

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER
AT WAIRARAPA**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**")

AND

IN THE MATTER of a resource consent application by Woolworths New Zealand Ltd ("**Woolworths**") for a new vehicle access and signage at 134 Main Street, Greytown (associated with the existing FreshChoice supermarket)

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF RICHARD KNOTT ON BEHALF OF
WOOLWORTHS NEW ZEALAND LIMITED**

HERITAGE AND URBAN DESIGN

15 SEPTEMBER 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Background and experience

1.1 My full name is Richard John Knott. I am a historic heritage specialist, urban designer and planner and work at my own company Richard Knott Limited. Prior to establishing my own practice in 2014, I was an Associate Director at AECOM NZ Ltd and ran their Design and Planning business for New Zealand.

1.2 I have been elected as a full member of the following professional institutes:

- (a) Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (UK).
- (b) Member New Zealand Planning Institute.
- (c) Chartered Town Planner (Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, UK).
- (d) Member of the Institute of Highway Engineers (UK).

1.3 I am a Making Good Decisions Certificate Holder (since 2010 and last renewed in 2021) and have sat as Independent Planning Commissioner (panel member and/or Chair) for Hamilton City Council, Whangarei District Council, Taupo District Council, Tauranga City Council, South Wairarapa District Council and Auckland Council on over 40 hearings. I often sit on Hearings Panels where specialist urban design, special character or heritage expertise is required. I am a current a member of the Auckland PC78 (IPI) and Tauranga PC33 (IPI) independent hearing panels.

1.4 I have more than 34 years' experience working in the areas of heritage, urban design and planning. I have held various senior urban design and heritage positions in New Zealand and the UK including Group Manager Urban Design at Manukau City Council and Conservation Officer at Borough of Poole, UK.

1.5 I hold post graduate qualifications in the following areas:

Post Graduate Diploma Building Conservation, School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University (2002)

- (a) This two-year post graduate course covered all areas of building conservation (historic heritage), including international building conservation theory, best practice and materials/repair. The course was undertaken at various centres of excellence, to provide direct

first-hand practical experience of the issues and repair techniques for a wide range of building types and materials.

Master of Arts Urban Design, University of the West of England (1995)

- (b) This three year post graduate course focused on delivering contextually appropriate design responses, though developing an understanding of the assessment of the historic heritage significance and character of areas. I specialised in appropriate design within Conservation Areas (the UK equivalent to historic heritage precincts), being areas of special architectural or historic interest where there is a specific requirement to preserve and enhance the character or amenity of the area. My independent research concentrated on investigating the assessment of character and the success of Conservation Area legislation.

Bachelor of Planning and BA(Hons) Town and Country Planning (1989 and 1988)

- (c) My planning degrees included significant taught elements and workshops on urban design matters including design studio projects throughout the combined four years, along with a fourth-year concentration on site design.

1.6 To expand my knowledge and understanding of global best practice in historic heritage, special character and visual impact matters, I have undertaken overseas continuing professional development courses. In 2016, I attended the University of Southern California Fundamentals of Heritage Conservation summer school and in 2019 I attended the Planning Institute of Australia landscape and visual assessment training.

1.7 Throughout my career I have led projects relating to heritage buildings, conservation areas and special character areas. My experience in relation to historic buildings and special character matters has included (but is not limited to):

- (a) area wide historic heritage and conservation areas studies; identifying and designating new conservation areas/heritage areas (this has included a two-year project to identify and schedule new historic heritage areas in Hamilton – project ongoing).
- (b) historic heritage assessments for individual buildings;

- (c) advice to a very significant number of historic heritage building owners regarding re-use, alteration and repair, ranging from medieval to post-modern buildings;
- (d) assessments of many proposals to alter (or demolish) heritage buildings and buildings in conservation areas, historic heritage areas and special character areas;
- (e) managing heritage assistance funds and assessing applications for funding;
- (f) producing conservation plans for historic heritage buildings;
- (g) Conservation Area appraisals;
- (h) authoring (along with a small group of experts) the English Historic Towns Forum Book of Good Practice in Shop Front Design;
- (i) authoring various conservation and heritage design guides;
- (j) advising the IHBC Dorset Branch as a committee member; and
- (k) producing masterplans for historic town centres, including town centre masterplans for Ōpōtiki Town Centre (for Ōpōtiki District Council), Papakura (for Papakura Local Board) and Featherston (for South Wairarapa District Council ("**SWDC**") – project ongoing).

