



SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Kia Reretahi Tātau

Agenda

ORDER PAPER FOR AN ORDINARY MEETING TO BE HELD

**Waihinga Centre, Texas Street
Martinborough**

&

Via audio-visual conference

ON

14 July 2022

MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR

Mr Alex Beijen

Deputy Mayor Garrick Emms

Cr P Colenso
Cr R Fox
Cr L Hay
Cr B Jephson

Cr P Maynard
Cr A Plimmer
Cr B West
Cr C Olds

**RECOMMENDATIONS IN REPORTS ARE NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS
COUNCIL POLICY UNTIL ADOPTED BY COUNCIL**



SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING
Agenda 14 July 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING

This meeting will be held in the Supper Room, Waihinga Centre, 62 Texas Street, Martinborough and via audio-visual conference, commencing at 9.00am. All members participating via audio-visual conference will count for the purpose of the meeting quorum in accordance with clause 25B of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act 2002. This meeting will be livestreamed and available to view on our [YouTube channel](#).

SWDC Affirmation

We pledge that we will faithfully and impartially use our skill, wisdom and judgement throughout discussions and deliberations ahead of us today in order to make responsible and appropriate decisions for the benefit of the South Wairarapa district at large.

We commit individually and as a Council to the principles of integrity and respect, and to upholding the vision and values we have adopted in our Long Term Plan strategic document in order to energise, unify and enrich our district.

Open Section

- A1.** Apologies
- A2.** Conflicts of interest
- A3.** Acknowledgements and tributes
- A4.** Public participation

As per standing order 14.17 no debate or decisions will be made at the meeting on issues raised during the forum unless related to items already on the agenda.

Please note: Electioneering is not permitted in council meetings or on council premises – your cooperation is appreciated.

If electioneering is deemed to be taking place, the Chair of the meeting or council officers will bring your session to a close.

- A5.** Actions from public participation
- A6.** Extraordinary business – Refer to Item B2 and B3.

B Decision Reports from Chief Executive and Staff

- | | | |
|------------|--|---------------------|
| B1. | Featherston – Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document Report | Pages 1-35 |
| B2. | Three Waters – Submission to Select Committee Report | <i>To be tabled</i> |
| B3. | Recommendations from Assets and Services Committee Report | <i>To be tabled</i> |

AGENDA ITEM B1

FEATHERSTON – MASTERPLAN FOUNDATION DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

Purpose of Report

To seek endorsement for the attached Draft Featherston Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document to be publicly notified for informal community and stakeholder feedback.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the Draft Featherston Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document July 2022.*
2. *Approve the Featherston Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document July 2022 for informal public consultation, subject to any amendments.*

1. Executive Summary

The Council prioritised and approved the development of a Featherston Masterplan following the adoption of its District Spatial Plan in 2021. Featherston has been identified as a town suitable for transit-oriented development in the District Spatial Plan and in the Wellington Regional Growth Framework (2021). More recently, it has also been identified by the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee as a Complex Development Opportunity (CDO). It has been identified as a CDO for a range of reasons including being in a key location to achieve strategic objectives and the need for partnerships to ensure delivery of outcomes.

The preparation of a Foundation Discussion Document is the first stage of developing the masterplan for Featherston. This includes gathering evidence to underpin the masterplan and engaging with hapū/iwi, the community and stakeholders to hear their views.

Since 30 March 22, the council has undertaken the following engagement with hapū/iwi and the community:

- Held an Online public meeting 30 March 2022

- Engagement with representatives of Pae tū Mokai o Taurira. This included meetings in person and online. It also included a Pae tū Mokai o Taurira representative engaging directly with Māori residents to seek their views on the future of Featherston.
- Discussion Featherston Knitting Group - 29 April
- Discussion with Booktown representative - 23 May
- Discussion with Fareham House Creative Space -26 May
- Meeting with Five Trails Trust - 26 May
- Discussion with Powerco - 31 May
- Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)/Fab Feathy meeting - 1 June
- Meeting with Wairarapa Moana Trail – 7 June

This engagement has assisted in understanding the challenges and opportunities facing Featherston, together with community aspirations. Three challenges and opportunities have been identified as follows and included in the Foundation Discussion Document:

- creating a pleasant town centre along the main street which also serves as a state highway;
- ensuring that there is capacity for growth, with associated infrastructure; and
- protecting what is valued (such as family living/lifestyle options) while enabling intensification, choice and change.

A draft vision has been developed in the Foundation Discussion Document and included for feedback:

Draft Vision: ‘A strong and caring community where there is a place for everyone’

Additionally, Council staff and its advisers have engaged with Central Government/Crown and regional agencies including Kainga Ora, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD), Waka Kotahi, KiwiRail, Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), and Wellington Water. This has included a Design Charette in late April 2022 to assist in formulating high level the masterplan concept options.

These draft concept options were reviewed by Mike Cullen, UrbaCity from an economic perspective in June 2022. They have since been refined and are outlined in section 2 of this report.

In brief, two concept options, together with advantages and disadvantages are being put forward for the Council’s consideration:

- Concept option 1 is to have an area of intensification around the existing train station and existing Town Centre

- Concept option 2 is a proposal to move the rail station nearer to the town centre and intensify around a combined town centre and rail station.

Both options suggest areas for a town centre zone, mixed use zone, general residential zone, and some larger lot development at the edge of the town.

2. Discussion

2.1 Masterplan Concept Plan Options

Three high level concept options were an outcome of the agency charette held in April 2022. One of these options (Option 3) looked at whether or not it would be practical or feasible to have the town centre located next to the existing rail station. This option was ruled out after an economic review of the intensification options by Mike Cullen, UrbaCity. This review concluded that moving the *“town centre would lose direct regional access to the regions”* that the existing location of the town centre is on a movement network and that such networks are *“fundamental to urban commerce”*. He concluded that *“moving of the town centre is not a realistic option”*.

Two options (see below) are therefore being put forward for Council’s consideration.

Option 1 (Intensification around the existing town centre and existing rail station) and Option 2 (Moving the existing rail station nearer to the existing town centre and intensifying around both).

A summary of advantages and disadvantages of each option is included below. Concept maps are included in the attached Draft Featherston Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document.

Ree Anderson Consulting Ltd and Richard Knott Ltd, who are assisting council with the development of the masterplan will be available online at the council meeting.

2.1.1. **Concept option 1: Intensification around the existing town centre and existing rail station**

2.1.2. Advantages	2.1.3. Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses existing infrastructure and may be the most cost-effective option • Is on key movement networks providing access to regions and is a driver for urban commerce • Takes account of current investment in the town centre and rail station • Enables diversity of densities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The train station and commercial activity are separate, and this may reduce those commuters who do not reside in Featherston from spending at local shops- they may only use the park n ride • The existing rail station has no built attributes that would attract density • Immediate proximity to the rail station may not be a factor driving intensification because the rail

- Looks to make better use of existing urban land and does not encourage the development of general or medium density development beyond the existing established boundaries of the town.

station is generally within a walkable catchment across much of Featherston

- The rail line is used for freight, and this may have a negative impact on amenity
- The State Highways are used by large vehicles, and this may have a negative impact on amenity
- Requires a range of measures to make the town centre more pleasant for people (e.g., traffic calming etc)

2.1.4 Move the train station to be near the town centre and intensify around both

2.1.5 Advantages	2.1.6 Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the existing infrastructure of the town centre • Is more aligned to transit oriented development (TOD) principles where urban centres and public transport operate together • Takes account of current investment in the town centre and rail station and encourages additional investment in the town centre • Enables diversity of densities and may inspire a greater desire to intensify • Looks to make better use of existing urban land and does not encourage the development of general or medium density development beyond the existing established boundaries of the town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KiwiRail has identified that this is likely to be a costly option and may require land purchase; they seek a feasibility study be undertaken • There may be technical issues associated with locating the train station in the town centre, which could have knock on effects which could impact on vehicle, pedestrian and cycle movement in the town centre area (for instance duration that barriers are closed across the State Highways) • Requires a range of measures to make the town centre more pleasant for people (e.g., traffic calming etc) • Potential loss of a section of commercial land for new train station

2.2 Consultation

It is proposed that the concept options be consulted on prior to developing the more detailed masterplan. This will include an online survey; the opportunity to fill in hardcopy of the survey and “drop in” centre consultation. It will also allow further engagement with hapū/iwi and central government agencies.

Formal consultation is proposed to occur under the Local Government Act 2002 once the preferred concept option has been finalised and a detailed masterplan developed around the preferred option.

2.3 Legal Implications

There are no known legal implications as the Draft Featherston Foundation Discussion Document is being proposed to be consulted on.

2.4 Financial Considerations

The Featherston Masterplan has been budgeted for in the Council’s LTP.

3. Supporting Information

3.1 Long Term Plan - Community Outcomes

The Featherston Masterplan has been identified as a priority within the Long Term Plan and aligns to delivering on all LTP outcomes.

3.2 Treaty of Waitangi

Pae tū Mokai o Tauria representatives have been engaged in developing the Foundation Discussion Document. It is anticipated that others including Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust will be engaged through this informal consultation process.

4. Conclusion

The Featherston community is a highly engaged community and has taken a keen interest in the development of the masterplan through the various established networks. The public notification of the Foundation Discussion Document, for further informal feedback provides additional opportunity to hear community and stakeholder views.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Featherston Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document, June 2022

Appendix 2 –UrbaCity Economic Review Report by Mike Cullen

Contact Officer: Kendyll Harper, Intermediate Planner

Reviewed By: Russell O’Leary, Group Manager Planning and Environment

**Appendix 1 – Draft Featherston
Masterplan Foundation Discussion
Document, June 2022**

Draft Featherston – Masterplan Foundation Discussion Document – July 2022



FEATHERSTON MASTERPLAN

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF FEATHERSTON

PREPARED BY REE ANDERSON CONSULTING LTD AND RICHARD KNOTT LTD IN COLLABORATION WITH SWDC, IWI, CENTRAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND THE COMMUNITY

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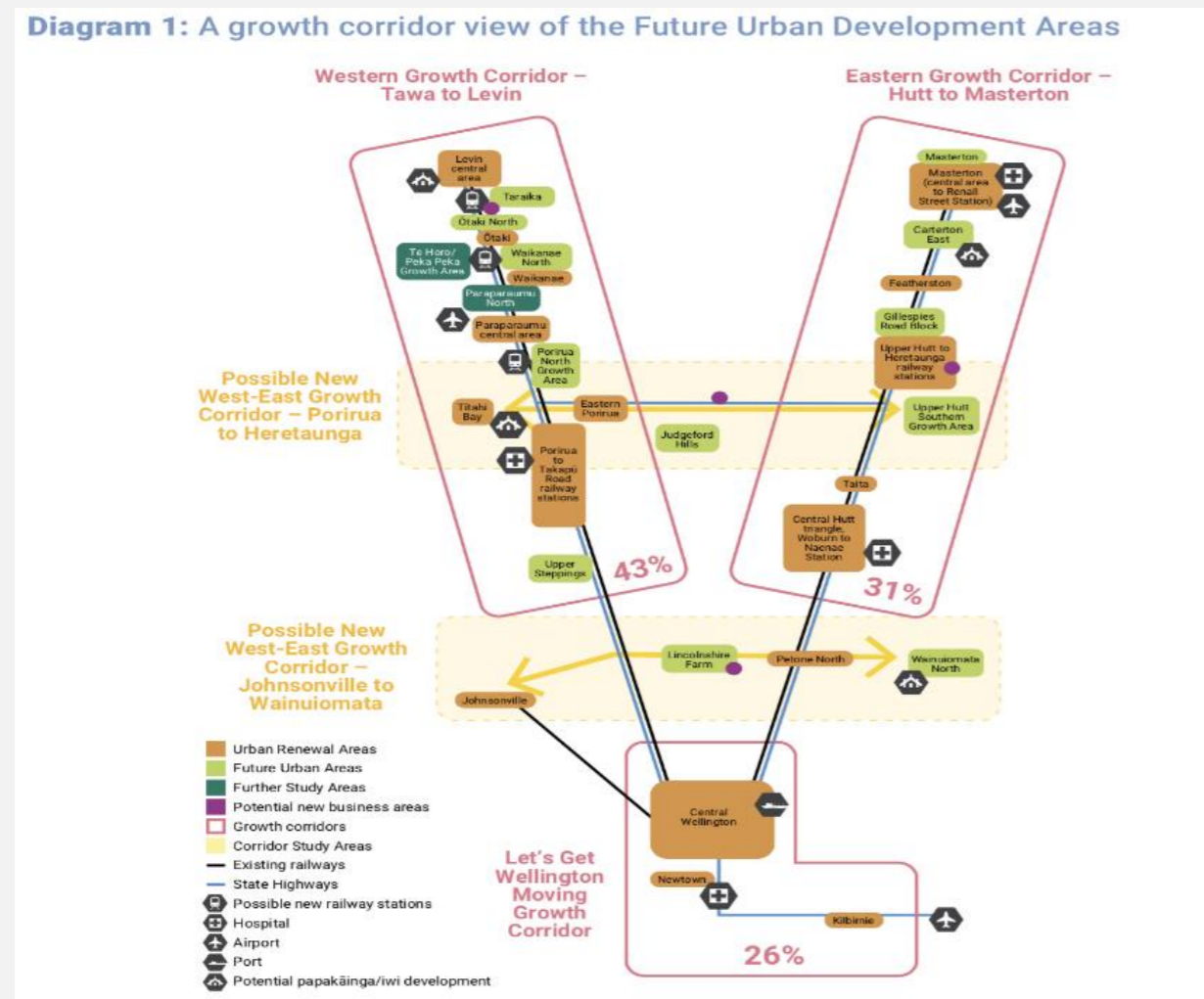
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1.0 Tāhuhu Kōrero | Introduction

