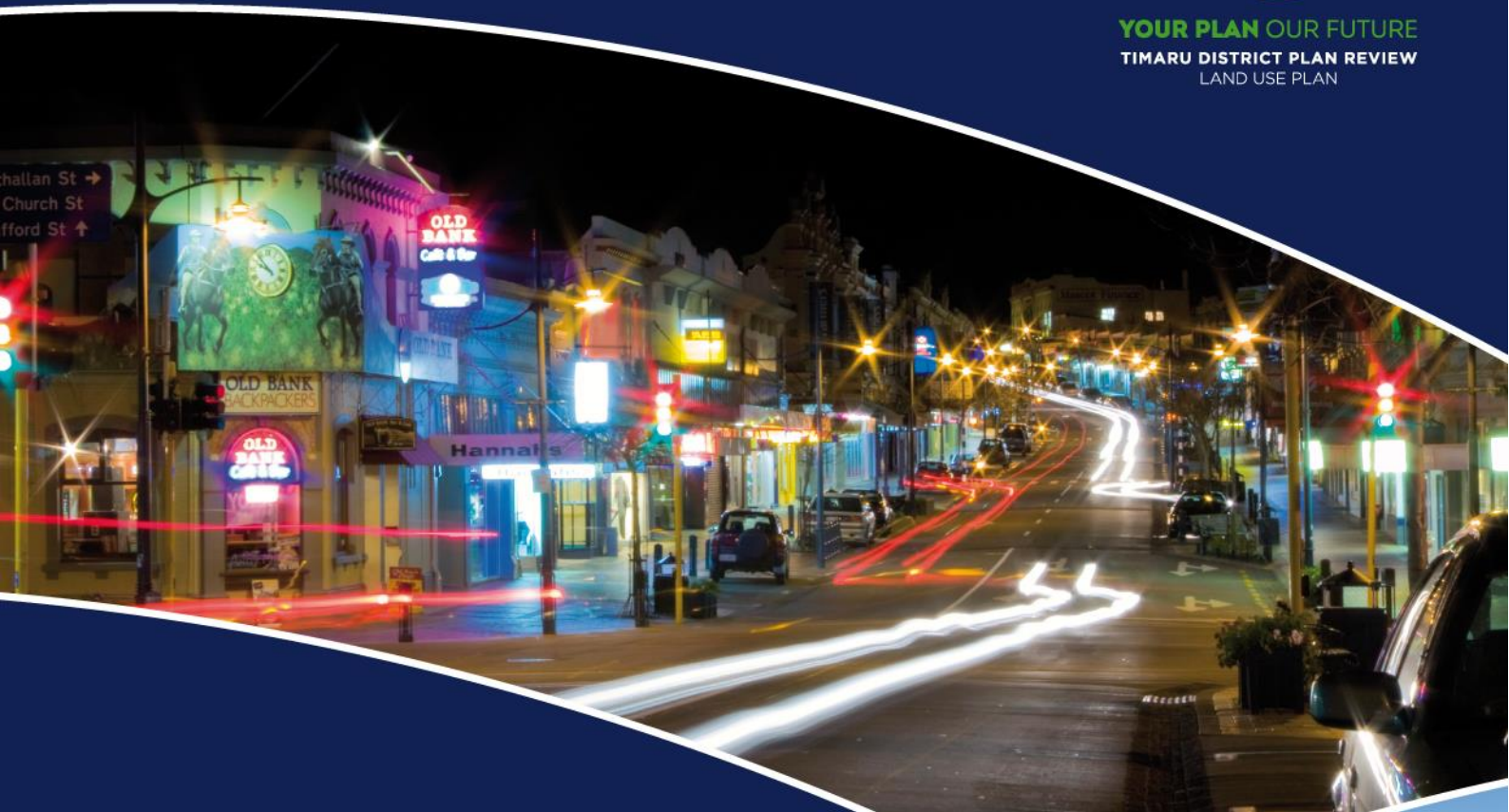




YOUR PLAN OUR FUTURE
TIMARU DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW
LAND USE PLAN




District Town Centres Study 2016



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CONTRIBUTIONS

Function	Name	Position
Project supervisor	Mark Geddes	District Planning Manager
Surveys, analysis of results and graphs	Aaron Hakkaart	Planner
Prepared mapping	Richard Lovell	GIS Officer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District's town centres are at the heart of our communities. They are where we meet, shop and do business. They are also where many of us work and where most of us, at least from time to time are entertained, and where some of us live. Our town centres have historical significance, not just because of our rich Victorian and Edwardian architecture, but because it is where our community commenced and where it has evolved into what it is today.

Given the importance of our town centres, it is crucial that we not only plan them correctly, but also periodically review how they are performing. If we can keep abreast and address the issues and opportunities faced by our town centres, we can ensure they continually improve and continue to be great places. Further, if we want our town centres to be truly amazing places, which are capable of attracting large numbers of people, then we have to be proactive, we have to think outside the box and we have work together and we have to be bold in our ambition.

In light of this, this report examines the issues and opportunities faced by our town centres. It subsequently suggests some ideas on how to address those matters. It is not intended that this report will provide all the answers, but that it will start a discussion and process that will improve our town centres to make them even better places.

The District Plan Review provides an opportunity to review the current planning rules that relate to our town centres. Given the significance of our town centres and the need support investment in it, it is crucial that we provide a clear and effective planning regime to manage new development in them. Starting the discussion on our town centres now provides an early opportunity to identify and address issues and opportunities and ensure they are addressed from the outset of the District Plan Review.

This report's assessment of our town centres found that they are generally performing fairly well. However, we have also found a number of issues and some opportunities that can be addressed to significantly improve the performance of our town centres.

The main issues with the District's town centres are the:

- high vacancy in some areas;
- lack of coordination and cooperation amongst town centre businesses;
- lack of activity in some areas;
- ageing building stock;
- earthquake prone buildings
- retail expenditure leakage and under performance;
- out of centre retail development;
- traffic congestion and lack of parking.

The main opportunities for the District's town centres are:

- encouraging the use of vacant buildings;
- establishing a Town Centre Management Group;
- capitalising on the unique quality of Timaru's built heritage;
- capturing the leakage in retail expenditure;
- consolidating retail activities to a core area;
- encouraging residential and visitor accommodation development;
- enhancing amenity values;
- providing more open space pedestrian areas and outdoor dining;
- improving accessibility;
- promoting clustering of similar activities;
- assisting large format retailers into locations in and around the town centre;
- ensuring the DP encourages suitable development;
- the development of key sites;
- making the most of views;
- the addition of more people attracting activities;
- the benefits of driverless cars.

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LAND USE PLAN

Part 1

Introduction, Background and Methodology



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PART 1 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to examine the issues and opportunities faced by the District's town centres and to subsequently present options to address those matters.

It is hoped that this report will stimulate discussion so that the issues and opportunities facing the District's town centres can be readily identified. It is not

intended that this report will provide the answers to the issues and opportunities faced by the town centre, but rather be the start of the discussion and a process that will make our District town centres the best they can be. Timaru District Council wants to encourage economic development in the District and is particularly keen on supporting the town centre and town centre businesses.



The report and the consultation will provide important information that will inform the District Growth Strategy and the Timaru District Plan Review (DPR), both of which have just commenced. The District Growth Strategy will provide a Council strategy for dealing with growth in the District, including potential growth issues faced by the District's town centres. The Growth Strategy will also inform the DPR, particularly informing the quantum and location of any new zoning required. As the District Plan manages new development, including land use and subdivision, it potentially has a significant impact on the District's town centres. The DPR therefore provides an opportunity to address some of the issues and opportunities faced by the District's town centre. Accordingly, before the DPR progresses further, it is important that Council gains a comprehensive understanding of the issues and options faced by the District's town centres. Doing so will ensure town centre growth issues can be addressed by the Growth Strategy and that town centre matters addressed by the District Plan can be addressed in the DPR. Go to www.tdc/dpr for more information about the DPR.

1.2 SCOPE OF REPORT

This report is broadly set out as follows:

Part 1 – The remainder of Part 1 summarises the significance of town centres, some relevant background information and the study methodology.

Parts 2 to 5 – Summarises the study results of Timaru, Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point town centres respectively.

Part 6 – Distils the key issues and opportunities faced by the District's town centres.

The report has been informed by various information sources, including a Timaru Retail Market Assessment (TRMA) commissioned by Timaru District Council and prepared by Property Economics. The TRMA and the other information sources used in this study are described later in Part 3 of this report.

It is important to note that this report does not represent Council policy or the views of elected members. It is also important to note from the outset that not all of the issues and opportunities faced by the District's town centres are within Council's control to address. For instance, issues and opportunities faced by the retail sector are largely driven by market forces and are therefore outside Council's direct control. Accordingly, the reader should note that while this report addresses a range of issues and opportunities faced by the District's town centres, Council may have limited powers to address some matters. However, it is still important to identify all issues and opportunities facing the District's town centres, as even if Council cannot address a particular matter, businesses, either singularly or collectively, may be able to deal with it.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF TOWN CENTRES

Town centres have traditionally been the focus of economic, administrative, cultural and social activity. They consist of a combination of land uses, built form, infrastructure, natural areas, public spaces, and most importantly people. Land uses in town centres are often mixed and are normally highly interdependent. It is the combination and critical mass of land uses that attract people and make them viable commercial areas. Town centres

generally evolve over time and are often significant cultural areas, with historic buildings, places and monuments and places of significance to Tanga Whenua. These historic elements help contribute to a sense of place and character, are highly valued by the community and give a sense of cultural pride. The people and character of town centres combine to give a centre its vitality and vibrancy and makes them great places to visit.