1.8 In addition, I have worked for Woolworths (and their predecessor companies) on a number of mixed use/supermarket developments, as both an urban design and historic heritage specialist. I therefore have a good understanding of the requirements and constraints placed upon such developments. My work has included designing the new town centre and preparation of comprehensive development plan for Rototuna Town Centre, Hamilton; a new Countdown supermarket was a key anchor within this area (client HCC and Kirkdale Developments) and residential, commercial and supermarket/local centre developments with Woolworths in Palmerston North, Hastings, Te Atatu, Wainuiomata, Kapiti, Lincoln, Hawera, Mosgiel.

Scope of evidence

1.9 This evidence is given in respect of the resource consent application by Woolworths for the proposed new vehicle access and signage ("**Application**") at 134 Main Street Greytown ("**Site**"), associated with the existing FreshChoice supermarket.

- 1.10 I have been asked by Woolworths to examine the heritage and urban design implications that may arise from the Application, including in relation to the Historic Heritage Precinct.
- 1.11 My evidence will discuss the following matters:
- (a) the existing environment at the Site;
 - (b) an overview of the historic heritage precinct;
 - (c) an overview of the Application;
 - (d) heritage and urban design effects;
 - (e) the Council's Section 42A Report ("**42A Report**"); and
 - (f) response to relevant submitters on the Application.

Code of conduct

- 1.12 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses 2023 contained in the Environment Court Practice Note and that I agree to comply with it. I confirm that I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express, and that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person.

2. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

- 2.1 The FreshChoice supermarket in Greytown is located behind Main Street, with site frontages to Hastwell Street and West Street. The supermarket building is positioned so that its rear elevation faces towards the rear of properties on Main Street, with its front elevation facing north-west, towards West Street.
- 2.2 Access to the existing customer car park at the rear of the supermarket site is available from both Hastwell Street and West Street. This existing arrangement requires delivery and service vehicles to manoeuvre within the customer carpark and often pass directly past the store's main entrance.
- 2.3 Main Street has a range of narrow one to two storey shop buildings directly fronting the street, particularly on the northwest side of the street. The southeast side of the street, particularly in the vicinity of the proposed new site access, has a number of buildings set back from the street frontage, with the

intervening area being designed for outdoor seating or having the appearance of a public open space.

- 2.4 The Site contrasts with the norm; whereas most other buildings on the north side of the street in the local area have a commercial appearance with shop fronts at ground floor, the existing building on the Site has a residential appearance. It is set far back from the street frontage.
- 2.5 The front yard area of the Site is not used for commercial purposes; it is instead used as a vehicular access, car parking and a lawn area for the existing house.
- 2.6 There is a large Copper Beech tree ("**Beech Tree**") on the site frontage, to the south of the existing vehicular access/crossing, and to the north of this various other trees/large shrubs along the site frontage, and within the site. There is a low wall along the site frontage (framing the vehicular access).
- 2.7 The setback and Beech Tree within its front yard mean that the existing building is not a dominant element in the street and is not prominent to passers-by. The Beech Tree is a prominent feature in the street and in my opinion makes a positive contribution to the local area/historic heritage precinct and is in line with Greytown's general recognised sylvan character. The other smaller/trees and planting do not make a notable contribution to the values of the area, apart from providing some enclosure along the site frontage.

3. HISTORIC HERITAGE PRECINCT

- 3.1 The wider supermarket site is split-zoned so that it is partly within the Industrial Zone and partly within the Residential Zone. There is a Historic Heritage Precinct ("**HHP**") overlay over a small part of the Industrial zoned section of the wider supermarket site.
- 3.2 The Site is zoned Commercial, with the HHP overlay. The majority of the proposed works are within the Site itself, although there are some alterations to the existing service yard, existing supermarket building and nominal amendments to the existing car park area.



Figure 1: Key local features. Purple blocks indicate existing building frontages, illustrating the setback of the existing building on the site relative to other buildings on the north side of Main Street (which contrasts with the buildings on the south side of the street). Base map, including zoning, based on plan from Wairarapa Combined District Plan – Local Maps –

<https://gis.mstn.govt.nz/WairarapaViewer/?map=25092c1c467841908f7854a3ecc1fa41>)

- 3.3 Considering the Site's location, a number of Objectives and Policies within the Operative Combined District Plan ("ODP") are of particular relevance to the historic heritage preservation of the site:

Historic Heritage

10.3.1 Objective HH1 – Historic Heritage Values

To recognise and protect the important historic heritage of the Wairarapa.