On 8 December 2021, after community, iwi and stakeholder engagement, the Council finalised and adopted the South Wairarapa Spatial Plan-Step 1 Residential Growth Areas.¹ This Plan sets the long term direction for the district - protecting what is valued by the community while also enabling change, growth and new opportunities. The District's Spatial Plan took account of national and regional directions including being guided by the National Policy Statement - Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD), the Greater Wellington Regional Growth Framework (GWRG) and Regional Policy Statement.

One outcome of the South Wairarapa Spatial Plan is the identification of Featherston as a Future Growth Node - referred to as an Urban Renewal Area in the Greater Regional Growth Framework.

Featherston is located in the Eastern Growth Corridor Hutt to Masterton in the Regional Growth Framework. One third of the Greater Wellington region's population growth is expected to be accommodated in this corridor. See Diagram 1 below:



Through the Council's district spatial plan process Featherston has been prioritised as the first town in South Wairarapa to be masterplanned.

Masterplanning includes developing a plan for Featherston that integrates transport, housing, recreation reserves, infrastructure, community facilities, land use patterns, iwi, and community aspirations.

The masterplan will build on existing work such as the work of Pae tū Mōkai o Tairā, Fab Feathy, the Wairarapa Gateway Business Group, the Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy, the sports hub, Booktown, and will include mana whenua and community input as well as the involvement of central and regional government agencies and neighbouring councils.

This draft Foundation Discussion Document, which we want your feedback on, captures work undertaken and views received so far that can help shape the masterplan for Featherston. Work that has been undertaken to date includes:

- Featherston site visits and walkovers
- Meetings with:
 - Chair of Māori Standing Committee (MSC)
 - Chair MSC and Mana Whenua
 - Pae Tū Mōkai o Tairā
 - Chair Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy
 - Council Staff
 - Kainga Ora
 - Fab Feathy
 - Featherston Knitting Group
 - Booktown
 - Fareham House Creative Space
 - Five Trails Trust
 - Wairarapa Moana Trail Trust
 - Local businesses
 - Powerco
 - Department of internal affairs
 - KiwiRail
 - Waka Kotahi Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Informal workshop with the public
- Design Charette workshop with government agencies
- Workshop with Elected Members and Community Board Chair
- Foundation Discussion Document released for feedback

¹ See: <https://swdc.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/1.-South-Wairarapa-Spatial-Plan.pdf>

The **South Wairarapa Spatial Plan** has identified the growth area for Featherston, (See Map 1).

The Spatial Plan highlights that development can take advantage of the opportunity that the presence of the rail station provides, allowing transit oriented development close to the rail station; that is higher residential densities within the 5-10 min walk of the rail station.

However, residential growth and development is intended to also include different densities with lower densities further away from the rail station.

Account has also been taken of densities near schools where families may live and walking school bus options as well as proximity to the main street.

Varying densities will allow a range of housing types to meet the different needs of families, commuters, older and younger people. We are looking to hear your feedback on these densities and provide further information further on in this report.

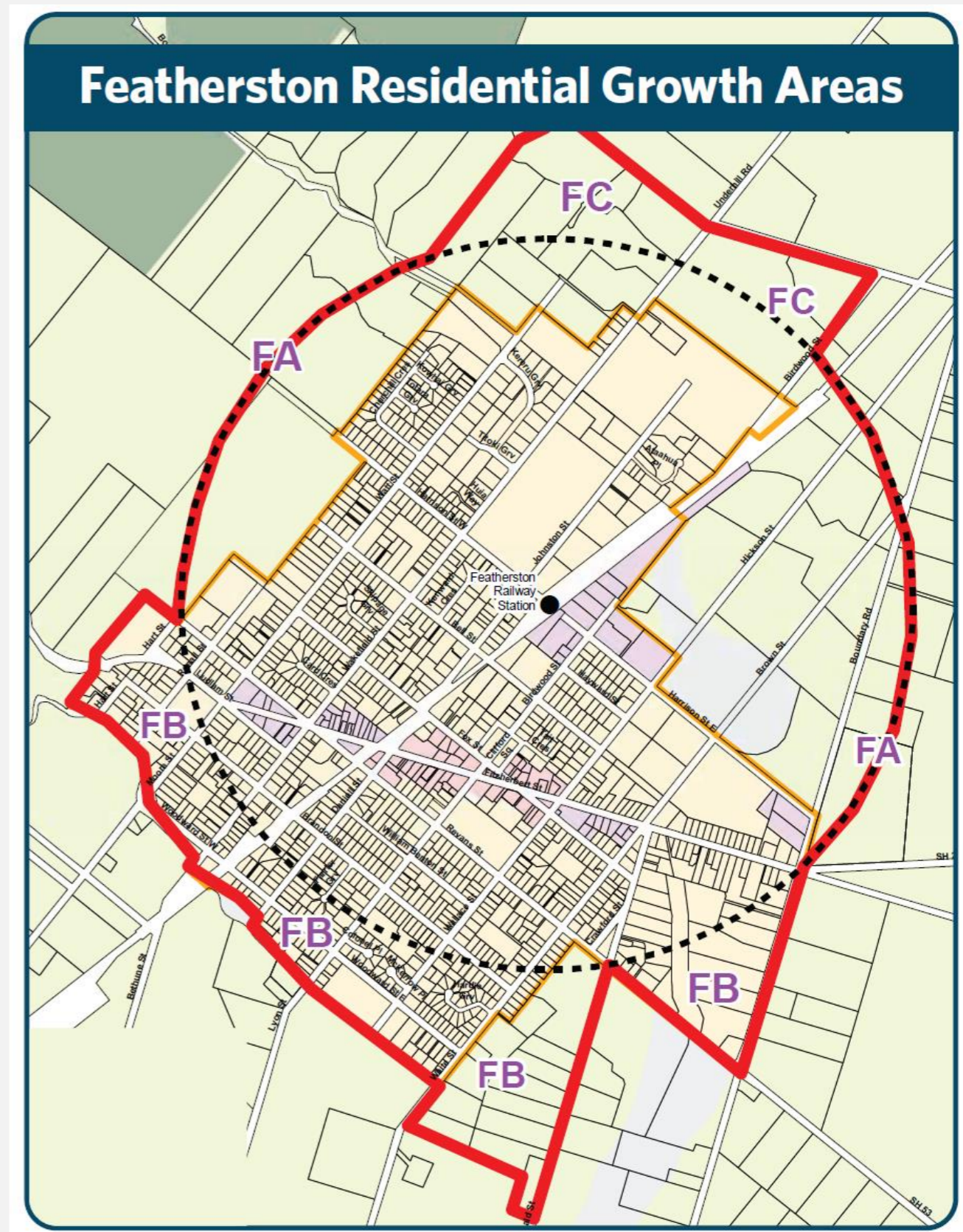
Enabling choice and respecting character are two key urban design principles that communities in South Wairarapa seek as they accommodate population growth.

On the 31 May, Featherston was approved by the **Wellington Regional Leadership Committee** as one of seven **Complex Development Opportunities** (CDO's) for the Wellington Region. CDO's are projects that have a special partnership arrangement with central government agencies which are needed as:

- Have the potential to deliver significant housing and other benefits to the region
- Especially support the objectives of the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee (WRLC)
- Are in key locations where successful development gives effect to those agreed strategic objectives
- Are complex and working in partnership is required to deliver at the desired pace and scale.

With Featherston being a CDO, there will be greater ability to engage with central government and its agencies to align work programmes so that there is an integrated implementation plan to deliver the masterplan.

Map 1: Featherston Growth Node (Urban Renewal Area)



2.0 Horopaki | Context

2.1 Tangata Whenua Our Vision

Local iwi are Ngāti Kahungunu and Rangitāne –

Based on initial conversations undertaken through a Pae Tū Mōkai o Tauria representative, Māori residents seek to have a connected and strong community. This includes support for older persons and rangatahi (youth). The restoration of the Wairarapa Moana (a taonga with immense significance to local hapu) is strongly supported together with the Moana being connected to Featherston township through the planned multipurpose trail. Being connected to nature and having easy access to fishing, diving, the ocean, beaches, trees, birdlife, and open spaces is also highly valued.

Like other residents, the local sports hub, swimming pool, Booktown, and other amenities such as the library are seen to be important attributes making Featherston an attractive place to live. There are concerns though with the adequacy of water infrastructure, flooding, street lighting, the state of footpaths, and the safety, look and function of the main street.

There is an opportunity to enable greater participation of local hapu, in the development of Featherston, so that going forward there is a tangible presence of ‘taha Māori’ (things Māori) in the town.

This is in keeping with Policy 1(a) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) that states that a well-functioning urban environment should at a minimum have or enable a variety of homes that should at a minimum *‘(ii) enable Māori to express their cultural traditions and norms’*.

Q1. Tell us how you would like to see a greater Māori presence in the township?

2.2 Our People and Our Vision

One of Featherston’s great strengths is its sense of community.

Fab Feathy is a community led partnership with the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) which facilitates community development in Featherston.

In 2016 and 2017, they assisted with the development of the community plan “Our Future Featherston” identifying a range of projects and initiatives to build on the strengths of the community. The community vision is to *“fully realise the potential we can see that Featherston is bursting with while retaining and enhancing what makes our town and community distinctive and great.”*

To understand what to focus on next, in June 2022 Fab Feathy completed a survey asking the community what was working well, why Featherston is great and what would make Featherston even better. The themes that have emerged through this survey have been echoed through our recent engagement with the community via an online workshop and questionnaire as well as discussions with Featherston business owners, representatives from Booktown, Fareham House Creative Space, Wairarapa Moana Trail, Five Trails Trust, and many others.

We’ve continued to hear that what makes Featherston special is its strong community, its large number of volunteers and the way that people work together to make a difference. Other themes which have come through strongly are:

- The need for town centre revitalisation and urban renewal
- Better representation, visual presence of Māori in the town
- Improved infrastructure networks
- Traffic calming and safety improvements
- Better connections in and around town, emphasis on connecting to the moana
- In terms of housing, most mentioned the need for affordable and suitable housing for residents while retaining the small-town feel. These themes guide planning for the projected growth within Featherston.

Our Draft Vision

‘A strong, caring community where there is a place for everyone’

Q2. Do you agree with our draft vision? What is your vision for Featherston?

Featherston Population

The overall population in Featherston in 2018 was 2487. In 2020, the population for Featherston was estimated at 2,615.

Projections made in 2020 anticipated that Featherston would see an additional 800 people and 428 households over 30 years, this projection has now increased to an anticipated 1730 additional people over the next 30 years. This means around 940 dwellings will be needed over this timeframe. The key drivers of population change include the increased ability to work from home and ability to commute into Wellington.