All of Timaru District's town centres exhibit these characteristics. The rural town centres of Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point serve as local centres for their respective areas, while the Timaru town centre takes on a broader role being the main centre for the South Canterbury area.

Given the significance of town centres, it is crucial to not only plan them correctly, but to periodically review how they are performing. If we can periodically review and address the issues and opportunities faced by our town centres, we can ensure they continually improve and continue to play an important part in our community. It is anticipated that all of the district's town centres have potential for improvement. Identifying and addressing these areas of improvement will help foster economic development, support local employment and help create diverse, attractive places where people want to work, live and visit. Further, it's worth pointing out that if we want our town centres to be truly amazing places, which are capable of attracting large numbers of people, then we have to be proactive, we have to think outside the box and we have work together and we have to be bold in our ambition.

Providing a clear planning framework for town centres is also important. Town centres are subject to significant investment and are the main focus for commercial activities. To ensure that investors can confidently invest in our town centres, and to ensure existing businesses are confident to remain, the District Growth Strategy and the District Plan has to provide a clear planning framework. This will provide certainty for businesses and communities.

1.4 TOWNS ASSESSED

The Timaru District, a territorial authority of 46,850 people (2013 census) in and around Timaru City (31,205), includes a prosperous agricultural hinterland with links to smaller rural communities such as Pleasant Point (1,190), Temuka (4,247) and Geraldine (2,574). This report assesses all of these town centres.

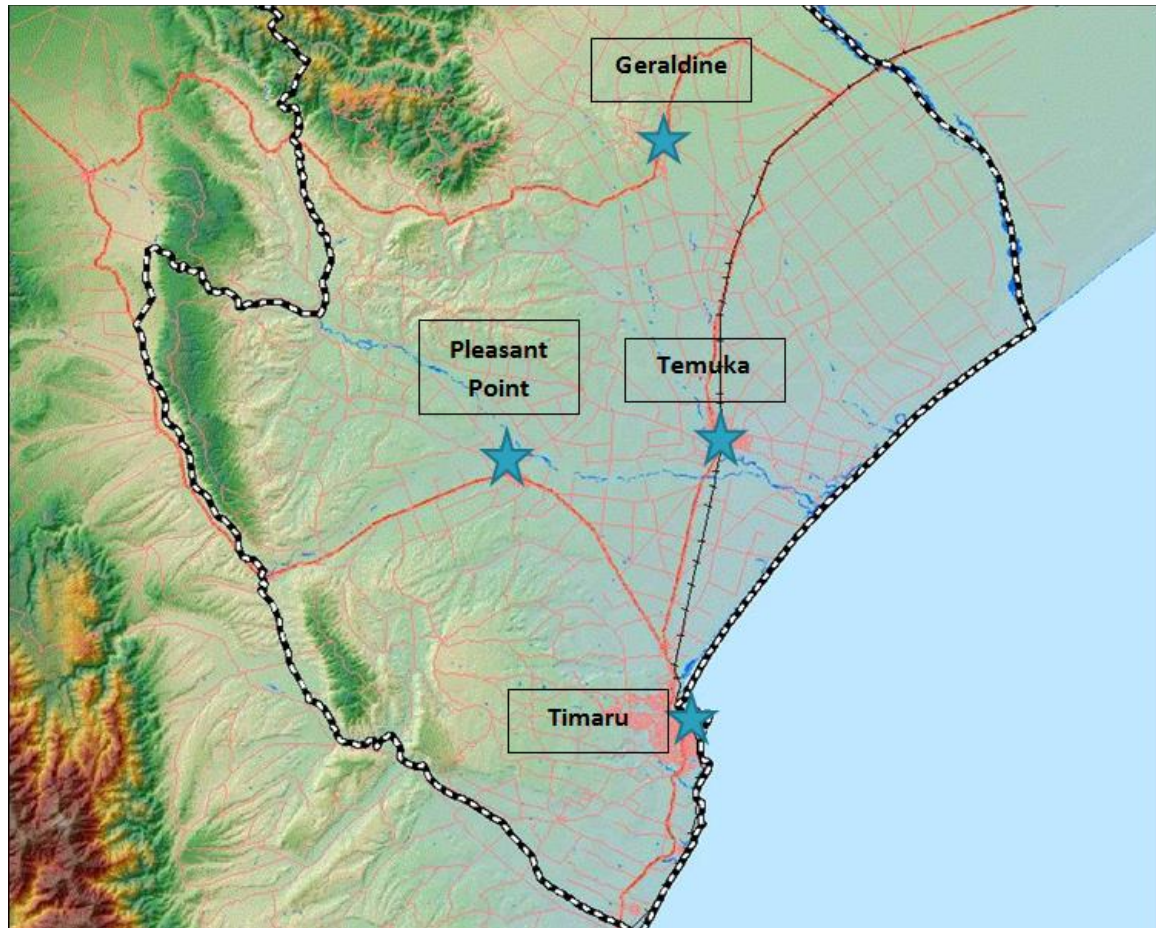


Figure 1: Map of Timaru District showing the centres assessed in this study

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 RETAIL HIERARCHY

The Timaru District contains a number of towns including Timaru, Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point. Timaru is the second largest city in Canterbury (after Christchurch) and is the biggest in the District. Timaru acts as the main commercial centre for the South Canterbury area, not only drawing trade from towns within the District, but also from towns and rural areas outside the district such as Waimate and Mackenzie District. The Timaru town centre therefore sits at the top of the retail hierarchy in the District, with the other towns generally operating in support and complementary to it by providing everyday shopping items and basic goods and services. By catering for a steady stream of visitors that travel along State Highways 79, Geraldine is the exception to the District's town centres by providing services that are not totally orientated towards local needs.

2.2 CHANGING RETAIL TRENDS

Over the last twenty years or so, there has been a significant increase in the size of some retail shops. Competition has driven down the unit price for products, which has led stores trying to sell more in order to make sufficient margins. Trying to sell more has led some stores stocking more, which has created a need for larger shop footprints. As larger shops cannot easily be accommodated into the finely grained allotments of town centres, larger shops have tended to move away from town centre premises to large sites on the edge or out of centre. Smith City, Briscoes, Harvey Norman, The Warehouse, Pak'n Save and Countdown are all examples in Timaru. There is a major retail park proposed at Showgrounds Hill in Timaru, although this is yet to be developed. Across the road, Harvey Norman has obtained resource consent for a similar retail park development. Both of these sites are out of centre and have the potential to affect the Timaru town centre.

In recent years, during the Global Financial Crisis, there was a downturn in retail spending. Now, it seems that a new market is emerging, with a higher dependency on on-line shopping and a demand for specific products. New Zealand is influenced by the global markets more than ever before. The emerging trends in the UK, Europe, and the USA are for more tailored shop layouts, even for chain stores, offering smaller retail footprints but a more diverse range of shopping experiences. This trend may also affect our District's town centres.

2.3 INTERNET RETAILING

The TRMA gives an overview of internet spending in New Zealand. Although it is difficult to precisely state the value of internet spending, the TRMA has estimated and adjusted it to be 5% of overall sales. This has been valued at \$3.7 billion nationally by the end of 2013¹. It is apparent that the growth of internet retailing is leading to a decrease in on-the-ground spend and floor space demand. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for town centre retailers.

2.4 BUILDING (EARTHQUAKE-PRONE BUILDINGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2013

The Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Bill 2013 was proposed by the Government to change the system for managing earthquake-prone buildings. The proposed new system aims to strike a better balance between protecting people from harm in an earthquake and managing the costs of strengthening or removing earthquake-prone buildings. At the date of writing the Bill has still not been passed. The final Select Committee report recommends the following amendments (in summary):

Engineering Assessments

- Territorial authorities are required to undertake an engineering assessment of earthquake prone buildings in 10 years, or 5 years for priority buildings.
- Priority buildings include:
 - Buildings for education/health/emergency activities;
 - Unreinforced masonry buildings on busy thoroughfares;
 - Buildings on key transport routes.

Remediation/demolition

- Remediation/demolition by landowners of earthquake prone building is required to be carried out in 17.5 years for priority buildings and 25 years for other buildings. Category 1 historic buildings have a 10 year time extension.

Alterations

¹ New Zealand Herald, March 1, 2014

- Territorial Authorities can require seismic upgrade for significant alterations.
- Alterations are allowed that do not comply with means of escape and disabled access provisions of the building code if the proposed alteration will no longer make the building earthquake prone and the upgrades are considered too onerous

Some of the key definitions in the Bill have not been defined and will be defined by regulation. Therefore there is still uncertainty about the exact nature of the Bill.

There is likely to be a significant amount of earthquake prone buildings in the District's town centres, although the exact number is uncertain, as are the costs of the upgrade. The extended timeframe for upgrading earthquake prone buildings will likely mitigate the economic impacts of the Bill. Building owners will be able to spread the cost over an extended period of time, significantly reducing the financial burden.