10.3.2 - HH1 Policies

- (b) Avoid, remedy or mitigate the potential adverse effects of subdivision, development and use on historic heritage.
- (c) Ensure the important attributes of historic heritage is not disturbed, damaged or destroyed, by inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

- (d) Provide for the use of historic heritage where the activity is compatible with the identified historic attributes and qualities and there are no more than minor adverse effects on the historic heritage values.

Commercial Zone

6.3.1 Objective Com1 – Character and Amenity Values

To maintain and enhance the character and amenity values of the Commercial Zone in a manner that enables its commercial functions to provide for the wellbeing of the Wairarapa while mitigating adverse effects on the natural and physical environment.

6.3.2 - Com1 Policies

- (a) Maintain and enhance the function, character and amenity of the Commercial Zone by controlling the bulk, location and nature of activities and buildings to achieve appropriate levels of scale, density and environmental effects.
- (b) Encourage a wide range of appropriate activities within the Commercial Zone while ensuring any adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

6.3.16 Objective Com6 – South Wairarapa Town Centres

To ensure the special characteristics and historic heritage values of the town centres of Featherston, Greytown, and Martinborough are maintained and enhanced in a manner that enables their efficient commercial functioning.

6.3.17 Com6 Policies

- (a) Recognise the town centres of Featherston, Greytown, and Martinborough as Historic Heritage Precincts.

- (b) Maintain and enhance the character of the Featherston, Greytown, and Martinborough town centres by controlling new development in a manner that is keeping with their historic heritage values.
- (c) Avoid new development that is out of character with the historic heritage values of the Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough Town Centres.
- (d) Promote a pleasant pedestrian-oriented retail environment.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION

- 4.1 The Application includes the demolition of the existing dwelling on the Site and the construction of a new vehicle crossing from Main Street. A new sign is shown close to the east boundary of the Site; adjacent to the heritage building at 132 Main Street.
- 4.2 This new vehicle crossing for access to the FreshChoice supermarket will provide alternative access for service and delivery of vehicles to the FreshChoice supermarket and would remove the need for these vehicles to pass by the main pedestrian entrance to the FreshChoice and for them to manoeuvre in the car park and reverse into the existing supermarket service yard. I understand this will significantly reduce existing health and safety risks for users of the carpark.
- 4.3 Since lodgement of the original consent application in June 2022, there have been amendments to the Application in response to feedback from the Council, Waka Kotahi, and the community.
- 4.4 The key changes have been:
 - (a) Retaining the existing low stone wall along the front of the site (and adapting to accommodate the proposed widened vehicular access), rather than a new wall being constructed along the Site frontage as was previously proposed.
 - (b) The proposed sign is significantly reduced in size to a total of 3.6m high (rather than the previously proposed 5.4m). This will be constructed in painted timber, with vinyl graphics applied. This sign

will include external illumination, designed to be in keeping with the heritage character of Main Street and to reduce any potential light pollution. Notwithstanding any note on the submitted plans, this sign will have a single face, on the south side.

- (c) Reducing the width of the vehicular crossing from Main Street, from 9.0m to 8.3m, with the driveway narrowing to around 6.8m approximately 9m into the Site and further narrowing to 5.0m alongside the service yard.
- (d) Including a larger area of planting introduced along the north boundary of the Site, to assist with visually narrowing the proposed access and to screen the fence to the extended service yard.
- (e) Removing the previously proposed customer car parks close to Main Street. The intention now is to utilise this area for additional planting, in addition to the proposed new landscaping under the retained tree and in the enlarged bed (relative to the previous plans as lodged along the northeast boundary of the site, alongside 132 Main Street (as discussed above)).

4.5 As previously proposed, it is still intended to retain the existing Beech Tree adjacent to the site frontage, which although not scheduled does contribute to the character and quality of the street and provides enclosure to the Site frontage.