Featherston Community Profile

The 2016 Community plan – Our Future Featherston - profiled the community using the 2013 Census data. This data has been taken, and where possible, compared and updated with the 2018 Census data to help identify what characteristics may have changed in the last few years that may now help to shape this masterplan for Featherston - Paetūmōkai. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Comparing 2013 and 2018 Demographics for Featherston			
Demographic	2013	2018	What's different:
Median Age: Overall Median Age: Maori	43.4yrs	43.8yrs 25.8yrs	⌘
Ethnicity: European Ethnicity: Maori	88% 18.4%	88.9% 19.7%	⌘
Households: Avg size overall One family households Couples with children Couples without children One parent families Median weekly rent	2.2 people/hh 60.4% 32.9% 45.9% 20.8%	2.4 people/hh ? 183 312 246 \$260	The median weekly rental in has increased from \$260 in 2018 to \$485 in 2021. (Source: realestateinvestor.co.nz)
Own home	68.7%	70.1%⌘	
Formal Qualification 15yrs and over	70.3%	74.6%	This is positive change and aligns with initiatives to increase knowledge and skills to enhance overall economic prosperity (see Section 2.4)
Unemployment	10.5%	5.3%⌘	This is a significant reduction
Most common occupational group	'professionals'	'professionals' 13.4% 'technicians and trades'	Is important that key workers such as technicians and trades can afford homes in Featherston
Median personal income Income less than \$20,000 Income > \$50,000	\$23,900 44% 21%	\$25,600 37.4% 27.1%	Personal incomes have increased slightly, however house prices and rental costs have increased significantly. This is impacting on housing affordability as housing affordability is a function of household income and house price. (See section 2.3)
Travel to work private vehicle Travel by Train	56.3% 19.1%	55.9% 16.4%	
Business locations Paid employees	140 520	?	
Social Deprivation index	1060	Score between 5-10	
Access to the Internet	62.5%	79.1%	An important change as working from home; working remotely becomes a more accepted and/or desired practice; also important for businesses to have reliable and fast internet services

2.3 Our Housing

The majority of housing in Featherston was built between 1960-1969, although the earliest residential stock is recorded as being built in 1880-1889.² In terms of the quality of the housing stock (dampness, mould, basic amenities in working order), Featherston homes rate well for basic amenities, and rated moderately for mould (10% of homes had mould greater than A4 paper visible sometimes); and 16.6% of homes were considered damp (NZ Statistics 2018).

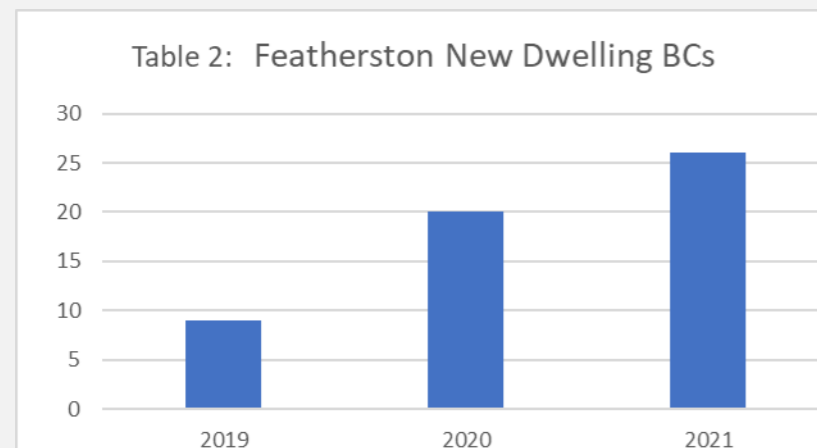
Featherston has traditionally been seen as a more affordable place to live compared to Martinborough and Greytown. However, this affordable housing quality has been changing as house prices throughout New Zealand have been rising and more people are turning to provincial districts to seek out new lifestyle options. While Graph 1 below still identifies Featherston as a more affordable option than Martinborough and Greytown, it also highlights that Featherston had the fastest growth in house prices of the 3 towns, growing 14.2% per year. The median house price in Featherston in September 2021 was \$621,850 up from \$484,100 in December 2020. Featherston is one of 10 suburbs within the Wellington region with the fastest growth in house prices.

A significant proportion (approximately 30%) of Featherston residents rent their homes, and as house prices increase so do rental costs. As noted in Table 1 above weekly rents have nearly doubled since 2018. Higher housing costs which take up more than 30-40% of a household's gross annual income puts a strain on income for other needs such as food, education and medical costs. It also means that workers on lower incomes may find it hard to find accommodation in places near to where they work.

Recent residential building consent data for Featherston shows that new dwelling building consents have more than doubled from pre-2020 to a total of 55 over the past three years. See Table 2 and map below.

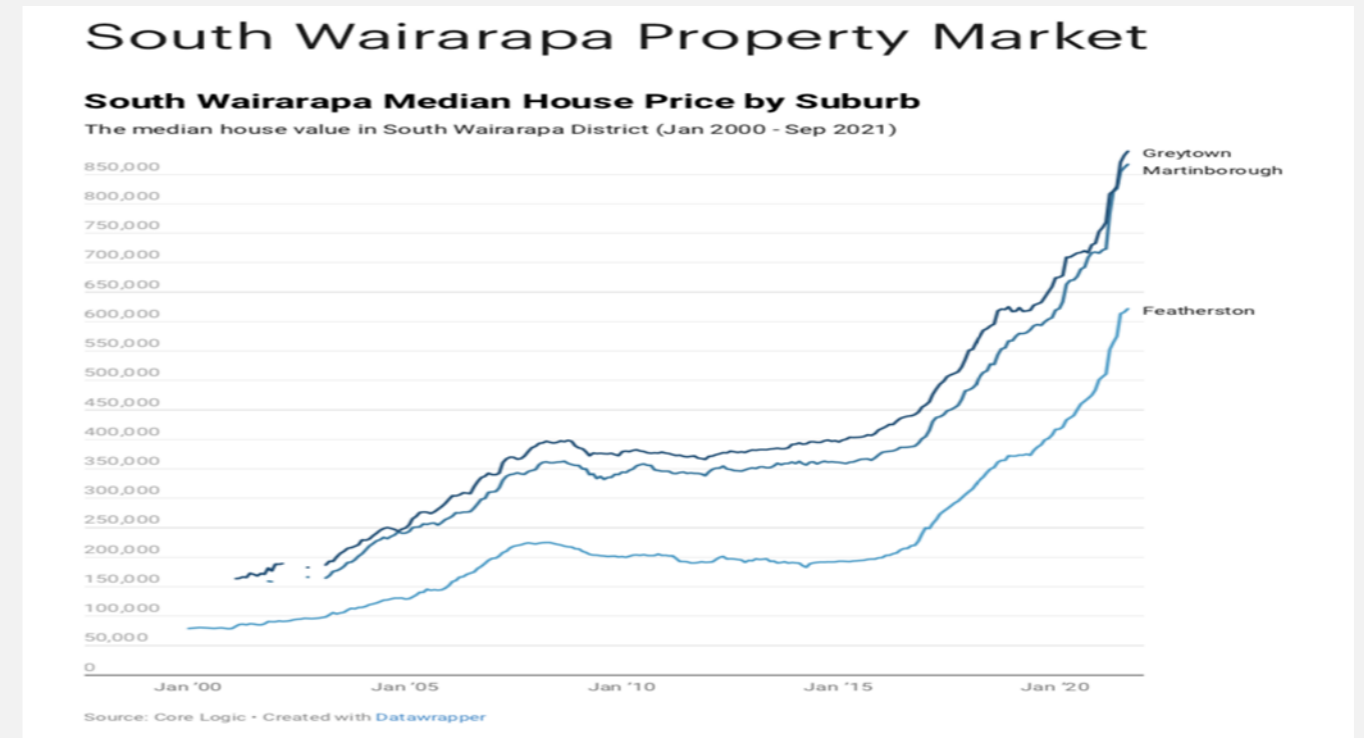
New build consents in Featherston pre-2020 sat around 5-9 new dwellings per year. In 2020, 20 new dwellings were consented and 26 in 2021. This indicates that building activity is starting to respond to the increase in demand for homes in Featherston.

52.7% of all new dwellings within the three years were transportable dwellings (29/55). Transportable dwellings are newly constructed houses that are built off site and then transported to the final location (this does not include tiny homes/relocated houses).

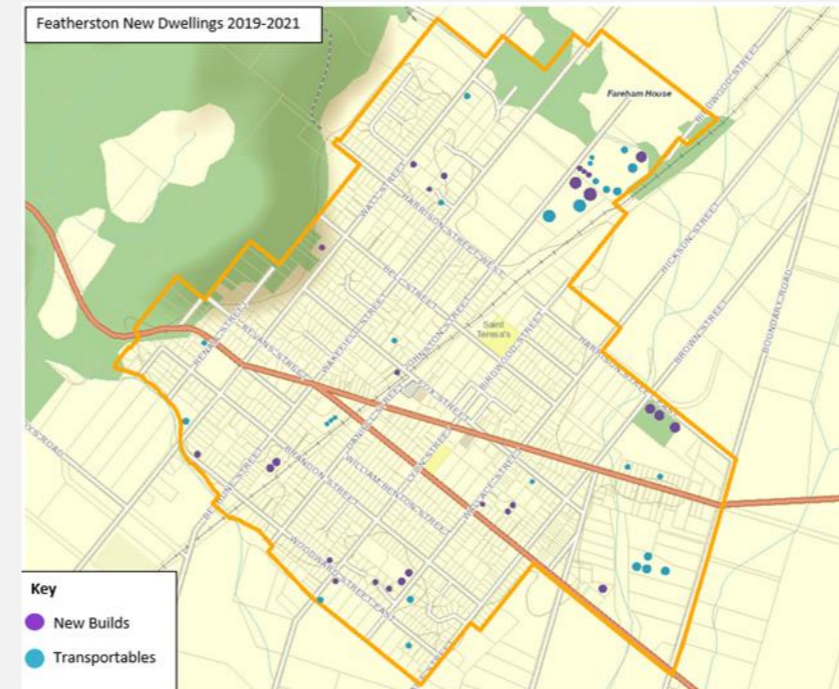


² OneRoof Suburb Profiles

Graph 1:



Map 2:



2.4 Our Economy

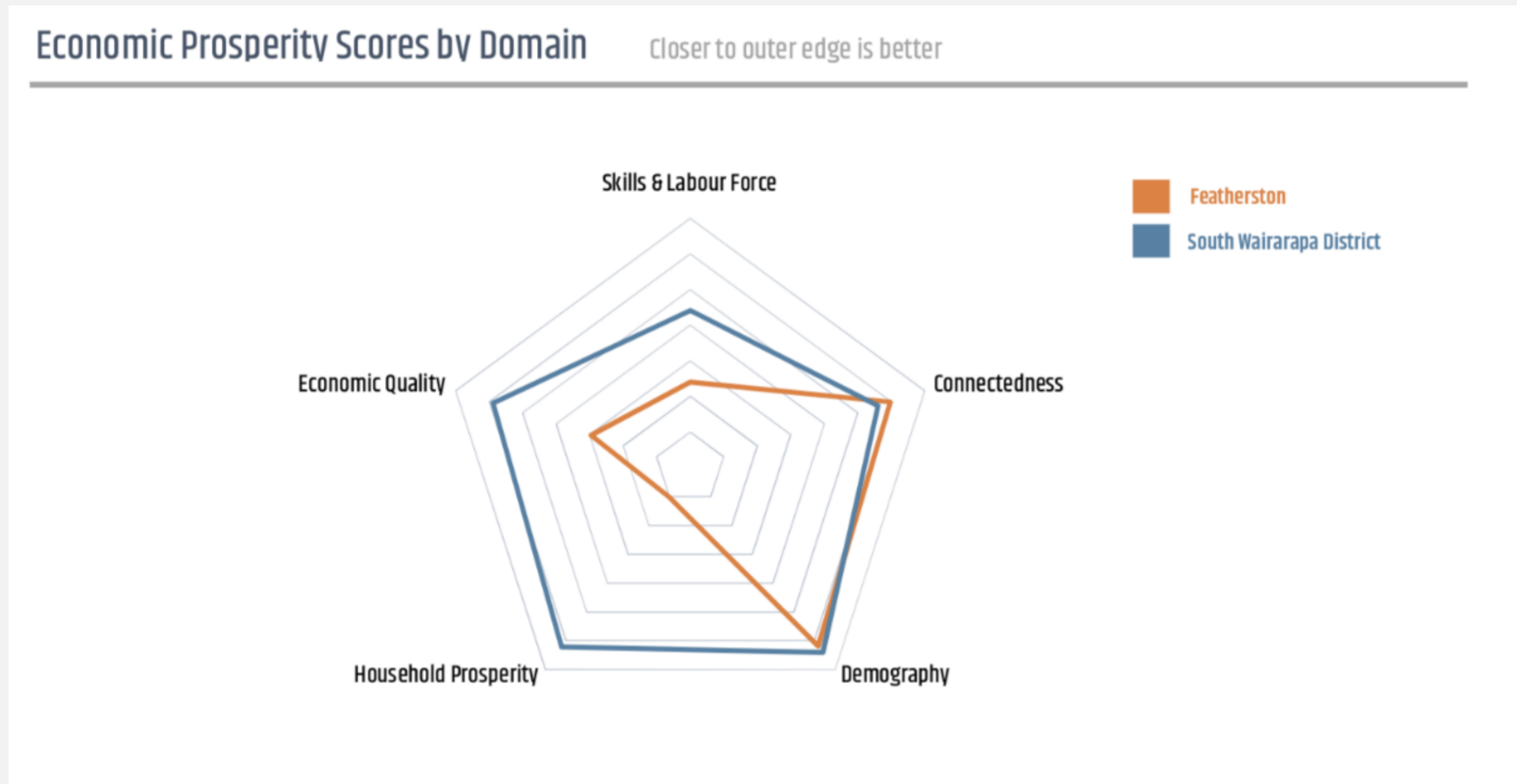
In the 1940s, Featherston was a booming rural service town, with industrial activities playing a big role in the economy. These activities included a rubber factory, chocolate factory and sawmill. The town continues to service the agricultural sector, but industrial and commercial activities are not as prominent as they once were.