The effect of the public notices on the front of buildings is also uncertain. What may happen is that those buildings that are strengthened are preferred by tenants, particularly those that attract a large number of customers. Tenants will be conscious that occupying an earthquake prone building may deter some people from entering their store. Therefore, strengthened buildings will be able to command higher rentals, while buildings that have not been strengthened will not. Some businesses may opt to strengthen their building to avail of high rentals.

Building owners could collaborate with each other to get their buildings strengthened. There could be considerable economy of scale efficiencies and subsequent cost savings in doing this. Additionally, if managed correctly, it could be an opportunity for economic spend and gain.

2.5 CONSULTATION

As previously stated, it is intended that this report will be used as a basis to consult town centre businesses/landowners and stakeholders. Town centre business/landowners will be consulted initially through a public survey. Follow up meetings will be conducted with a cross-section of businesses/landowners if the results of the survey are not clear or if deemed necessary for another reason. Individual meetings will be held with stakeholders such as Heritage NZ, Aoraki Development Business and Tourism, the Chamber of Commerce etc. The consultation will be summarised and presented to Council, who will determine what

action should be taken, if any. The public have been consulted by way of a pedestrian survey in all four centres. The results of this survey will be discussed later in the report.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Due to the complexity and interrelatedness of land uses, environment, infrastructure and people in a town centre, a singular methodology cannot be employed to identify the issues and opportunities for each town centre. Accordingly, a combination of methodologies is required including: a health check analysis; a market assessment; and an assessment of relevant District Plan provisions and District Bylaws. These methodologies are briefly described in turn below.

3.1 HEALTH CHECK ANALYSIS

A health check analysis examines the health of a town centre in terms of its vitality and viability. Vitality is a measure of how active and buoyant a centre is, whilst viability refers to the commercial wellbeing of a town. The health check analysis conducted had five main components, being a:

- Land use survey;
- Accessibility assessment;
- Environmental survey;
- Pedestrian opinion survey.

The methodology used to conduct each of the above surveys/assessment is briefly summarised below.

- **Land Use Survey**

A land use survey was conducted to understand the composition of uses that make up each town centre. This is important as if we are to understand each centre, we must understand the composition of its uses and what is located there. The survey was completed by surveying (on foot) the ground floor use of each building. Land uses were then categorised, tallied and mapped so that we could understand the quantum of different uses and patterns and where these uses occurred. The main land uses categorised were:

Convenience: Shops that sell basic consumables, e.g. supermarkets, grocers, butchers, bakeries, newsagents and dairies etc.

Comparison: Shops that sell most other goods, e.g. clothes, electronics, furniture etc.

Food and Entertainment: Premises that provide food and/or entertainment, e.g. restaurants, take-aways, cafes, children’s entertainment centres, museums etc.

Offices: General office space, e.g. lawyers, estate agents, travel agents etc.

Service: Outlets that are service based, e.g. school, community centre, churches, banks, hairdressers, libraries, post office, health centre etc.

Tourist Activity: Businesses that primarily provide tourist services.

Retail Trade: Businesses that provide a trade related service or goods e.g. mechanics, tyre sales, paint supplies, glass repairers etc.

- **Accessibility Assessment**

An accessibility assessment was conducted to examine if there are any issues/opportunities in relation to access to, or around, each town centre. Access to and around the town centre’s was assessed, as was car and bicycle parking facilities, pedestrian routes and public transport.

- **Environmental Survey**

An environmental survey of each town centre was conducted to examine environmental and amenity related matters. Survey points were selected randomly. Each survey point was then assessed against a number of criteria. The subjects addressed by the criteria were:

- Public transport
- Pedestrian access
- Cleanliness
- Clutter
- Buildings appearance
- Seating
- Open space
- Directional signage
- Street trees and flowers
- On-street parking
- Traffic congestion
- Cycle facilities
- Footpath condition
- Active frontages

Each criterion was given a rating value from one to five, one being very poor and five being excellent. Additionally, each criteria was given a weighting ranging from one to four, with ‘1’ representing the least important criterion and ‘4’ the most

important. The final score was calculated by multiplying the value by the weighting and adding up each aspect.

Buildings that have an active frontage provide a positive contribution to the vitality of an area (and vice versa). Accordingly, an analysis of shop frontages along streets was undertaken. The streets with a high area of dressed shop windows were seen to have a stronger active frontage than those with blank walls, or few/small shop windows.

- **Pedestrians Opinion Survey**

A pedestrian opinion survey was conducted in order to understand the opinions of people who use each town centre. The survey was carried out during the last week of January 2015. Respondents were asked a series of fixed and open questions. Staff undertaking the survey generally situated themselves in areas of high pedestrian footfall. The questionnaire used in the survey is attached as Appendix 1. A total of 180 respondents completed the survey.

3.2 TIMARU RETAIL MARKET ASSESSMENT

The TRMA was prepared by Property Economics in February 2015 and is the principal assessment tool relied on to assess the viability of retail activities in the District.

The TRMA analysed the existing retail sector in each town and subsequently predicts what future growth is likely to occur. It then addresses the implications this has for future commercial zoned land requirements.

In summary, the TRMA considers there to be enough retail floorspace to meet the current and anticipated retail requirements of the district for the foreseeable future. It identified shortcomings in the provision of large retail floorspace (i.e. stores of 500sq.m or more). However, these current gaps will be filled with the Showgrounds Hill retail development and the redevelopment of the Harvey Norman site. The main findings of the TRMA are summarised as follows:

1. Over three-quarters (76%) of all retail expenditure generated by Timaru District residents is spent within the district.

2. The remaining retail expenditure (24%) leaks from the district. In monetary terms, this leakage amounts to \$112 million per year.
3. Expenditure leakage from the catchment of 24% means that there is potential for the local retail market to improve retail provision and retain this leakage.
4. Approximately 8% of retail expenditure leaks to Christchurch. There is significant expenditure leakage in relation to higher order comparison goods in Christchurch, equating to approx. 20% or \$1 of every \$5 spent.
5. Nearly a quarter of retail expenditure within the district is generated from outside the area, i.e. \$1 out of every \$4 spent in Timaru is derived from shoppers who live outside the district. There is potential to improve this.

The TRMA recognises that while there is sufficient retail provision within the District in terms of floorspace, the quality of the supply is not meeting the District's requirements. This has led to over half of all fashion spending made by Timaru residents being made outside the district. This can clearly be improved on and presents a major opportunity to increase market share, and therefore achieve higher sales.

The TRMA recognises that upgrading and redeveloping lower quality stores in the area will increase the town centres efficiency and productivity. Lower quality stores often represent smaller, lesser quality, second-hand and unbranded store types that do not perform or generate the same level of retail productivity as stores in other sectors².

The TRMA is referred to throughout this report and many of its recommendations incorporated into Part 6 – Issues and Opportunities. The TRMA is available at www.tdc.dpr

3.3 DISTRICT PLAN AND DISTRICT BYLAWS

The District Plan manages new land use, buildings, subdivision, and development in our district. Accordingly, it has a significant impact on our town centres. For this reason, it is important to analyse the District Plan's provisions that relate to our town centres to see how effective they are in the current economic climate.

² Timaru Retail Market Assessment, Property Economics, page 20

The Timaru District Consolidated Bylaw 2013 also manages a number of matters in the town centre's, including traffic speeds; liquor; trading in public places; use of public places; and some aspects of signage. Again therefore, it is important to examine the relevant provisions of the Bylaws to see if there are issues that affect the town centre.