5. HERITAGE AND URBAN DESIGN EFFECTS

5.1 My Urban Design and Heritage Assessment Report ("**Assessment**"), dated 13th April 2023, provided a full assessment of the proposed development against the relevant objectives and policies of the ODP, as listed above, as well as against the assessment criteria at 22.1.4 of the ODP relevant to proposals within the Historic Heritage Precinct, and the South Wairarapa Town Centres Design Guidelines included as Appendix 8 to the ODP.¹

5.2 In my opinion, the Application has been designed to recognise and protect the historic heritage values of the Greytown town centre and Historic Heritage Precinct. Having assessed the Application against relevant objectives and policies, assessment criteria and the town centre design guide, I consider the

¹ R Knott, *Proposed Alterations FreshChoice, Greytown, Urban Design and Heritage Assessment*, Richard Knott Limited, 13 April 2023.

design is sympathetic to the heritage values of the Historic Heritage Precinct for the following reasons:

- (a) The provision of a well-functioning supermarket (which meets relevant health and safety obligations) makes an important contribution to the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of the local community – it is an essential element in the existing well-functioning urban environment.
- (b) The existing building to be demolished, is set far back from the street frontage, as such:
 - (i) Due to the Beech Tree and other planting along the site frontage and within the Site, the building makes little contribution to the Main Street street-scene/environment.
 - (ii) It does not contribute to the continuity of the building frontages.
 - (iii) Demolition of the building will have little impact on the historic heritage values of the area.
- (c) The existing wall along the site frontage makes a contribution to the continuity of the site frontage and has therefore been retained (although the gap for the vehicular access will require widening to accommodate the updated access).
- (d) Whilst it is not scheduled, the Beech Tree on the Site frontage contributes to the enclosure and continuity of the Main Street. The proposed vehicular access and pedestrian access have been designed to allow the retention of the Beech Tree, with detailed advice from an arborist now forming part of the application.
- (e) The site entrance has been further considered and redesigned to be of a lesser width than previously proposed at the street frontage and is narrowed further into the site with additional landscape planting to each side, further emphasising its reduced width.
- (f) Larger areas of landscape planting are provided either side of the new access, to maintain the existing planted character of the previous front yard area and to provide screening which breaks views of the fence and gates on the south boundary of the service yard.

- (g) The position of the service yard, the gates enclosing this at each end, the resulting curved alignment of the new access road, retention of the existing Beech Tree and the retention of the wall on the Site frontage and new landscape planting will ensure that there will not be a clear view down the lane towards the new canopy and towards the car park.
- (h) The proposed externally illuminated sign has been significantly reduced in size from the original proposal and is constructed in painted timber to be in keeping with the heritage values of the historic heritage precinct. It will now be no taller than the eaves height of the adjacent building to the north (132 Main Street), which it is located close to. As a result, it will not stand out unduly in the street, particularly given the retention of the existing Beech Tree.
- (i) Whilst the proposal includes the addition of a new canopy on the existing supermarket building, this is located around 28m back from the Site frontage to Main Street (although within the historic heritage precinct).
- (j) The canopy is simple in design. Following discussions with the Council's historic heritage specialist, thought was given to the detailed design of the canopy and whether there was a potential design which reflected the design and materials of older buildings in the area. It was concluded that attempting to do so would be likely to significantly increase the bulk and mass of the canopy and that it was more appropriate to design a structure which recognised the functional needs of the supermarket building (and so recognise the advice in Section 6.3.18 of the Operative District Plan).
- (k) The overall height of the canopy is not out of keeping with the main supermarket building. Overall, given the simple design of the canopy and its very significant setback from the main street frontage (around 28m), the alterations will maintain the character and amenity of the Commercial zone and will enhance the functionality of the supermarket building.
- (l) The Site does not currently make a positive contribution to the creation of a pleasant pedestrian-oriented retail environment, as the existing building is not in commercial use and is set well back from the Site frontage.