Reports from Infometrics use a tool called an Economic Prosperity Index (EPI) to assess living standards. In 2018, Author at Infometrics Kelvin Davidson posted a case study: How prosperous are South Wairarapa Towns? This case study highlighted the following:

That Featherston's overall EPI score is 3.7 compared to 5.7 for South Wairarapa indicating lower overall economic prosperity Featherston however, does rate highly in the domain of connectedness, which is one factor used for measuring prosperity. *"The domain of connectedness measures access to infrastructure and services to take advantage of employment, education and business opportunities across the South Wairarapa and beyond."*

It is this potential that this masterplan intends to help unleash through transit oriented development.

Graph 2



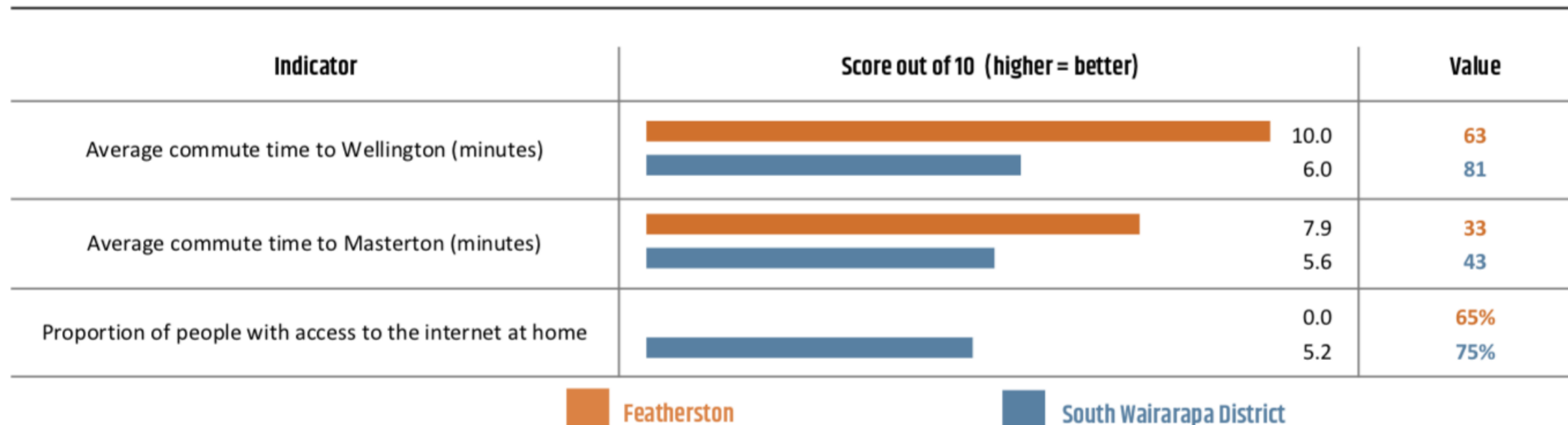
The following Graph 3 highlights indicators of connectedness for Featherston. Featherston provides opportunities for residents to live and work in Featherston as well as commute for work.

Graph 3

Connectedness

This domain measures access to infrastructure and services to take advantage of employment, education and business opportunities across the South Wairarapa District and beyond.

Connectedness indicators ranked from Featherston's best to worst



At the same time, the Infometrics reports suggest that to improve overall economic prosperity of Featherston that: *“there could be a focus on increasing the proportion employed in the knowledge and intensive industries.”* While 51% of 24-34 year olds have at least NCEA level 4 qualification this is still below other towns such as Greytown (61%). This is where initiatives such of those of Fab Feathy and the Wairarapa Economic Development Forum are integral to growing community wellbeing. At the same time, the recent interest in Featherston as a desirable and more affordable town to live will attract new talent and knowledge workers.

2.5 Our Community and Social Infrastructure

Community services is defined in the NPS-UD 2020 to include:

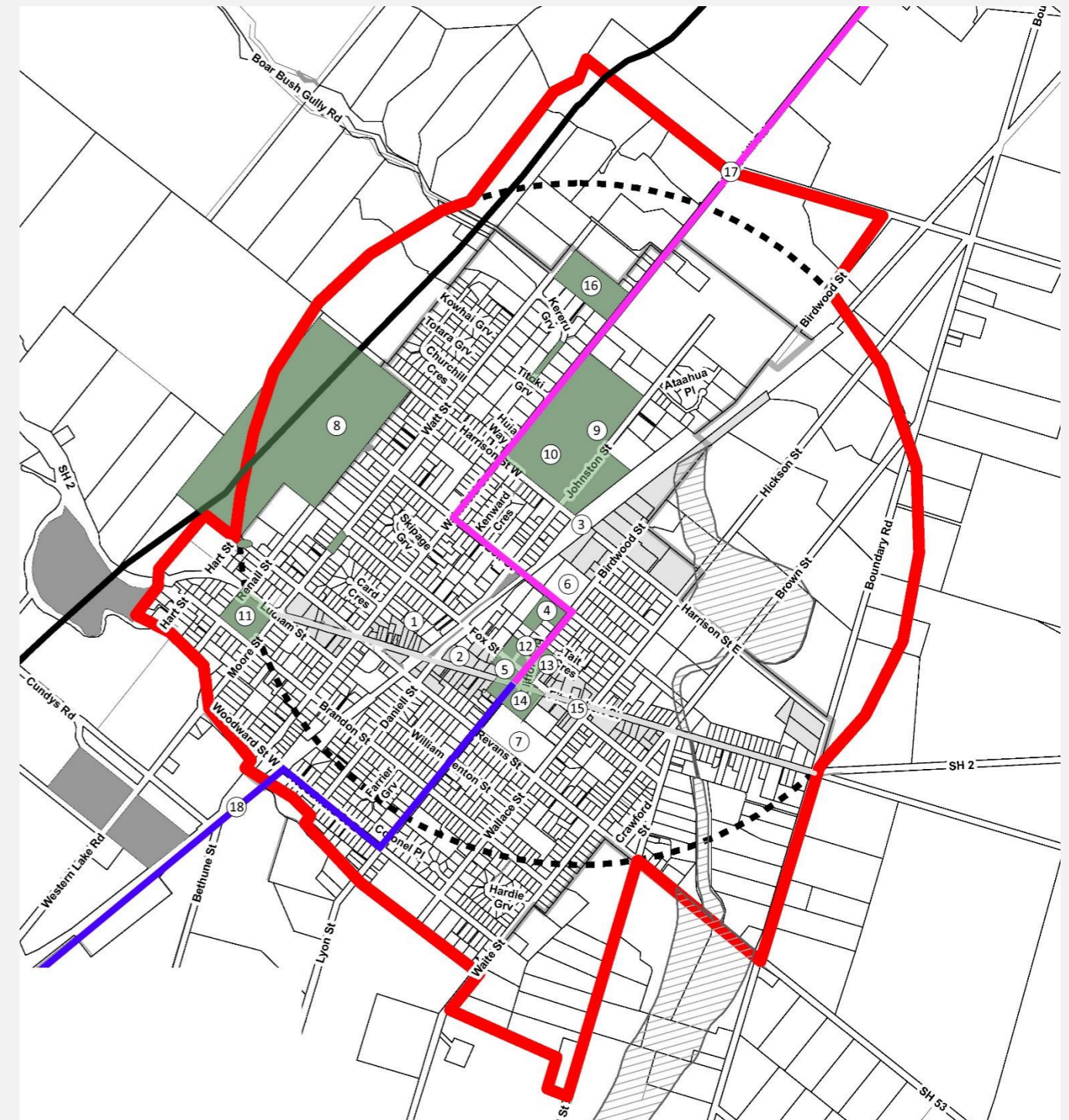
- Community facilities
- Educational facilities and
- Commercial activities that serve community needs

Map 3 identifies the current Community Services located in Featherston.

- (1) Community Centre and Medical Centre
- (2) Supermarket
- (3) Train Station
- (4) Anzac Hall and Community Emergency Hub
- (5) Town Square, Men's Shed and Skate Park
- (6) St Teresa's School
- (7) Featherston School Te Kura o Paetūmokai
- (8) Featherston Domain
- (9) Swimming Pool
- (10) Sports Stadium
- (11) Dorset Square
- (12) Mini Fell Train
- (13) Public Playground
- (14) Fell Locomotive Museum, Library, Information Centre and Bowling Club
- (15) Cenotaph, Book Shops and Antique Shops
- (16) Barr Brown Bush Reserve
- (17) Cycle Trail
- (18) Cycle Trail to Wairarapa Moana

Q3. What additional community and social infrastructure do you think Featherston needs?

Map 3 – Facilities in Featherston



Schools

In terms of educational facilities, Featherston has three primary schools, Featherston School and Saint Teresa's School are located within the township while South Featherston School is located approx. 2.5km from Featherston township. Kuranui college is the only secondary school in the District and is located in Greytown. The schools have seen stability and an overall general increase in roll numbers over the past three years. This shows the attractiveness of Featherston as a place for families to live and account has been taken of this in terms of enabling housing choice and also taking into consideration the proximity of family homes to schools where walking and cycling can be encouraged.

Kuranui College is located in Greytown and is the only high school within the South Wairarapa District. The majority of students catch the school bus to and from school.

Table 3: School Roll Numbers

	Featherston School	South Featherston School	Saint Teresa's School	Kuranui College/Greytown
2019	133	57	98	451
2020	131	46	103	551
2021	148	51	107	653

2.6 Our Transport

The rail line that serves Featherston was constructed in the early 1870s to connect Wellington to the Wairarapa, and the line helped populate the region by improving access.

Access to Featherston is also via State Highways with State Highway 2 running along the western side from Featherston to Woodville. Highway 53 links Featherston to Martinborough.