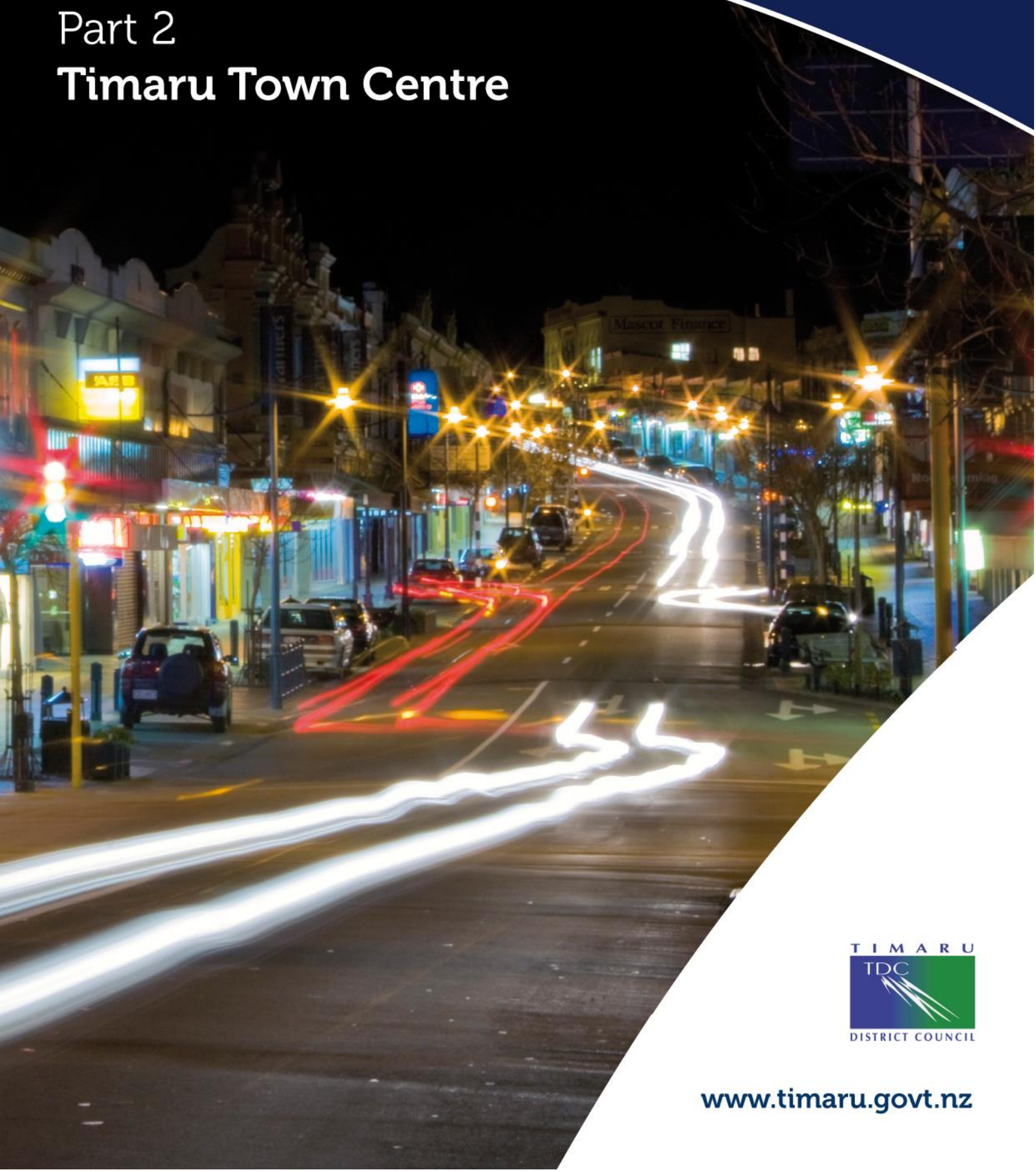
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Part 2

Timaru Town Centre



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PART 2 TIMARU TOWN CENTRE

INTRODUCTION TO TIMARU TOWN CENTRE

Timaru is south Canterbury's largest regional hub, set amongst an agricultural hinterland and a major port. Timaru is located 157km south/west of Christchurch and approximately 196km north/east of Dunedin on the Pacific coast. Timaru is built on the hills created by lava flow from the extinct Mount Horrible, resulting in some steep and winding streets, and providing the distinct bluestone rock from which many of the town's buildings are constructed. Timaru's rolling topography is in clear contrast to the flat landscape of the Canterbury Plains to the north.

Timaru is an agricultural service town and port for the South Canterbury regional economy. Timaru is one of the major cargo ports of the South Island, with a number of light manufacturing plants associated with the export and import trade. Many of these producers are concerned with processing, packing, and distributing meat, dairy and other agricultural produce.

4.0 HEALTH CHECK

4.1 LAND USE SURVEY

The Timaru commercial area is split into three different commercial zones by the District Plan, which each having a specific theme (see Figure 3). The Commercial 1A Zone extends 1.3km from The Bay Hill to the south of Stafford Street. It only extends back from the main street for approximately half a block. The Commercial 1B Zone adjoins the main retail area to the east and west, while the Commercial 1C Zone is located in three distinct pockets on the periphery. All three commercial zones have been included in the study. The location and extent of different uses, the quantum of different land uses, and the main attractions in the town centre are illustrated in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 7 respectively.

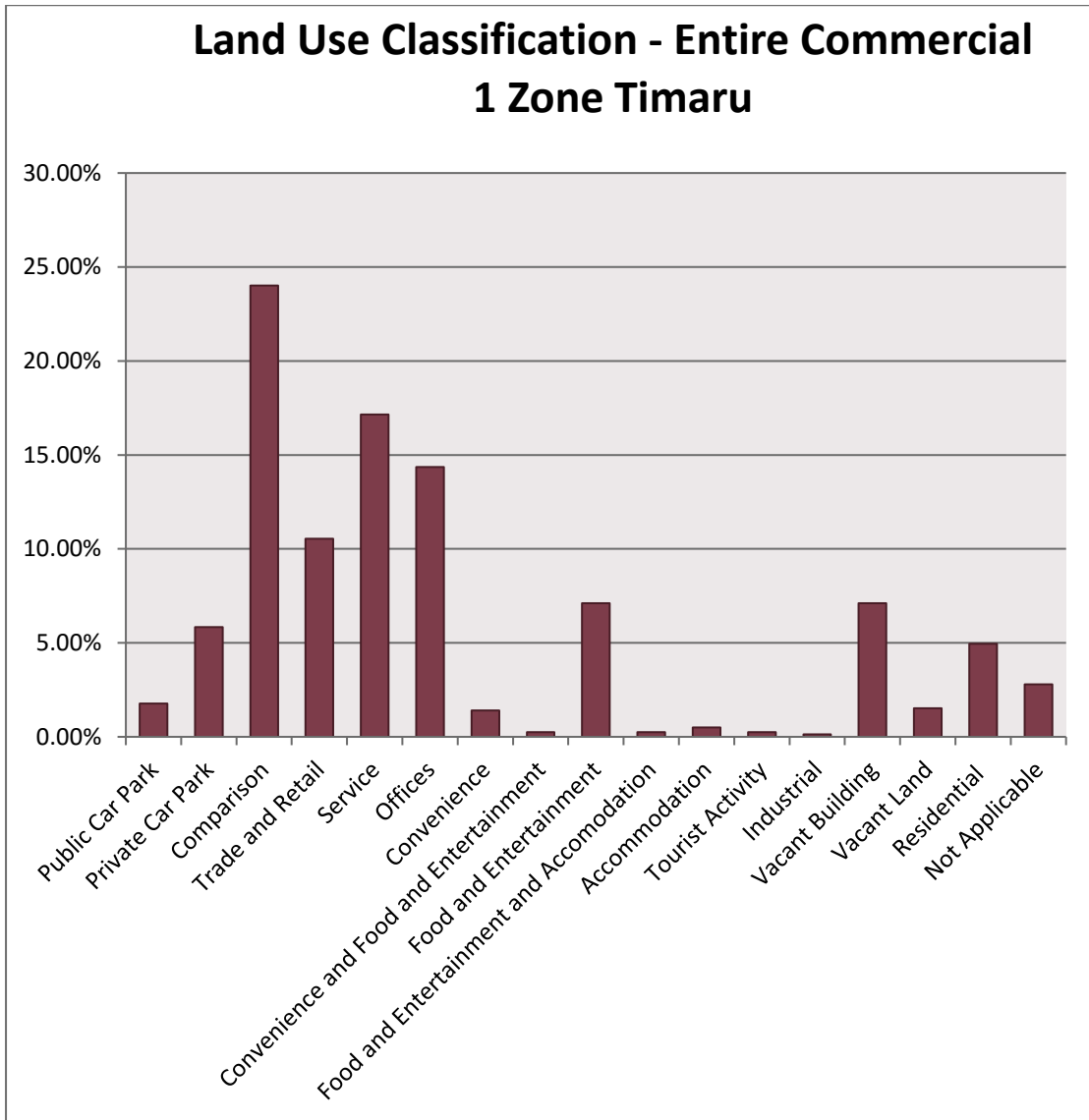


Figure 2 – Land Uses in the Commercial Zone (Entire Study Area). These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