- (m) Whilst the creation of the new vehicular access has the potential to disrupt the free flow of pedestrians across the Site frontage, the potential for this is mitigated by the updated design of the proposed access:
- (n) The access will be designed as a vehicle crossing rather than as a road with kerbs and channel. Pedestrians will therefore maintain priority across the entrance, and they will not be forced to navigate kerbs and channels, rather they will be able to continue across the entrance on a footpath. The reduced width of the vehicle crossing will reduce the distance that pedestrians have to pass by, compared to earlier plans.
- (o) The proposal provides a new pedestrian access to the supermarket entrance which increases the pedestrian focus of the supermarket development.
- (p) Together these matters will mitigate the potential adverse effect of the demolition of the existing building, new access and alterations to the building and ensure that the overall impression is that Main Street has a broadly continuous frontage of buildings and large trees as existing.
- (q) As described above, the proposed access and alterations to the supermarket building have been designed to be in keeping with the existing character and amenity values of Main Street whilst assisting the Applicant in meeting their Health and Safety obligations, which need to be considered under the purpose of the RMA. The use of external illumination for the proposed sign will minimise impact on the Dark Sky Management Area guidelines.

6. 42A REPORT

- 6.1 I have reviewed the 42A Report dated 1st September 2023 with particular regard to the heritage and urban design matters. I address the key matters raised in the 42A Report below.

Significance of the submission of the Greytown Heritage Trust

- 6.2 The 42A Report appears to place greater significance on this particular submission than others, in that it states:

The Greytown Heritage Trust (GHT) submission also includes a detailed assessment against the relevant Historic Heritage WDCP provisions (objectives and policies and assessment criteria) and tend to agree with the findings and conclusions of Ian Bowman, contrary to the findings of the Richard Knott assessment. It is noted that the GHT are regularly called upon by SWDC to assist in assessments of resource consent applications for sites within the Greytown HHP, the residential extension of the Greytown Heritage Precinct (Plan Change 4), or individually listed heritage items in and around Greytown.²

- 6.3 I do not dispute that the Trust has significant knowledge of the local area and note that at least one trustee could be considered a heritage expert. However, the Trust's website confirms that the Trust is 'a group of dedicated volunteers advocating for and preserving the unique history and heritage features of Greytown in South Wairarapa'³.

- 6.4 As such an interest group, I do not consider that the Trust can be seen as objective or impartial, and it is therefore entirely inappropriate in my opinion and experience that Council officers would call upon them to assist with Council assessments of resource consents for sites within the Greytown HHP. Their submission should be treated as any other lay submission.

That the Proposal is contrary to the aims and outcomes of the HHP

- 6.5 The 42A Report suggests that 'the proposal to create an 8.3m wide industrial style access within a HHP site is actually contrary to the aims and desired outcomes of the HHP as it is not even envisaged or contemplated by the Design Guidelines.'⁴
- 6.6 This statement is incorrect as the desired outcome for the HHP are set by the relevant objective, 10.3.1 Objective HH1 – Historic Heritage Values, not by the content of the design guidelines.

² 42A Report at 72.

³ Greytown Heritage Trust, <<https://www.greytownheritagetrust.co.nz/>>

⁴ 42A Report paragraph 73.

- 6.7 Mr Bowman also incorrectly states the aims of the HHP. The aims he quotes, included at 35.1.2 of the ODP, are the aims of the South Wairarapa Town Centres Design Guide.
- 6.8 Objective HH1, and its supporting policies, 10.3.2 HH1 Policies, do not make any statement which suggests that an access such as that proposed at the Site is contrary to the aims or desired outcomes for the HHP.

Concerns about the Beech Tree

- 6.9 As noted above, my support for the proposal is reliant on the fact that the Applicant intends to retain the existing Beech Tree at the Site frontage. Notwithstanding this, and appreciating Mr Peers' evidence about the tree, I note that there is currently no control over the replacement of the tree should it die.
- 6.10 In these circumstances I consider it good practice that the Applicant has offered a condition that if the Beech Tree was to be adversely affected by the proposal to the point that it should die, a replacement tree should be planted. I consider that the suggestion in the 42A Report that this 'questions whether the real intention is to retain the tree or not.'⁵ is not based on sound planning best practice and fails to show objectivity.

Width of the Proposed Access

- 6.11 The 42A Report suggests that 'the width of the proposed access into the Site is inconsistent with the width of the limited number of existing driveways along this stretch of the street'.⁶ This is incorrect.
- 6.12 The significant majority of properties on the south side of Main Street have their own driveway. There are less driveways on the north side of the Street, but there is not a 'limited' number. For instance, there are driveways at 132, adjacent to 136B, 140, 142, 148-50 Main Street. I respond more fully to this issue in my response to the GHT submission below.

⁵ 42A Report at 77.

