back from the frontage with the SH is a good compromise in terms of maintaining a retail look along the road frontage while enabling it to be close to other community facilities such as the skate park and new square. It would also facilitate the formation of the square in front of it through to the highway much as with the original concept. In fact the new Menz Shed location opens up the possibility of the shops and it enclosing the square and so giving it a definite form and sense of place. It would also enable a shop design whereby the square could be utilised e.g. for cafes with outdoor areas. The commercial building could potentially (through careful design) be used to manage the impact of wind on the area and make it a place to go to for social and commercial reasons. Featherston would benefit from the development of an overall commercial centre (heart) for the town. The revised proposal goes a long way on that front by promoting commercial development with a related public space (the square) aligned with it. This is supported by the DP as well (linked public and private use).

If Council was so inclined, the design of the new square could be used to link the streetscape together as well by carrying the pavement form out of the square and along both sides of Fitzherbert St in that block. These design elements could extend beyond the footpath pavement to landscaping and street lights to provide a more cohesive overall design. This would greatly reinforce a sense of place and the feel of a town centre.

Lastly on the commercial side of things, the other end of the shops could also offer an opportunity to "get rid of the wooden fence" that has been erected as the new supermarket is built. Again, if Council could reach agreement with the Trust the shops could be designed on that side to "open out" onto that carpark to create some connectivity between the two sites. This would mean all the new shops (as depicted on the plan) could be designed on a three frontage basis, a highly desirable outcome for a commercial site.

With respect to the Clifford Square Reserve Management Plan, this is a separate statutory document which sets out the aims of Council and the community for the future development of the reserve. It also sets out various policies and methods to achieve those aims. The proposed new placement of the Menz Shed means it is partially on Councils freehold commercial land and partially on the reserve (the land is all still zoned commercial in the DP though). This might mean a small adjustment to the Clifford Square RMP is required although looking at the concept plan, the intrusion is minor and does not require any special provision.

5. Financial Implications

The building has been donated, and the Menz shed organisation has indicated it will undertake site placement.

In terms of landscaping the hardsurface area and other areas adjacent to the site, these could be funded from a mix of existing budgets, reserve funds, and grants.

The landscape architect costs are estimated to be \$1,500 from existing budgets.

If approved as a commercial development, lease and set up costs would be borne from existing budgets.

6. Appendix

Appendix 1 – Potential Featherston Town Square Scheme

Contact Officer: Paul Crimp, Chief Executive

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Town Square