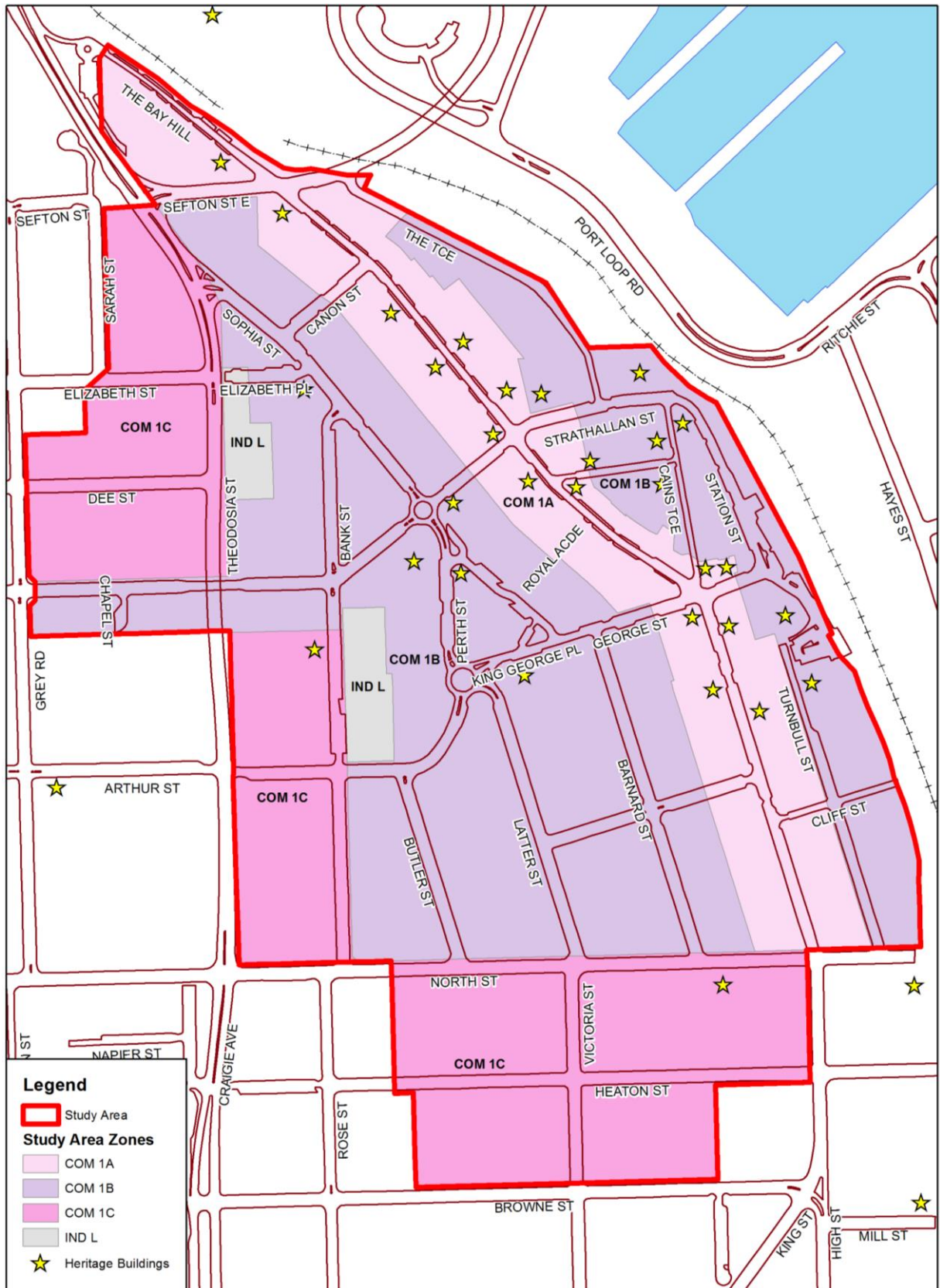


Figure 3 – Extent of the Timaru Town Centre and Extent of the District Plan’s Commercial 1 Zones

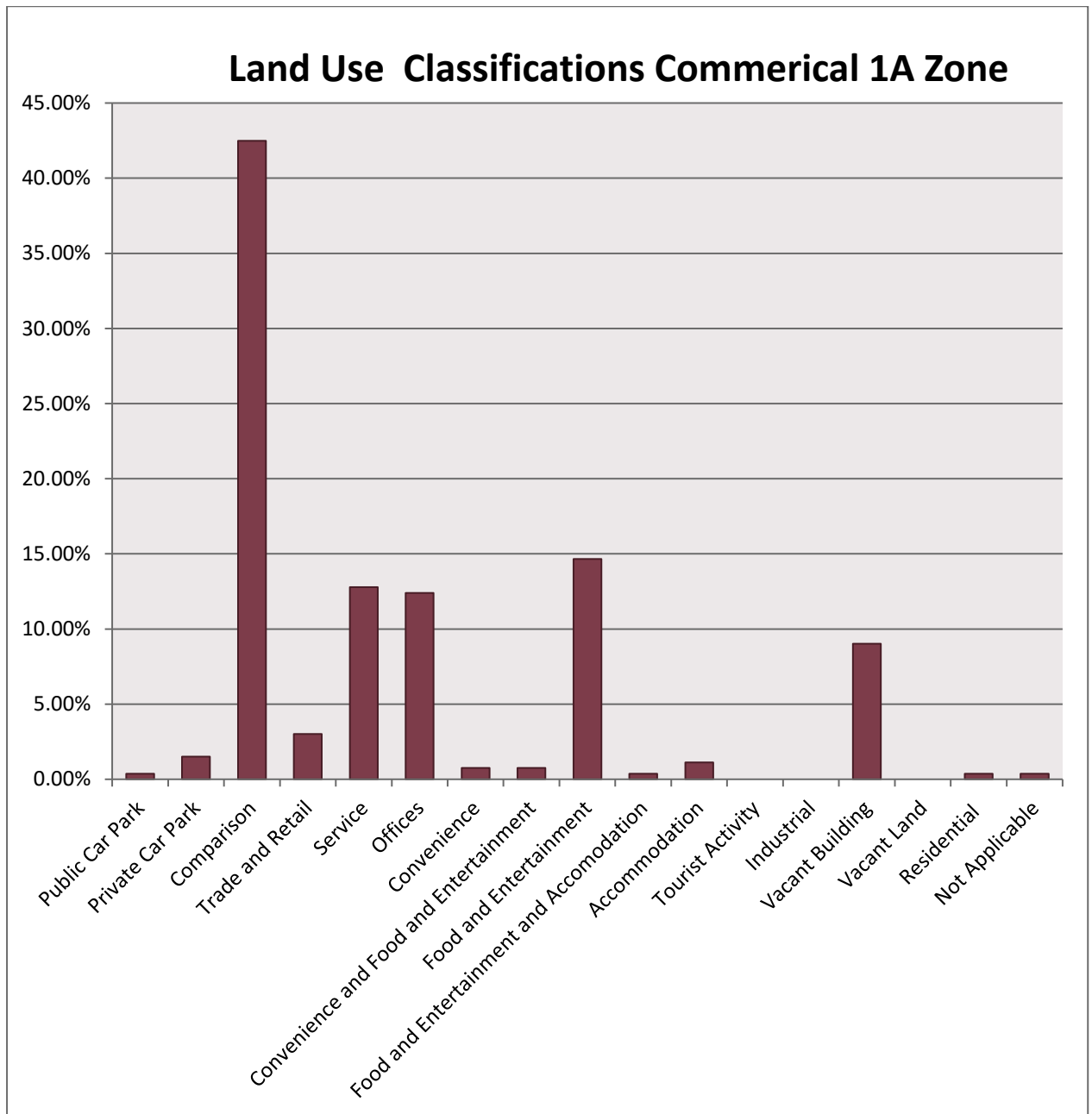


Figure 4 – Land Uses in Commercial 1A Zone (Town Centre). These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

4.1.1 Land Use Survey Findings

(A) Comparison Retail

Timaru has a large amount of comparison retailing (43%), which is typically expected of a town centre. This is followed by food and entertainment at 15%. The quantity of office and service based business together comprise 24% of the total ground floor space. As there is potential for office/service’s to push retail to the periphery of the town centre, the ratio of uses between comparison and office/service based business should be monitored.

(B) Convenience Retail

There are a low percentage of convenience retail stores in the town centre. Of those that exist, many double-up as food outlets, such as lunchtime bakeries and are not solely dependent on retail. This supports the trend that most people purchase convenience items from supermarkets rather than making separate visits to a butcher, green grocer or baker. There is one supermarket (Countdown) located in the southern part of the Commercial 1C Zone, while there are two farmers markets operating in the town centre on weekends.

(C) Other Retail

The TRMA report notes that there is a higher than usual proportion of 'other stores' in the Timaru town centre. Often 'other stores' represent smaller, low quality and unbranded store types that do not perform or generate the same level of retail productivity as stores in other sectors. The TRMA states that, *"These store types can affect the long term viability, quality, overall sales performance and health of the centre, whereby trading productivity per sqm is generally lower for 'Other Stores', requiring lower rental rates for sustainability while lowering overall attractiveness and amenity of a centre"*. There are examples of 'other store's' occupying prime retail floorspace in the central portion of Stafford Street.

(D) Vacant Premises

At the time the survey was conducted there were nineteen vacant premises along Stafford Street. The majority of the vacancies occur in the south end of Stafford Street, south of George Street. It is widely acknowledged that the south end of Stafford Street has struggled to attract footfall from shoppers. This area does not contain any national or regional retail chains. This is likely to be a result of its considerable separation from the prime retail area to the north, which is a long walking distance from the core retail area. Vacancy is much lower on Stafford Street from Canon Street to George Street, which, at the time of writing only had three vacancies.