⁶ 42A Report at 90.

Relevance of the SWDC Greytown Town Centre Historic Heritage Precinct and Heritage Buildings, Guidelines to making changes to buildings in heritage precincts

- 6.13 Mr Bowman makes reference to the SWDC 'Greytown (Town) Centre Historic Heritage Precinct and Heritage Buildings, Guidelines to making changes to buildings in heritage precincts'.⁷
- 6.14 I am surprised by Mr Bowman's reference to the guidelines; as outlined below I consider that there are doubts as to the validity of the descriptions and guidance:
- (a) The statutory status of the guidelines is not clear, as to whether they have been through an RMA or Local Government Act process, and therefore what weight should be given to them under s104(1)(c).
 - (b) The specific purpose of the guidelines is to make changes to buildings in heritage precincts (rather than to guide other works in HHPs such as the construction of a new access).
 - (c) They appear ill informed; for instance, the guidelines describe various building typologies within the Town Centre area, including Hotels, which it describes as 'Timber, two storey, wide verandah/balcony'.⁸ There are few hotels in the centre of Greytown and this appears to be a description of the White Swan Hotel. I note that the White Swan was previously a NZ Railways administration building at Woburn, Lower Hutt and was moved to the site in 2002 in six parts, pieced together and converted into a hotel.⁹
- 6.15 Notwithstanding the above, I also disagree with Mr Bowman that the building at the Site is largely consistent with the description for residences given in the guidelines; 'Timber, verandahs, setback from street, garages setback from house.'
- 6.16 The existing house at the Site differs significantly from the above description in that it has plaster elevations and there is no verandah on the house (assuming that this means verandahs on the front elevation or otherwise visible from the street). Given this, the existing house is not typical of residences in the area.

⁷ Evidence of Ian Bowman – paragraph 21.

⁸ SWDC Greytown Centre Historic Heritage Precinct and Heritage Buildings Guidelines to making changes to buildings in heritage precincts; and the evidence of Mr Bowman at 21.

⁹ Informed by <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/12123/new-lease-of-life>.

Mr Bowman's Assessment of Impacts

- 6.17 There is overlap between a number of the statutory controls and assessment impacts outlined in Mr Bowman's evidence; for brevity I therefore respond to common matters raised across these.
- 6.18 Mr Bowman's evidence indicates that removal of dwelling on the Site will reduce the heritage values of the HHP.¹⁰ I disagree. As outlined above, the existing dwelling is set far back from the Site's frontage to Main Street and does not contribute to the continuity of the building frontages. There are limited views of the existing building due to the existing planting along the site frontage and the Beech Tree. As such, the demolition of the building will have little impact on the historic heritage values of the area.
- 6.19 Mr Bowman also indicates that the proposal overall will impact the integrity, character, use and amenity of nine listed properties.¹¹ I disagree with this statement. The closest nine scheduled heritage properties are identified on Figure 2.



Figure 2: Site of 134 Main Street outlined in cyan. Scheduled heritage buildings identified by red circles (115/117 Main Street marked with 'X' and 125 Main Street marked with 'Y')

¹⁰ Evidence of Mr Bowman at 36.
¹¹ As above.

6.20 In my opinion:

- (a) With the retention of the Beech Tree the view of the application site from many of these sites will alter very little. From outside of 115/117 Main Street (marked 'X' on Figure 2), the retained Beech Tree dominates the view, with views of the site frontage also disrupted by the verandah on the adjacent building at 132 Main Street. This view will alter little as a result of the planned works.
- (b) From 135 Main Street (marked 'Y' on Figure 2), the Beech Tree will remain the dominant feature. In time, new landscaping will soften the frontage. Whilst the new sign will be visible against the side elevation of 132 Main Street, it will not appear out of scale with the area when seen against this backdrop. The sign will not appear more colourful than other signage in the local area; I address this specific matter in more detail below in response to The Greytown Heritage Trust's submission.
- (c) Views from more distant scheduled heritage sites will be even less affected than these two examples.
- (d) From the two of the closest scheduled buildings, 119 and 123 Main Street, views of the Site will be more visible than at present. However, I do not consider that this fundamentally affects the heritage values of these sites in themselves, in so much as I do not consider the Site to be part of the surroundings which are associated with these heritage buildings. Each of these two buildings is viewed in the context of their own site and within the wider street scene. People viewing them will either be looking along the street and be aware of the retained Beech Tree or be directly looking at them, and unaware of the altered site at 134 Main Street.
- (e) Passerby will see the scheduled heritage building at 132 Main Street (and to an extent the more distant 130 Main Street) with the altered site at 134. There will likely be a greater view of the side elevation of 132 Main Street (a scheduled historic heritage building) than there is at present, and if directly opposite the site additional glimpses of the supermarket building and service yard gates at the same time as also viewing 130 and 132 Main Street. The supermarket building is already viewed along the driveway between these buildings. However, with the retention of the Beech Tree and with the planned new landscaping within the Site, I do not consider that this will have