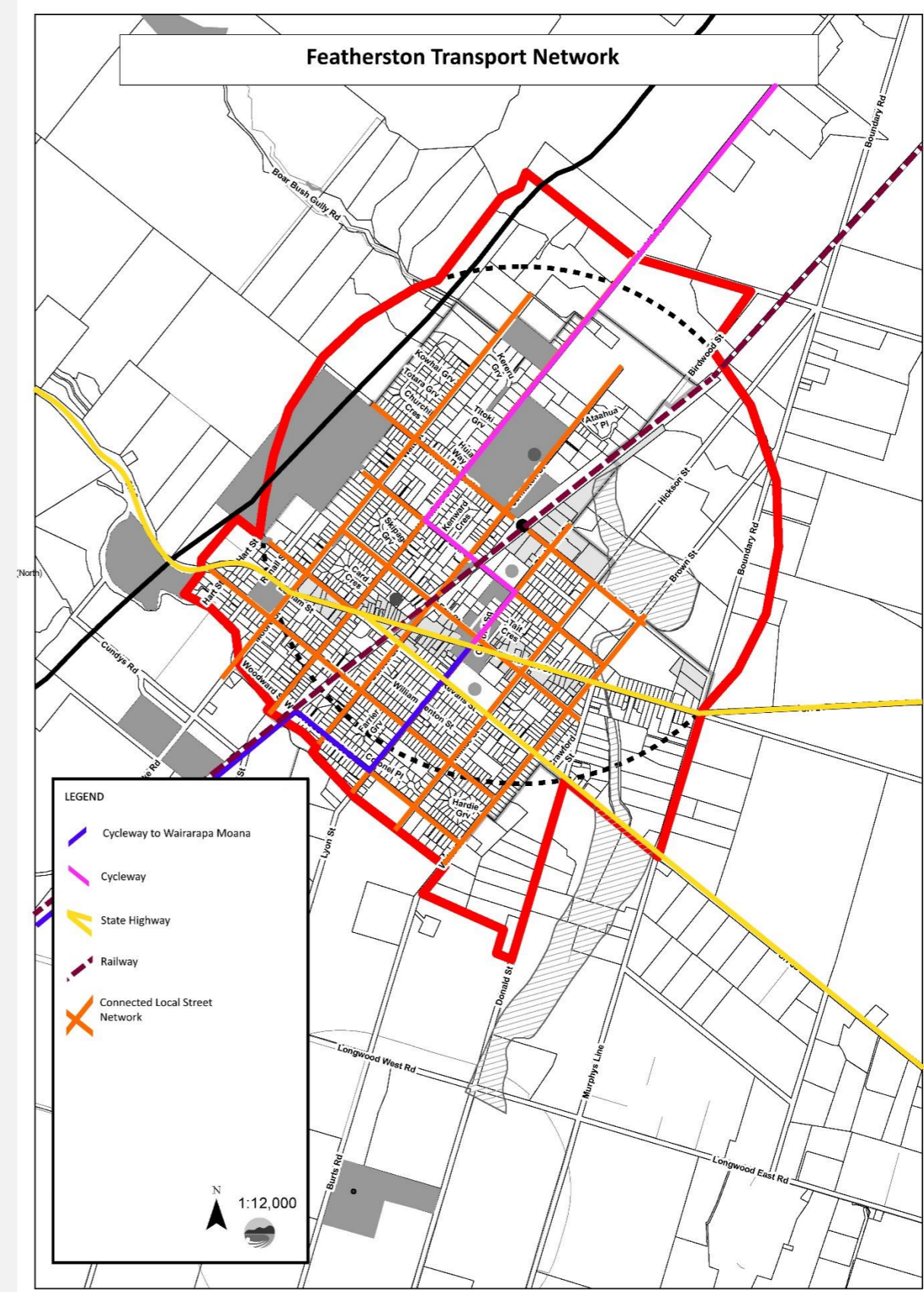
The Greater Wellington Regional Framework identifies transport choice and access as one of its top priorities. As noted in Table 1 (page 5 above), despite Featherston having a train station, the use of private vehicles remains the dominant mode of travel and the travel trips by train in Featherston decreased between 2013 and 2018. This plan seeks to encourage more opportunities to use and access existing train services.

The GWRP does not envisage further rail lines such as one for Featherston to Martinborough as population growth is not such to warrant this. Hence, rail transport services need to be integrated so that residents for example in Martinborough who work in Wellington can bus to Featherston and connect with the passenger train service at Featherston.

The original town comprises a very well-connected grid network of local roads. These provide easy access to key local facilities, including the town centre and train station. This network of streets creates large, square blocks. Introducing additional streets bisecting these large blocks could further improve connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and other users, as well as facilitate the more efficient development of the blocks. State Highway 2 cuts across the local street network at an angle. This has a negative effect on the legibility of the local network, and also creates a number of narrow, hard to develop sites where the State Highway and local roads intersect.

Two cycle trails have been proposed to connect Featherston to the Moana – the Wairarapa Moana Trail and to connect Featherston with Greytown – Trail Section 1 of the Wairarapa Five Towns Trail Network. Work is soon to be completed on the Featherston to Greytown section. The feasibility study has been completed for the Wairarapa Moana Trail. In the longer term, a 36km trail from Featherston to Martinborough – Signature Trail Section 5 is proposed subject to detailed planning and design.

Map 4 – Featherston Transport Network



2.7 Our 3 Waters

Wastewater

When the Council was preparing the South Wairarapa Spatial Plan-Residential Growth Options it sought advice from the Council Controlled Organisation Wellington Water (in which council is a shareholder) on the capacity and servicing of growth for water, wastewater and stormwater.³

While the Featherston Wastewater Treatment Plant is designed with capacity to serve a population of around 5000, it is acknowledged that the Plant, built in 1975, does not operate efficiently or sustainably to meet new Freshwater standards. The Plant discharges to Donald's Creek and is operating on a lapsed 2012 resource consent. As a consequence of this and the shared goals to improve environmental quality as well as allow for additional growth in Featherston, a joint project is underway with Wellington Water to find alternative solutions to the current arrangement for managing Featherston's Wastewater. Wellington Water has commenced consultation with the iwi, key stakeholders and the community on this project. It is in the early stages of development. Final decisions will be made by Council. The ultimate goal is to have any construction of the preferred option, once determined by July 2025. The Council in its Long Term Plan 2021-31 (LTP) has identified investment in the Featherston Plant for consenting and improvements as a priority in Years 1-5.

These initiatives mean that the upgraded wastewater infrastructure will meet the future growth needs as identified in this masterplan.

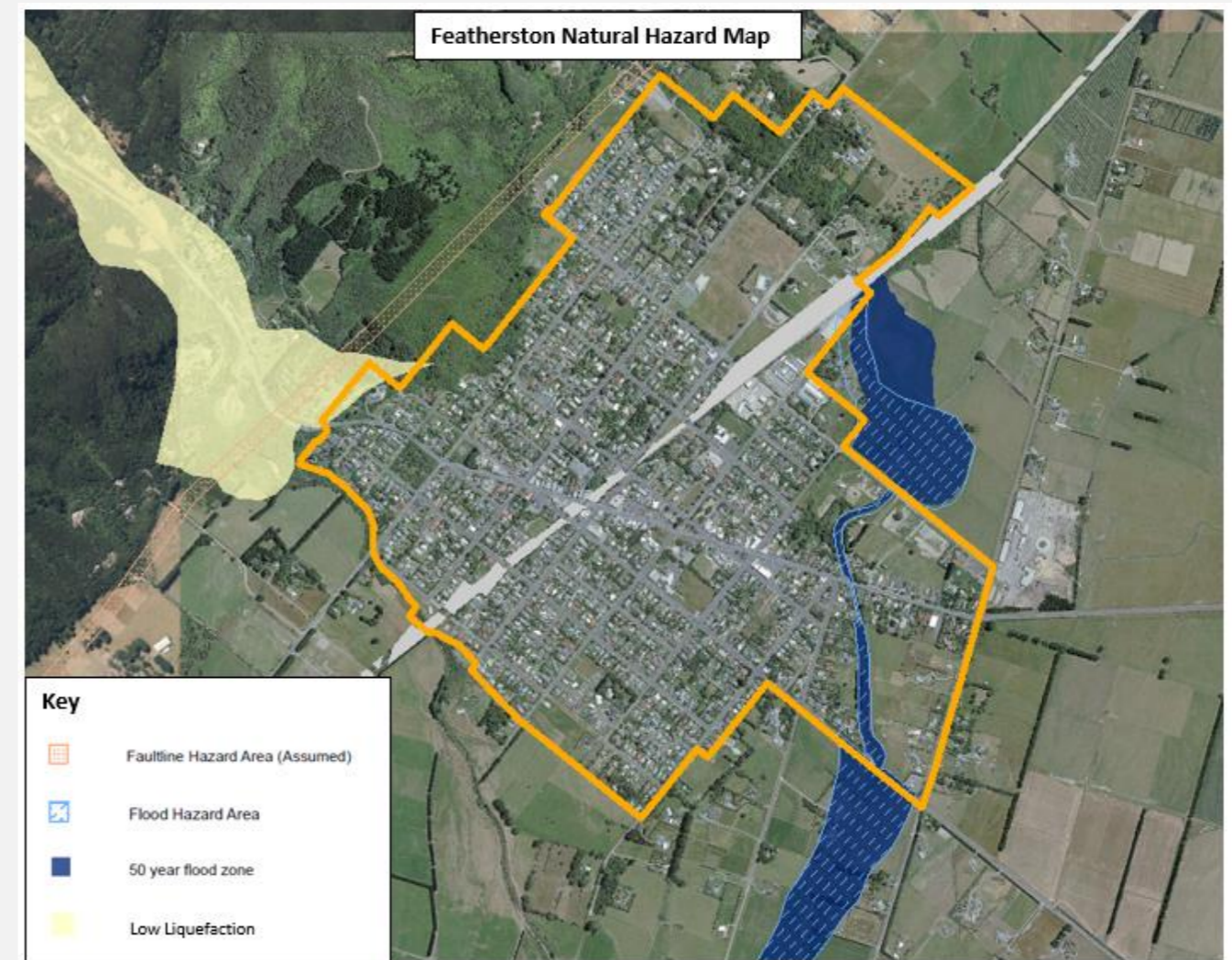
Water

Again, as part of the development of the South Wairarapa Spatial Plan, Wellington Water was able to advise that the capacity of the Waiohine Water Treatment Plant which supplies water to Featherston will be increased as a fourth bore is being installed to increase production. Water in South Wairarapa is "sourced from surface water and ground water, treated at a number of water treatment plants around the district and stored in reservoirs."⁴

Stormwater

Wellington Water has assessed that stormwater can be reasonably managed in Featherston, using typical development controls and infrastructure upgrades albeit noting that water comes off the hills, and that some remedial work is required at certain intersections. Additionally, soakage pits are used on site.

2.8 Our Environment Natural Hazards, Climate change



³ <https://swdc.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/9.-WWL-Inputs.pdf>

⁴ <https://swdc.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/9.-WWL-Inputs.pdf>

3.0 Nga Wero-Whai Wāhitanga | Our Challenges and Opportunities

Our key challenges and opportunities include:

3.1 Creating a pleasant town centre along the main street which also serves as a state highway

Residents have told us that they seek to have a town centre that has a sense of place (a 'heart'); is visibly attractive, and is safe and vibrant. The report by UrbaCity also identifies the need to enhance the town centre and main street so that it is an attractor to higher density living.

Currently the town centre is challenged by the heavy traffic that passes through it and will continue to do so; by the rail line that divides the main street into two parts. Whichever growth option is chosen (See section 4 below) there are a range of initiatives that will be needed to address these challenges. These include providing a detailed plan and design for the town centre which includes:

- Identifying different precincts along the main street, such as the core commercial area, and a Booktown precinct;
- Identifying paving, streetscape, lighting and associated projects and budgets in the Long Term Plan
- Calming traffic measures
- Well-positioned and fit for purpose pedestrian crossings and safe bus stops including for school children
- Identification of shared pathways for pedestrians and cyclists
- Design guidelines that help shape the scale and form of new buildings
- Public spaces that incorporate Maori history and design

3.2 Ensuring that there is capacity for growth, with associated infrastructure

Our population projections over the next 30 years suggest Featherston will have around 1730 additional residents which means Featherston is likely to need around 940 new homes over that period.

Some new medium density zonings will be required to enable Featherston to have capacity to accommodate the number of homes for the future. Section 4 identifies different ways of achieving this, including options to introduce a medium density zone that allows development at densities of 1:200m². The council is looking for feedback on these options.

As this growth occurs it is also important the necessary infrastructure to support that growth is in place. This includes water, waste water and social infrastructure such as parks and reserves. See section 2 above.

3.3 Protecting what is valued (such as family living/lifestyle options) while enabling intensification, choice and change

We have heard from residents that they value the existing family housing. However, we also know that increasing house prices have impacted the affordability of Featherston as a place to live for those who have traditionally lived there.