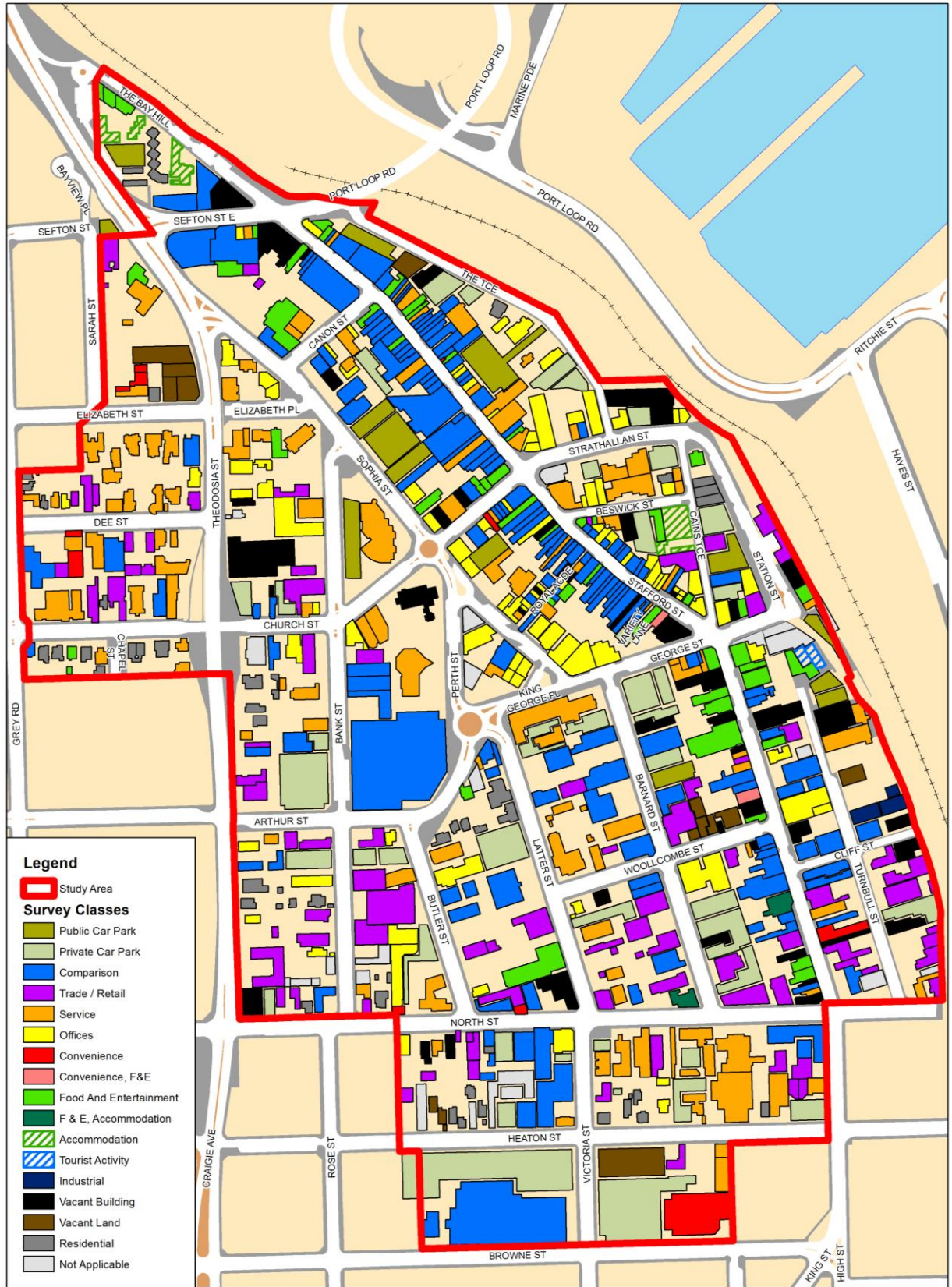


Figure 5 – Ground Floor Land Uses in Timaru Town Centre



Figure 6 – Vacant premises, South Stafford Street

The most notable vacant premises in the Timaru town centre is the Hydro Grand building. Another notable building that is currently underutilised is the Dominion Hotel building. The Hydro Grand building has been vacant for a number of years. It occupies one of the most prominent sites in the town centre, being located at the northern entrance, adjoining the Piazza and visible from the surrounding area. The Hydro Grand building has been allowed to fall into a semi-dilapidated state which detracts from the amenity of the area, even though it is listed as a Category B heritage building. However, aside from its poor state of repair, its most significant affect is that while it remains vacant, it does not contribute any activity to the area. If it was developed appropriately, it would significantly enhance the town centre. It would actively link the Bay Hill area with the town; provide another place where people could view Caroline Bay; attract more people to the Piazza area; and also enhance an existing hub of food and bars.

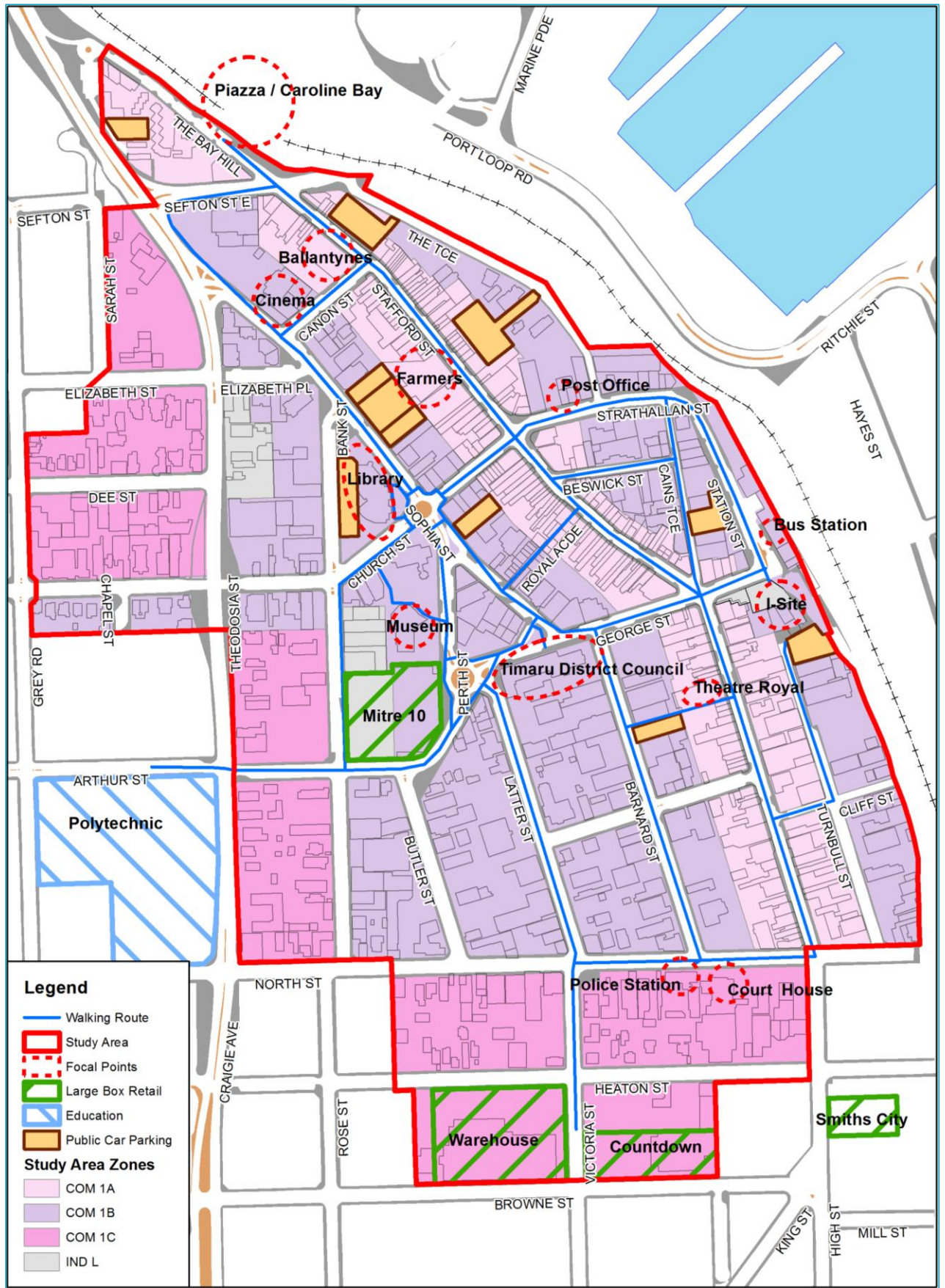


Figure 7 – Timaru’s Main Services

4.1.2 Type of Retailer

There has been an increase in the number of national retailers opening stores in Timaru in the last couple of years. These include large franchisers such as Glassons, Macpac, Pagani, Bed Bath & Beyond, Noodle Canteen, Lone Star, Bike Barn and Palazzo Kitchens. This may indicate growing confidence in the Timaru market.

The presence of bigger national retailers may perhaps put pressure on individual shop owners, by increasing rental prices. However, this increase has to be balanced with the greater attractiveness of the retail offer these stores bring to the town centre. With continued improvement in the choice and quality of shopping, more people will be encouraged to shop in Timaru rather than shopping in other centres or shopping online. Higher quality retail offer attracts more customers and increases the viability of the centre. Very little can be done to control what type of retailer comes into the town, other than incentivising and marketing to particular types of retailer. This is a possible role for a Town Centre Management Organisation, which does not currently exist in Timaru.

To attract high quality retailers into the town centre, the retail offer needs to be differentiated from the out of centre areas, with anchor attractions that can help create this differentiation. Timaru town centre already has, for example, the Ballantynes department store, which is a long standing, successful South Island retailer. Relative to all of the other shopping alternatives within Timaru Ballantynes is unique, and it also offers history and a clear South Island focus for visitors to Timaru.