a significant impact on the heritage values of either of these two scheduled heritage buildings.



*Figure 3: View towards the new access from outside of 115/117 Main Street
(Photo RKL)*



*Figure 4: View towards the site from (approximately) outside of 125 Main Street
(photo RKL)*

Negative impact of the view of the Site

- 6.21 As discussed above in relation to the effects on the scheduled historic heritage buildings in the local area, there are already views of the supermarket building from Main Street, between the scheduled heritage buildings. With the retention of the Beech Tree and with the planned new landscaping within the site, I do not consider that any additional glimpses of the supermarket building will have a significant impact on the heritage values of either the street scene or overall heritage values of the area.

Residential character

- 6.22 The main existing contributor to the residential character of the Site is that it does not have a shop/commercial building on the street frontage. It instead has a very large tree and other planting on the street frontage. Whilst the existing building is of residential character, this is only apparent to a passerby should they stop and look through the existing vehicular access towards the building. The site has a Commercial zoning.
- 6.23 Whilst the construction of the wider driveway will have an impact on the appearance of the site, it will not provide it with a fully commercial appearance; it will remain a planted frontage and retain some of its existing characteristics.
- 6.24 As set out above, I consider that the removal of the existing building will not have a significant impact on the character of the site or values of the HHP.

7. RESPONSE TO RELEVANT SUBMISSIONS

- 7.1 I have read the submissions from The Greytown Heritage Trust and Michelle Dawson and Ian McDonald (Greyfriars Motel), both of which raise a number of matters which relate to heritage and urban design. I address these concerns below.
- 7.2 From reading the Trust's submission, my understanding (in summary) is that the Trust considers that the proposal shows disregard to the HHP, and that the health and safety issues are overstated and do not warrant the level of change proposed (and that they are not aware of any health and safety incidents).
- 7.3 I disagree. The proposal has sought to maintain the existing values of the HHP whilst overcoming inherent health and safety concerns with the existing layout of the site. My understanding is that whether or not there has been a health

and safety incident is not relevant; the fact is that the existing layout raises health and safety concerns which Woolworths are obligated to address.

7.4 The Trust question whether the Beech Tree will be retained. I have advised Woolworths from my early involvement in the scheme that the Beech Tree makes a significant contribution to the heritage values of the area. It is, and has always been, my understanding that the intention is that the Beech Tree will be retained and appropriately protected during and after construction. Had this not been the intention I would not have been able to support the proposal and my assessment of the Application would have been quite different.

7.5 The Trust notes that the proposed sign exceeds the standards for a permitted sign within the area. I do not consider this to be a fatal flaw; it has merely triggered the need for resource consent for the sign and brings the opportunity to consider whether or not the proposed sign is appropriate. The sign has been significantly reduced in size from the original proposal and is constructed in painted timber to be in keeping with the heritage values of the HHP.

7.6 Whilst I note that the Trust considers that its colours are bright and out of keeping with the area, the colours of the sign are the same as those on existing supermarket signage already visible from Main Street. Other signs within the heritage precinct incorporate bright colours including:

- (a) Tommy's Real Estate, bright green signage, adjacent to the application site.
- (b) Property Brokers, including large red signage, corner of Hastwell Street with Main Street.
- (c) The White Swan, multiple bright green umbrellas advertising a beer brand.
- (d) Greytown Fish Supply, large bright red signage around the edge of the verandah.
- (e) Cahoots, bright red building frontage.
- (f) Greytown Superette, bright red fascia sign.

7.7 Many of these examples are significantly more dominant than the proposed sign in the Application, which would be located at right angles to Main Street, set in from the Site frontage and within the context of the retained Beech Tree. I remain of the opinion that the sign will not stand out unduly in the street.