In order to assist with housing affordability, increase the number of people living within walking distance of the town centre and train station, and also limit the release of greenfield land, we have considered options which allow for greater subdivision of existing lots than is currently provided for by the District Plan.

This will inevitably lead to change in existing streets, with the potential introduction of a greater number of two storey houses and attached dwellings, including semi-detached/duplex and terraced.

At this stage we are considering potential site sizes of down to 300m² in the General Residential Zone and down to 200m² in the Medium Density Residential Zone. Currently the minimum average residential site size in Featherston is 500m².

Examples of different development densities/lot sizes can be seen here:

www.qldc.govt.nz/media/1eda15f5/pc44_henley_downs_plan_change_appendix_n_-_examples_of_development_densities.pdf (Note: this linked document has been prepared by others and not SWDC or the consultant team working on this project)

As noted above, Featherston has a very good connected grid street layout, which allows easy movement through the town. Whilst this is adaptable to more intensive housing forms, particularly if additional connections are provided through larger blocks, this will not necessarily ensure that future development reflects what residents value. Further thought therefore needs to be given to how future development should reflect the existing sense of place. This could include the preparation of a design guide which considers building design, site layout, provision of open space etc. In addition, consideration could be given to whether areas which reflect the 'traditional' Featherston patterns of development should be protected as Historic Heritage Areas (options identify the draft boundaries of one such area).

Q4. Should the Council prepare design guides to ensure that new development reflects the sense of place of Featherston, and should a Historic Heritage Area study be carried out across the town?

What the different areas provide for

- Town Centre – Commercial activities only
- Mixed Use Area – Commercial and residential activities
- Medium Density Residential – Houses/Lots at 1 per 200m²
- General Residential – Houses/Lots at 1 per 300m²
- Outer Residential – Houses/Lots at 1 per 2000-4000m²
- Community Uses – Open space, community space, parks, sports facilities, and community buildings (e.g., library)

Q5. What do you think about these increased densities and reduced site sizes?

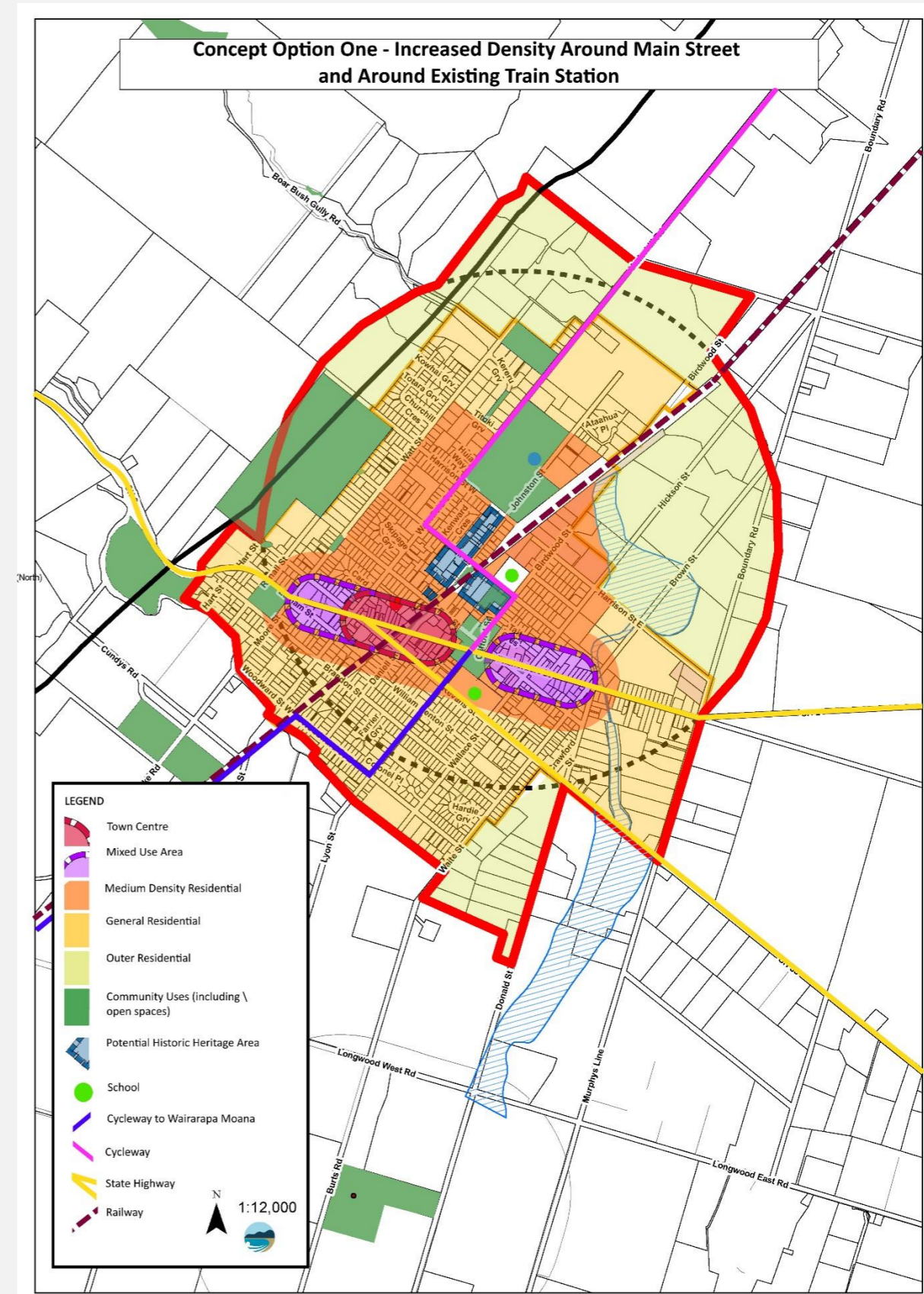
4.0 Mahere Matua | Our draft Masterplan Concept Options

As part of our development of our two concept options, we also considered Concept Option Three. This considered the possibility of relocating the town centre from SH2 to land around the existing Train Station. This was not our preferred option and the advice we received from UrbaCity was that it was not a realistic option. We have therefore not presented this option as part of this consultation.

4.1 Concept Option One – Increased Density Around Main Street and Around Existing Train Station

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses existing infrastructure and may be the most cost effective option • Is on key movement networks providing access to regions and is a driver for urban commerce • Takes account of current investment in the town centre and rail station • Enables diversity of densities • Looks to make better use of existing urban land and does not encourage the development of general or medium density development beyond the existing established boundaries of the town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The train station and commercial activity are separate and this may reduce those commuters who do not reside in Featherston from spending at local shops- they may only use the park n ride • The existing rail station has no built attributes that would attract density • Immediate proximity to the rail station may not be a factor driving intensification because the rail station is generally within a walkable catchment across much of Featherston • The rail line is used for freight and this may have a negative impact on amenity • The State Highways are used by large vehicles and this may have a negative impact on amenity • Requires a range of measures to make the town centre more pleasant for people (e.g. traffic calming etc)

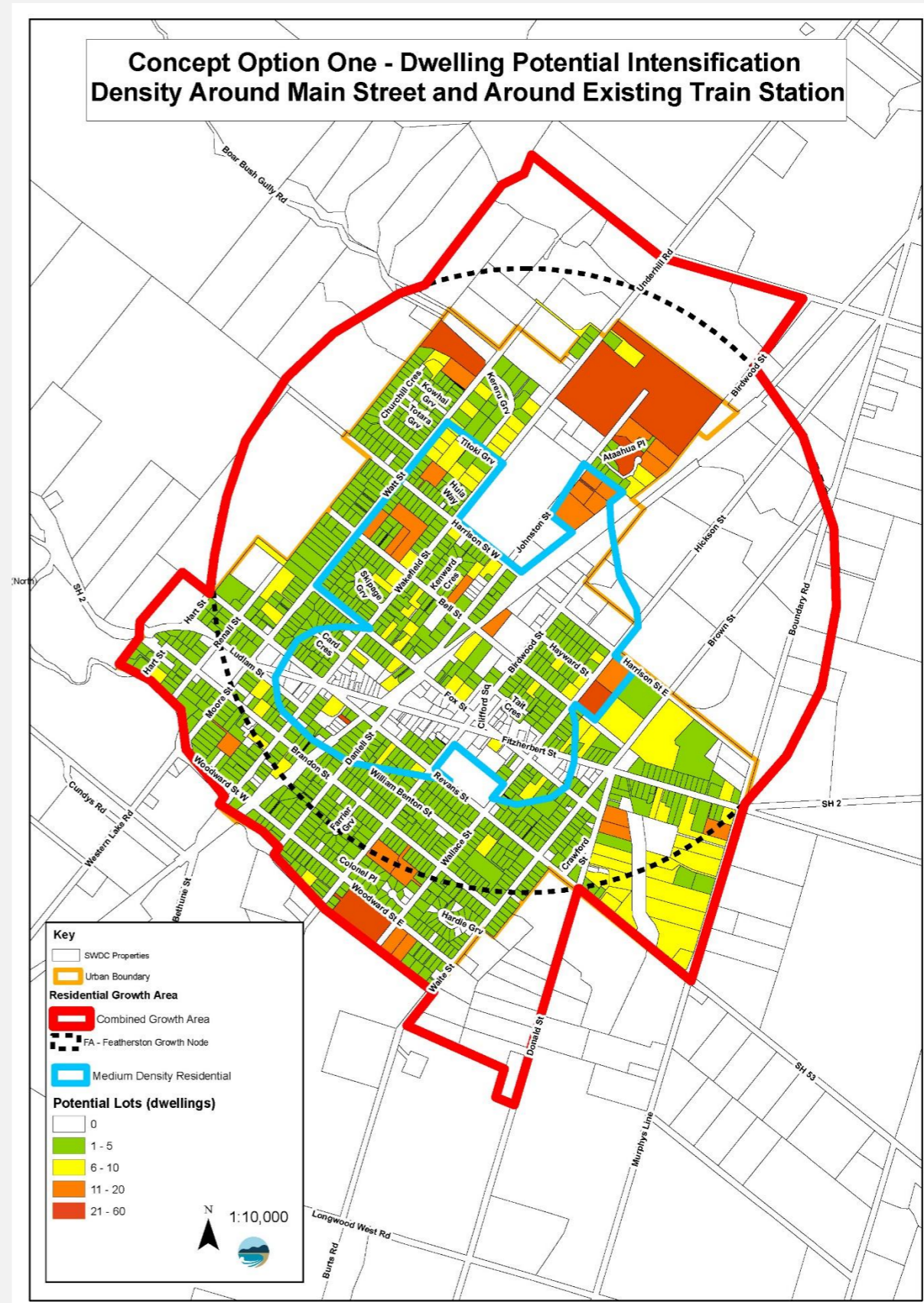
Q6. Do you support Option One – Increased Density Around Main Street and Around Existing Train Station?



Potential lot yield, Concept Option One

As part of our consideration of Concept Option One, we have considered the number of lots which could be delivered by the option.

Assuming that there is an uptake of 25% (i.e. only one in four sites within the existing residential zoned area is redeveloped), that the general residential sites are able to be subdivided down to lots of 300m² and the Medium Density Residential Area sites are able to be subdivided down to lots of 200m², Concept Option One would provide 574 additional dwellings.