4.2 ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

4.2.1 Vehicle Access

There are no major constraints to vehicle access in the Timaru town centre. It is easy to access from State Highway 1 and a number of arterial and collector roads. Traffic congestion along routes to and within the town centre, even at peak times, is limited, particularly when compared to congestion in larger centres. Notwithstanding, 20% of respondents in the pedestrian opinion survey thought there is too much traffic and congestion in the Timaru town centre. This is likely to be an amenity issue for pedestrians, rather than a vehicular access issue.

4.2.2 Car Parking

There are 1,071 public car parking spaces available in the Timaru town centre. Five hundred and twenty of those are located off-street and 551 located on-street. Sixty-five percent of the respondents commented that there is an adequate supply of car parking, whereas 28% of respondents stated they would like to see more parking. Some respondents stated they expected to be able to park directly next to their destination. As the pedestrian survey showed that most respondents had driven to the town (69%), it is important that an adequate level of car parking is provided to accommodate this. Notably, no respondent mentioned an expectation for free public parking.

4.2.3 Bicycle Facilities

Only 3% of respondents in the pedestrian survey cycled into town. This indicates a very low proportion of people who cycle into the town centre. There may be a variety of reasons for this, such as cultural, geographic and social etc. However, it is noted that recreational cycle participation has significantly increased in Timaru over the last 10-15 years and therefore it is interesting that this has not significantly increased commuter cycling to the town centre.

Possible constraints to cycling to the town centre may be that bicycle parking facilities are very limited. The lack of bicycle parking facilities is a known constraint to cycle participation. Providing more bicycling parking facilities will therefore encourage cycling and is clearly an opportunity to promote cycling in and around the town centre.

4.2.4 Public Transport

The Timaru Metro bus services the Timaru town centre. The Metro runs four different routes (Timaru Link, Gleniti, Watlington and Grantlea) and operates Monday to Saturday. The main pickup point within the town centre is from Station Street, where buses generally run each route every 35 minutes during the morning and evening peak times and hourly during off-peak hours (9am-3pm). The bus service is free for Supergold card holders during off-peak times, on Saturday and for children under five. The fare is \$2 for adult and \$1.50 per child (5-18), reduced to \$1.50 and \$1 respectively with the use of a Metro Card. Although the frequency of the bus service is limited, it is considered adequate given the amount of people that travel to the town centre by bus.

There is only one taxi service operating in Timaru (Timaru Taxis) with taxi stands located on each side of Church Street. The location of the taxi stands appears to work well, as they are situated close to the main daytime use and close to evening activities.



Figure 8 – Timaru Metro Bus



Figure 9 - An improvised bicycle stand in Timaru

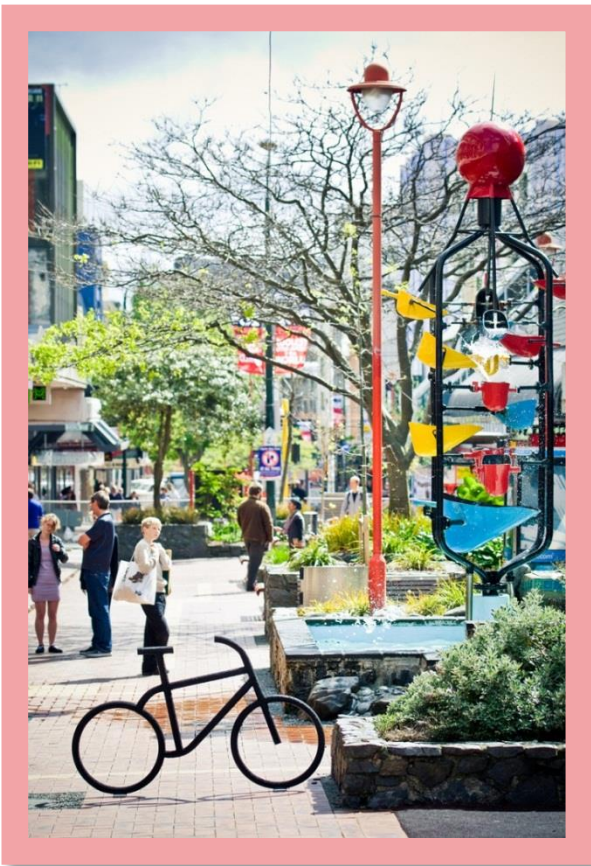


Figure 10 – These bike stands are used by Wellington and Hastings City Councils. They provide a place to park a bike, act as a piece of attractive street furniture and can also be fitted with advertising in the back wheel, which could be an income generator for Council. Win, win, win...

4.2.5 Pedestrian Routes

During the health check, areas that have higher volumes of pedestrian movement were assessed to determine whether the pedestrian routes were of an acceptable standard. Additionally, routes taken by those less familiar with the town, e.g. from the iSite to Stafford

Street, were examined. Pedestrian routes from the main central car parking areas were also appraised.

(A) Findings

There is a range in the quality of pedestrian routes around the commercial area of Timaru. The main pedestrian routes to and from points of attraction in the town centre are generally of good quality. The footpaths are wide enough to cater for the footfall and those less able. There is a gradual reduction in the quality of the pedestrian routes moving further from the main shopping area of Stafford Street. The quality of the footpath is still the same in many places; however the environment that pedestrians walk through is less pleasant. For example, the walk along Barnard Street to George Street is not as pleasant as the same walk down the parallel portion of Stafford Street.



Figure 11 - Barnard Street versus South Stafford Street – Stafford Street has better quality paving, street trees, more elaborate street lighting, and is proportionately in scale.

(B) Poor Pedestrian Routes

The few areas around the town centre that have poor pedestrian linkages are often used by locals, but do not appear to be used by others. An example of such a route is the link from the roof top car park above Kathmandu to Stafford Street. Internal stair access is provided from the car park to Kathmandu, but only has less abled access (i.e. prams, wheelchairs) around to The Terrace, on to Port Loop Road and then onto Stafford Street. Another example is the link between the Central Mall roof top car park and Stafford Street. Again, this requires entry through a retail shop to gain access to Stafford Street. While this may

benefit the retailers by directing people through their store, it is not convenient for the general user.

A further poor linkage can be seen from the car park located to the rear of the Landing Services building to Stafford Street. This requires users to access many small flights of stairs to obtain access to Stafford Street. The alternative is to walk around Station Street, on to George Street and then Stafford Street.

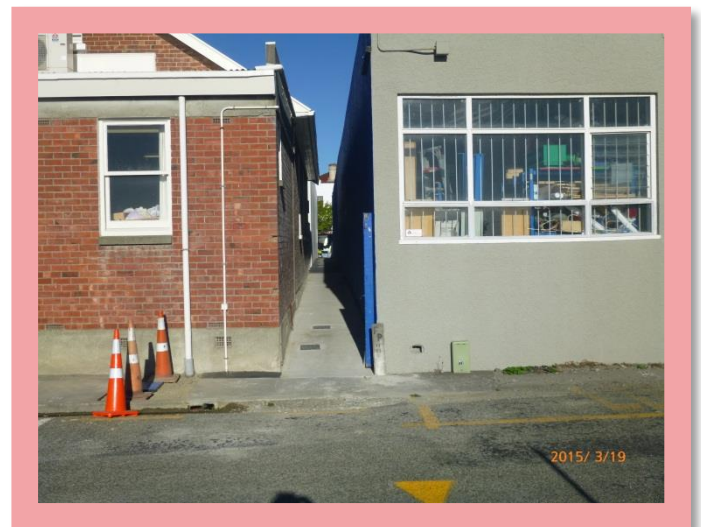
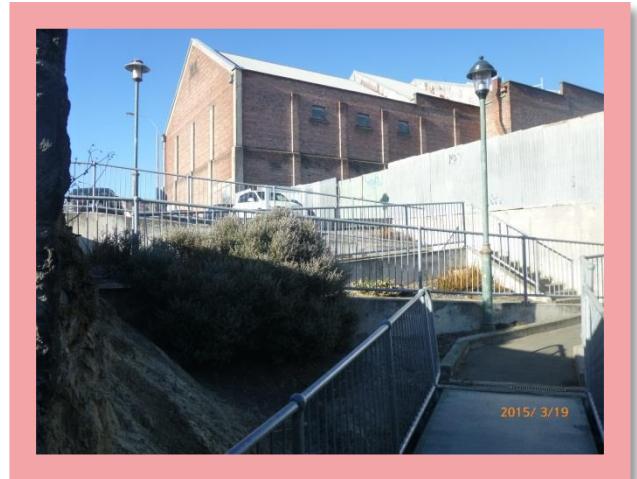


Figure 12 – Pedestrian access from the Landing Services car park to Stafford Street. Note how there is only stair access from this level, which turns into a ramp at first floor (presumably to allow for access to the first floor of the Landing Services Building). The narrow lane from Turnbull Street to Stafford Street is narrow, unlit and not signposted.

The Countdown supermarket is disconnected from the town centre. Although most people would drive to the supermarket from town, there are a number of people who do walk, for example during their lunch break. There is no pedestrian crossing across Victoria Street to the Warehouse on the opposite side, nor is there a pedestrian crossing across Heaton Street or North Street, which link these two shops with the town centre.

(C) Directional Signage

There is work to be done on all pedestrian links in terms of signage, particularly in the public car parks where there is very little indication as to which way to go to find the town centre. This could be improved with the addition of simple signs pointing the way to the town centre. There is a disconnection between the town centre and some points of attraction, e.g. the Museum, iSite and bus station.