7.8 The Trust have also raised concerns that the illumination of the sign will impact the 'dark skies' and that the sign as a whole will impact the amenity of residents living opposite the site:

(a) I consider that it would be appropriate to place a condition any consent granted to require that the external lighting be confirmed by way of additional information. The 42A Report suggests such a condition. I also note that Ms Panther Knight confirms that conditions are proposed that will ensure compliance with lighting standards and restrict the hours of illumination to the hours of operation of the store, 7am - 9pm. With such conditions in place, the Council could enforce compliance with this requirement. I am not a lighting specialist but am confident that lighting can be added to the sign without a negative impact on dark skies.

(b) I have not visited the dwelling at 119 Main Street (in that whilst I have visited the application site and local area on a number of occasions, I have not entered 119 Main Street or its garden area). However, I note that there is a tall fence along the site frontage, with trees within this. The trees are large and dense. Given this I consider that the likelihood of any amenity effect on these residents from the sign appears low.

7.9 I am not appropriately qualified to assess the structural condition of the existing wall along the site frontage, which will be retained and altered. However, I consider that it would be appropriate to add a condition to the consent to require rebuilding if damage occurs. This could specify that any replacement (approved by Council) should be of a similar height to the existing wall and that the detailed design and have minimal impact on the retained Beech tree.

7.10 The Trust suggest that the proposed access is far wider than is typical of the area. Whilst the driveway is 8.3m wide it narrows to 6.8m alongside the tree and further reduces to 5.0m further into the Site. My understanding is that splays will not be formed in the footpath along the Site frontage although the area of dropped kerb will be wider than the access to allow vehicles to turn in. By comparison, the vehicular access at 123 Main Street, almost opposite the Site, is around 8.5m¹², and the access to the Greyfriars Motel is around 6.7m (with the driveway widening to 10.4m around 2m into the site, immediately behind the small island of planting on the Site frontage).

¹² All measurements for other properties taken from the Wairarapa Property and Land map viewer.

- 7.11 I note that these other driveways appear wider than the maximum indicated in the Trust's submission (and significantly wider than the stated average). As noted in my assessment, the apparent width of the proposed access is reduced further into the Site with additional landscape planting to each side. In direct contrast, the Greyfriars Motel entrance opens to a wide area of parking which continues into the Site without the enclosure provided by the large Beech Tree to be retained at the application Site, or from by planting along each side.
- 7.12 On this basis I consider that the width of the proposed access is not out of step with other examples seen within the HHP.



Figure 5: 10.5m wide gap at entrance to Greyfriars Motel, opening to wide area of parking, without enclosure provided by the large Beech Tree to be retained at the application site, not reducing in width into the site and without the further enclosure provided by planting along each side as proposed as part of the application.

- 7.13 Reference is made in the submission to alterations to the neighbour's verandah. I assume that this refers to the building at 132 Main Street, which is a scheduled heritage building. I am not aware of any alterations being required to this building.
- 7.14 I accept that when working within a historic area there is always the potential for it to be found that an Archaeological Authority is required. As is usual for projects such as this, this matter can be addressed by a standard advice note on the decision. I do not consider that this is not a matter which should influence the outcome of an application for Resource Consent.

7.15 The submission of Michelle Dawson and Ian McDonald (Greyfriars Motel) quotes the introduction to Chapter 10 - Historic Heritage of the Wairarapa Combined District Plan, submitting that the Application contravenes the objectives and policies. I do not disagree with any of the quoted text and consider that the proposed development, as a whole, appropriately responds to the objectives and policies of the operative Wairarapa Combined District Plan, as set out in my Assessment.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 I do not consider that the existing building at 134 Main Street makes a positive contribution to the values of the HHP; it has a neutral effect. The demolition of the building will therefore not have an impact on the values of the HHP.

8.2 In my opinion, the proposed scheme has been appropriately designed to mitigate the potential adverse effect of the demolition of the existing building, new access and alterations to the building and to ensure that the overall impression is that Main Street has a broadly continuous frontage of buildings and large trees as existing. As such the proposal appropriately balances the Woolworths' health and safety obligations (which need to be considered under the purpose of the RMA) against the need to protect the historic heritage values of Greytown from inappropriate development.

Richard Knott
15 September 2023