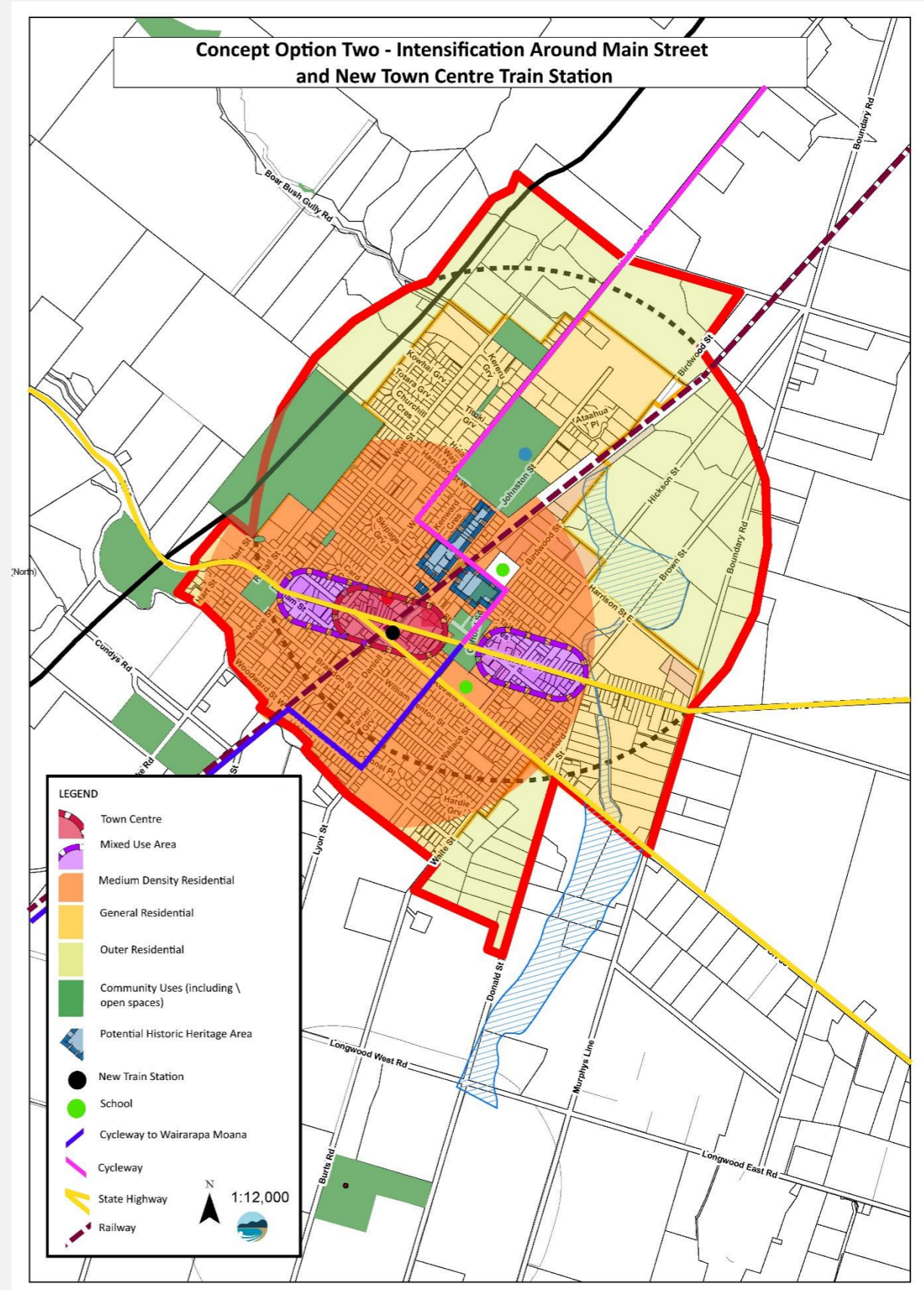
4.2 Concept Option Two – Intensification Around Main Street and New Town Centre Train Station

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the existing infrastructure of the town centre • Is more aligned to transit oriented development (TOD) principles where urban centres and public transport operate together • Takes account of current investment in the town centre and rail station and encourages additional investment in the town centre • Enables diversity of densities and may inspire a greater desire to intensify • Looks to make better use of existing urban land and does not encourage the development of general or medium density development beyond the existing established boundaries of the town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KiwiRail has identified that this is likely to be a costly option and may require land purchase; they seek a feasibility study be undertaken • There may be technical issues associated with locating the train station in the town centre, which could have knock on effects which could impact on vehicle, pedestrian, and cycle movement in the town centre area (for instance duration that barriers are closed across the State Highways) • Requires a range of measures to make the town centre more pleasant for people (e.g. traffic calming etc) • Potential loss of a section of commercial land for new train station

Q7. Do you support Option Two – Intensification Around Main Street and New Town Centre Train Station?

Q8. Which option do you prefer and why do you prefer this option?

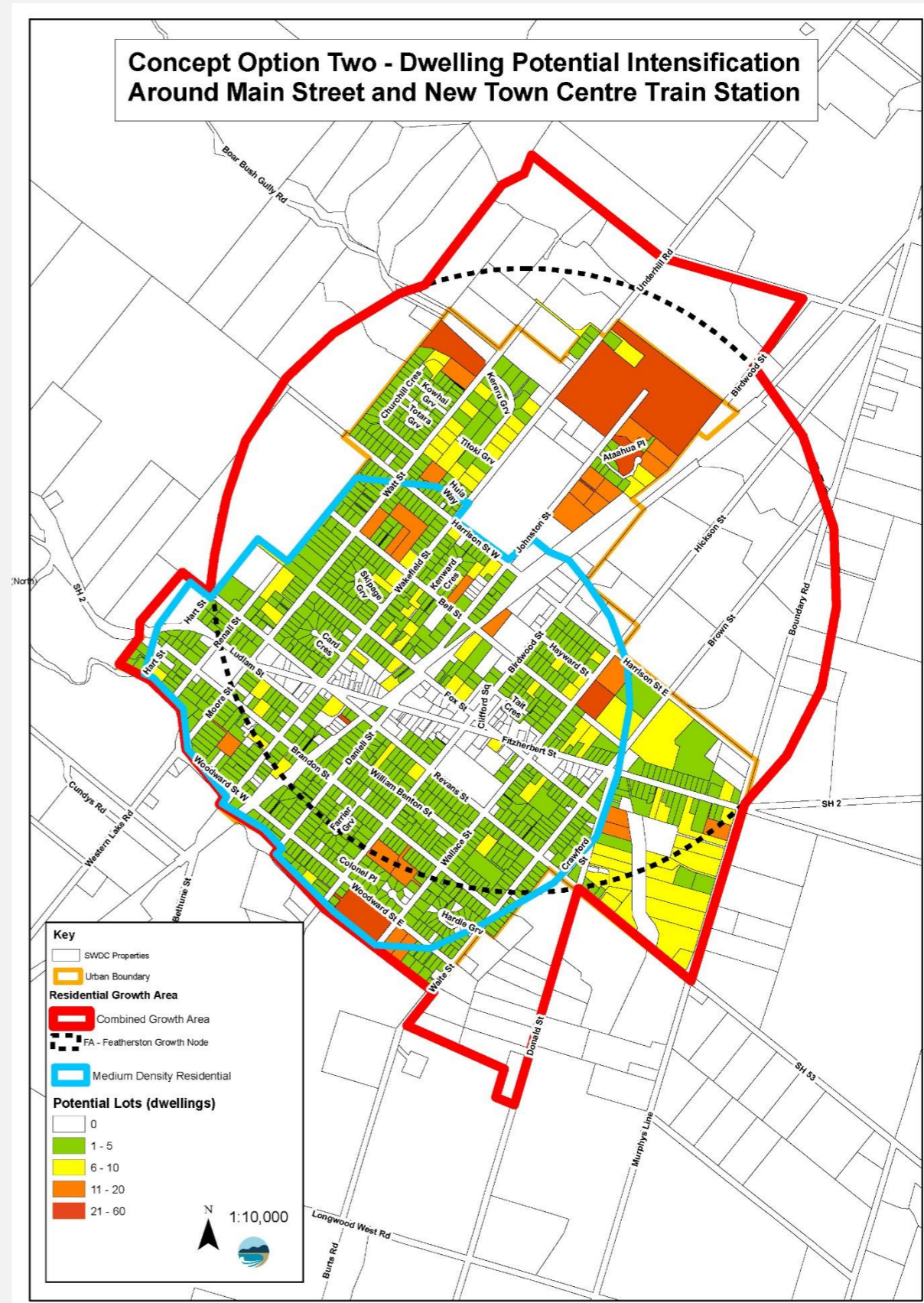
Q9. Do we need more industrial land? If yes, where?



Potential lot yield, Concept Option Two

As part of our consideration of Concept Option Two, we have considered the number of lots which could be delivered by the option.

Assuming that there is an uptake of 25% (i.e. only one in four sites within the existing residential zoned area is redeveloped), that the general residential sites are able to be subdivided down to lots of 300m² and the Medium Density Residential Area sites are able to be subdivided down to lots of 200m², Concept Option Two would provide 796 additional dwellings.



5.0 Nga Mahi ka whai ake | Next Steps

We appreciate all the input we have received so far to shape the Featherston Foundation Discussion Document and Concept Options. Our next steps include seeking your feedback on the questions below before we develop the masterplan further:

- **Q1. Tell us how you would like to see a greater Māori presence in the township?**
- **Q2. We have heard that Featherston's vision is to be a strong, caring community where there is a place for everyone. Do you support this vision?**
- **Q3. What additional community and social infrastructure do you think Featherston needs?**
- **Q4. Should the Council prepare design guides to ensure that new development reflects the sense of place of Featherston, and should a Historic Heritage Area study be carried out across the town?**
- **Q5. What do you think about these increased densities and reduced site sizes?**
- **Q6. Do you support Option One – Increased Density Around Main Street and Around Existing Train Station?**
- **Q7. Do you support Option Two – Intensification Around Main Street and New Town Centre Train Station?**
- **Q8. Which option do you prefer and why do you prefer this option?**
- **Q9. Do we need more industrial land? If yes, where?**

Feedback forms can be:

- Completed online at [XXX](#)
- Emailed to spatial-planning@swdc.govt.nz
- Sent to PO Box 6, Martinborough
- Picked up and dropped off at Council Offices
- Picked up and dropped off at the Featherston Town Library
- If you would prefer to make a verbal submission only, please call Kendyll at 06 306 9611 ex 886 or pop into one of the upcoming drop-in sessions
- **weeknight – Tuesday 2nd August**
- **weekday – Wednesday 3rd August**
- **weekend – Saturday 6th August**

Feedback closes on the **19th of August**.

Our timetable:

- Feedback on Foundation Discussion Document closes 5pm Friday 19th August
- Feedback reviewed and reported to 1st September Council Workshop
- Preferred Concept Option adopted by Council 21st September
- Detailed masterplan developed -Reported to Council November 2022
- Formal Public Consultation December -February 2023
- Hearings March 2023
- Masterplan and Implementation Plan Adopted March/April 2023

6.0 Technical Reports/Studies

- Featherston Economic Review of Intensification Options, prepared by Michael Cullen Urbacity, June 2022
 - [ADD LINK](#)
- Concept Option Maps, June 2022
 - [ADD LINK](#)
- Examples of different development densities/lot sizes
 - www.qldc.govt.nz/media/1eda15f5/pc44_henley_downs_plan_change_appendix_n_-_examples_of_development_densities.pdf

Appendix 2 – UrbaCity Economic Review Report by Mike Cullen

URBACITY

FEATHERSTON

ECONOMIC REVIEW OF INTENSIFICATION OPTIONS

PREPARED BY
Michael Cullen, Urbacity

June 2022

1. Background

In April 2022, Ree Anderson Consulting undertook a design charette with representatives from the Greater Wellington Regional Council, Waka Katohi, Kiwi Rail, South Wairarapa District Council, Kianga Ora - Homes and Communities and Richard Knott (consultant Urban Designer). This process follows a need to determine land use options for Featherston, along with other towns and villages via a Master Plan (MP) for each as set out in the Council’s Spatial Plan (SP). The SP gathered a range of views and submissions from across the community and from other agencies. Views and submission were further submitted in a Hearing in May 2021.

Intensification within towns and villages was one of the issues canvassed widely within the community, but with a general acceptance that character should be considered in parallel with growth. The growth dynamic from a local perspective seemed higher than various agency forecasts and came with a concern over the level to which visitors were displacing permanent residents.

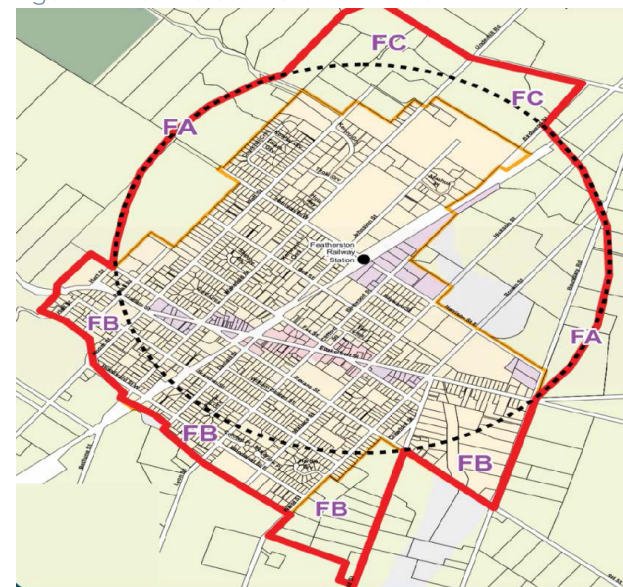
The MP incorporated these inputs and spatially interrogated growth options and locations.

This short report analyses the output of the charette and applies an economic and spatial logic to the charette output options.

2. Growth & Ease of Development

The charette canvassed three options within the Featherston Growth Node. The Growth Node is defined in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Featherston Growth Node



The node generally defines the investigation area for the charette.

The three options tested in the charette were:

1. Build more density around the existing main street (State Highway 2) and train station.
2. Move the train station closer to the existing town centre and intensify and join the two nodes together.
3. Relocate the town centre to the train station and develop both as a Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

The charette canvassed a loose development (mostly “redevelopment”)

footprint for each option.

In reviewing the Growth Node plan, the most apparent tension for a consolidation and density objective is the amount of greenfield land within the Node.

Possibly the most influential input into the Options is the target growth figure of 900 persons over the next 30 years. A new projection is available from Sense Partners. This projection slightly more than doubles the Council (signed off) projections, as below:

	Adopted Projection 2048	Sense Projection 2048
Population	900	1,730
Population Estimate 2048	3,400	4,300
Monthly Growth (persons)	2.5	4.0
Monthly Growth (houses)	1.0	1.6

The 2048 populations would rise from an estimated 2,500 now, to between 3,400 and 4,300 by 2048. There are a number of issues with the projections in terms of how the numbers are meaningful for the Master Plan and charette Options.

1. Whether either growth level will inspire intensification.
2. The sequencing of growth and what this might mean for change to the settlement and town centre. Kianga Ora is probably the only entity capable of “risking” product (ahead of market) to change the market (the supply effect on demand). If development is incremental and aligned with current growth projections, then market pressure for change is likely muted:

3. Whether the market will demand more diverse housing in Featherston anyway and on what basis might this occur?
4. Whether the availability of larger sections will reduce demand for intensification and can we manipulate the market through regulation?
5. Whether there are “amenity for density” triggers available in relation to the Options.
6. The level to which growth creates competition for housing in the market and changes the demographic composition of Featherston.
7. What particular community asset/s and retail thresholds are met under either scenario.
8. Whether and on what basis might we consider even higher growth options for Featherston and if so, at what level (if not already) does growth put pressure on sites for intensification?

The projected slow rate of growth (under either rate) is unlikely to inspire a market response to intensify in Featherston at scale. Developers may consider terrace homes as these can be rolled out in a staged sequence. Apartment development would be more difficult, as 12 apartments (for instance) would be 1 year’s (or 8 months) market demand. It would be financially risky for a developer’s feasibility assessment to require 100% to 67% of the assumed annual growth rate for success. This probably means that more likely is a pattern of opportunistic development of sites across wider Featherston as developers and speculative home builders pick up random sites within the Growth Node.

Regarding the role of Kianga Ora as an agent for change in Featherston, there are international examples of catalyst housing projects that immediately change development practices and expand housing typologies from the conventional developer builders. Most builder developers are

conservative and do not develop in line with market preferences, but rather typologies that work for them. We discuss this issue in more detail below.

In summary, the Growth Node diagram shows fairly extensive pockets of greenfield land on the fringes of the settlement. Many of these are very large sections. Perhaps because I live in Australia, this is counter-intuitive and suggests that the expectation is for these sites to act as a rural/residential growth boundary. The implication of such an approach is that outward peri-urban growth will stop at these places. In other words, this appears as a strategy for no urban growth beyond the “FC & FB” boundaries. One possible implication of this approach is that all that will be left will be redevelopment sites. This raises the question as to why we should prevent stronger growth outward in a more intensive fashion, and whether there are catchment thresholds (i.e. a definition of the most desirable size of Featherston) that switch on a range of other benefits and amenities for residents. That assessment appears to be missing in the growth plan.

An intensification and diversity objective is reasonable, but growth, at the rate projected, means the market will not be looking for difficult-to-develop sites at the start. Such sites are the target of the intensification and diversity objective in Featherston and the charette. With low growth there will be reduced competition for sites, which is the switch that pushes developers to more difficult sites in the face of scarcity.

Further on the supply side, there are marked differences between what home builders supply and what the market wants. Studies in most Australian cities and in Auckland show that home builders are not delivering on market preferences but delivering detached homes on larger blocks when the market preference is for more smaller blocks and more attached homes..

Generally home builders operate on a low risk basis with a rear view mirror view to what has sold (and they supplied) in the past. Housing supply tends to lag years behind lifestyle and lifecycle preferences even when growth is strong. However, irrespective of market preferences for more diverse housing, the fact remains that the assumed rate of Featherston growth does not encourage diverse housing or density, or for home builders to look at more difficult sites.

If we assume that we cannot influence the rate of growth or that we assume the official projected rate of growth in this assessment, then any site that is more difficult to develop will likely sit at the back of the development queue. This means that a filter for each of the Options will be ease of development and the on-costs of non-standard development sites.

We cannot assess each option based on ease of development as we do not have an in-depth understanding on a site-by-site basis of the areas that are developable in each Option. Rather, we will consider each option on the basis of two filters:

1. Transformation triggers
2. Ease of implementation

There remains though the issue of whether we can or should change the parameters for growth to increase competition for dwellings and switch on site that may be otherwise seen as more difficult. It is likely that these more difficult sites are the foundation sites for each of the Options.

In terms of retail thresholds, at 4,000 people we are able to deliver the range of grocery items of the major supermarkets as we now hit the threshold for a

1,400 sqm store. This size store can accommodate all the Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) of a Countdown or New World. The complete SKU threshold is around 20,000. The difference is size between the majors and a smaller (say) IGA is bay width per SKU. A 3,400 sqm Countdown will have 3 bays of Coke (for instance). The smaller store will have just one.

3. Charette Options

The charette did not assess the merits of each option, but left them for consideration for the Featherston Master Plan.



OPTION 1 - Intensify around the town centre and rail station

This option leverages the proximity of the station and the linear form of the town centre as a basis for joined-up density.

The charette considered the more proximate sites along the rail corridor, connecting back to the main street and linear town centre. The option attempts to use both nodes as a basis for growing them together and then spreading around the station and along the State Highway.

Assessment of Option 1 Rail Station

This Option is a logical start point for an intensification and diversity objective. The rail station is a potential node for diversity and density, but much of its appeal as a site and development proposition requires recognition that those that will choose to live near the rail station option will work somewhere else - probably south. The level to which immediate proximity to the rail station is influential in the demand profile is uncertain. Current journey to work figures show 16% of local residents catching the train to work, but this rate is falling. The other factor is that almost all of the urban area is within 1 kilometre of the rail station (1 kilometre is usually the catchment measure for both rail station use and TOD catchments). In other words, immediate proximity to the station may not be a major factor in housing choice.

The rail station has no built attributes that would attract density and is not an amenity feature around which a developer could build a marketing program.

Option 1 requires development along the rail line between SH2 and the rail station (shown in orange in the charette drawing). The freight aspect of the line would have a negative effect on amenity, which is usually an offset for density. The other obvious market pitch would be price - as in low price.

Town Centre

Like the rail station, one of the core issues for housing density and diversity is the level to which the town centre is an inspirer of density. The town centre is elongated for some distance on each side of SH2 but if one were to define a core, then the rail line probably cuts the core in half. The main convenience store is the IGA, which sits on the north side of the rail line and thereby is

divorced from the complementary convenience retailers on the south side. In built form, the town is comprised of modest one and occasional two storey buildings. As the “main street” is a state highway, Council’s ability to intervene and “tame” the street is limited. The town lacks an activated urban space within the core. The charette diagram logically extends the development footprint in a linear fashion along both sides of the State Highway.

The issue of inspiration remains the key issue for density and diversity within the town centre. What is it about the town centre that would create the desire for housing density (transformation triggers)?

The next question relates to ease of implementation. It appears that the sites on the south side of the rail line on SH2 are zoned industrial (Sheet 64 SWDC). This raises planning barriers for residential use. Site consolidation will be the major cost along with the cost of demolishing existing assets, or developing around them. This assessment is relatively high level so we have assumed (without site-by-site analysis) that most of the areas shown in orange on the charette drawing have existing built assets (are more expensive than vacant land to acquire).

OPTION 2 - Move the Train Station Closer to the Town Centre

Option 2 combines the town centre and rail station as adjacent assets. This limits the spread of intensification but this may be offset by the fact that the node it is more intense, engaging two assets not just one. This is more aligned to TOD principles, where urban centres and public transport operate together - not apart. This makes the station more attractive, but may come at a cost to park and ride. We are unsure of the influence of the current park



and ride on retail and other facilities in Featherston. We assume that much of the park and ride is occupied by non Featherston residents. Do they meaningfully engage in Featherston retail, food and beverage? The relationships between train stations and retail is universally a weak one. Train ridership generates almost no retail demand. We should not see the rail station as supportive of commerce (on its own).

The charette diagram for Option 2 shows an extended linear development of mixed use and higher density housing along the highway.

As a public transport proposition, this Option makes sense. We can assume that the potential loss of park and ride will have little, if any, effect on ridership as it is likely that existing users (from outside Featherston) will find other places to park and not convert to cars for the same journeys. Currently the Featherston park and ride is an easy/competitive resource for non Featherston residents compared to alternatives??

The combined effect of town centre and rail station consolidation would inspire a greater desire to intensify, as the inspiration is of two assets working

together.

OPTION 3 - Relocate the town centre close to the rail station

Town centres rely on multi-modal movement or movement energy. For millenia, towns have formed at places that are the most accessible from all directions for the most people. These places are almost always at crossroads where movement is heaviest. We also know (from observations and work undertaken by Space Syntax across the world) that urban (street) retail performs better at such places..



The nature of movement for urban centres is also important, as is the design speed of streets/roads. Historic town centres in the Wairarapa formed where they would work best for access and the structure of each settlement radiates from links to each's centre. For Featherston, the regional network has determined and is determined by the location of the shops and commerce of the town. The State Highway is most influential as it carried/carries the most traffic. There are three other regional networks that radiate from the town and link to the wider Wairarapa - as shown in black in

Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Networks and Central Place



The red box highlights the area that is most connected to everywhere else. This is where one would expect the best performing retail over time. Anchor stores and critical mass precinct concepts (such as shopping malls) can overrule this “natural” propensity, but in movement terms the red box highlights the place that has the most energy, which is fundamental to urban commerce.

That means if we move the centre to the rail station we lose direct access to the regions, our primary relationship is to local movement. At Featherston, we also end up at the rural boundary.

Figure 3 - Town & Missing Networks



The diagram demonstrates a lack of direct regional links, interfaces with a rural boundary, without any wider links apart from a cross link connection between Boundary Rd and Watt St (an extension of Western Lake Rd). The rural boundary is a part of the Growth Node so local links would be possible, but the adjacent “FC” area is proposed as large “lifestyle” blocks - not suburban or urban. As stated above, the only urban link to facilitate an urban town response is the red street (Harrison St West). The town is relatively inaccessible near the rail station and would have almost no movement economy.

Moving of the town centre is not a realistic option and even if achievable,

politically or as a development package, would fail at this site. This leaves us with only Options One and Two.

4. Tentative Thoughts

Growth appears to be a minor factor in driving density and diversity. This is probably the biggest factor in the barriers to change the housing mix. It would be good (if not done already) to test the basis of a more aggressive growth path for Featherston. Such propositions are politically difficult. The political test will be “what you get and what you lose” in a more substantial growth proposition. A part of this proposition relates to retail, but also to whether a particular growth number triggers more community resources within Featherston. Sustainable growth means less travel and more resources closer to home. Do we have the opportunity to test such a filter within Council’s community resources team for Featherston or has this been done already?

On the basis of the Options themselves, Option 2 appears to be the most transformative, but we are left questioning the feasibility of consolidating sites and developing at density.

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