For some attractions there are way-finding signs erected beside them, such as at the Bay Hill and outside Council offices. Whilst these are attractive and provide a clear indication of where you are and where things are, they are not numerous enough to maintain a thorough sense of connectivity to the town centre.

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

4.3.1 Area Surveyed

Sixteen streets within Timaru's Commercial 1 Zone were assessed in the environmental survey. The survey points are indicated on Figure 13. A table of the results is provided in Appendix 1 and are discussed below.

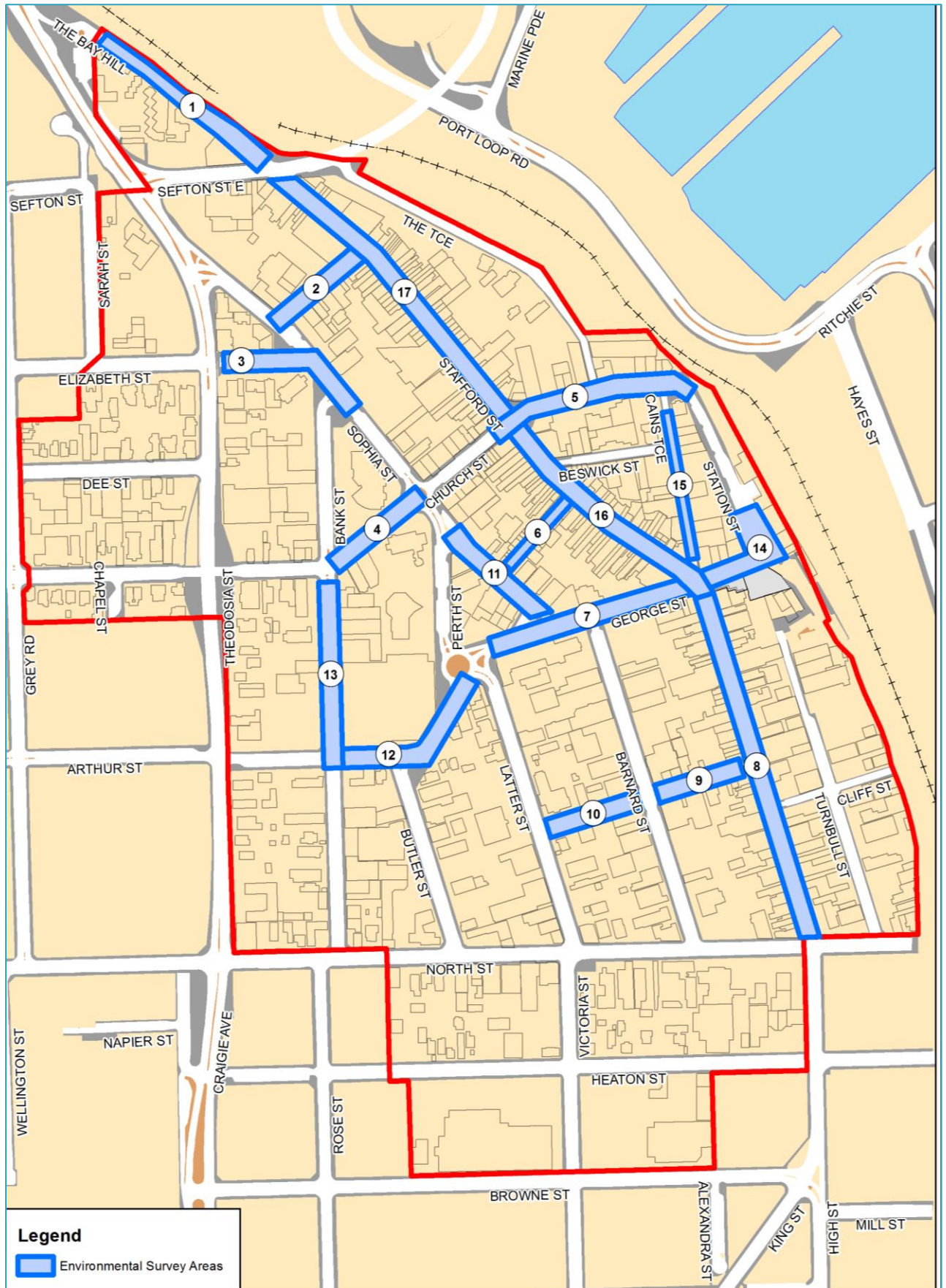


Figure 13 – Timaru’s Environmental Survey Areas. These correspond with the Environmental Survey Spreadsheet in Appendix 1.

4.3.2 Discussion

On the whole, the town centre is generally free from litter and graffiti. Landscaping measures are provided throughout the town centre, particularly along Stafford Street, The Bay Hill and Strathallan Corner, which add to its amenity and attractiveness. Caroline Bay is a significant amenity and visitor attraction, which has been recognised through the building of the Piazza, which links Stafford Street to the bay. However, we need to consider whether this asset can be utilised further for the overall benefit and health of the town centre. The Port Loop Road physically separates The Piazza from the remainder of the town centre, weakening the link. The Port Loop Road is utilised by heavy goods vehicles travelling to the port, which decreases the attractiveness of this area to pedestrians. Furthermore, the Hydro Grand building occupies the northern corner of the Stafford Street/The Bay Hill intersection. Until the Hydro Grand site is renovated, this end of the town centre will not achieve its full potential.

Parts of the town centre are elevated overlooking Caroline Bay and the Port, enabling expansive views to the ocean and distant views to the hills. While views of the Port may be perceived by some as an eyesore, most seem to consider the view interesting. There are opportunities around the Bay Hill and The Terrace to make better use of these views. High end apartments in these areas would provide residences with expansive views and the convenience of being located in the town centre, close to cafes, pubs, restaurants, Caroline Bay and town centre employment. In general, providing more residential development in and around the town centre would help provide a critical mass of people to support retailers, and would significantly add to the vibrancy of the area.

Traditional shopfronts are largely maintained along Stafford Street. The District Plan requires consent for the demolition or erection of any building visible from a street frontage in the Commercial 1A Zone. The demolition of historic buildings also requires consent. This along with a number of performance standards in the District Plan have contributed to the maintenance of the built form and character of the town centre, in addition to the more notable buildings of historical and architectural value remaining. However, it is considered there is scope to improve the maintenance and management of buildings in the areas outside of the core Stafford Street shopping area. The environmental survey highlighted many areas that the town centre needs to work on, whilst also identifying areas that are pleasant and have a high quality environment. These are considered below.



Figure 14: The Port Loop Road/The Bay Hill Intersection with the vacant Hydro Grand Building

4.3.3 Highest Quality Environments

The highest scoring street was the area from George to Sophia Street. This street is located within the Commercial 1B Zone, which is surprising given the characteristics anticipated by the District Plan in the Commercial 1B Zone. This street rated highly due to its quality of buildings, seating, open space, car parking and ease of pedestrian movement. In this regard, it is noted that Council's main office (a protected structure, being the former public library) and the former post office are located in and around King George Place.



Figure 15 – King George Place

The next highest rated street was Strathallan Corner and Street. This rated highly due to the street trees and flowers, seating and ease of movement, which are considered to add value to the environment. The other streets which rated well were the Bay Hill, Station Street, George Street to Stafford Street and the portion of Stafford Street between George and Church Streets. It was noted that the public area at Strathallan Corner turns its back to Stafford Street, with the monument and fountain almost hidden from view. While this may provide shelter from traffic noise, it does not lend itself to inclusivity nor maximise its use for the public. It does however contribute to the amenity of Strathallan Street. If this open space was more visible it would greatly enhance the streetscape.

4.3.4 Lowest Quality Environments

The street with the lowest value was Arthur Street. This rated low due to its traffic, pedestrian facilities, inactive street frontage, lack of open space and street planting.

Woolcombe Street also rated low due to its lack of public transport and cycle facilities, lack of seating, open space and active street frontages. It does not generally display many high

attributes other than being a wide and accessible street with on-street parking. Other streets that obtained a low rating were Elizabeth Place to Bank Street and Cains Terrace.

4.3.5 Active Frontages

Making building edges 'active' to the street adds interest, life and vitality to the public realm. This means having frequent doors and windows with few blank walls; narrow frontage buildings giving vertical rhythm to the street scene; articulation of facades with projections such as bays and porches providing a welcoming feeling; and lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling onto the street.

In terms of active street frontages, the central portion of Stafford Street acts as the main shopping street in the town centre, with the most active shop frontages. The area of the town centre with the most vitality seems to be Strathallan Corner, with this being a node where streets intersect and provides a cross route to different areas of the town centre.

Mitre 10 Mega has a negative effect on Arthur Street, dominating the streetscape with a large blank façade and trade entrance that occupies a large swath of footpath.



Figure 16 – Arthur Street and the Mitre 10 Mega building

It is particularly evident that the southern portion of Stafford Street does not appear to be particularly lively during the day. A cluster of daytime restaurant and nightlife activity has formed in this area, and although this creates activity at night, it does mean the area south of the George Street/Stafford Street junction lacks activity during the day³. The main shopping area of the town centre is therefore confined to an area between Canon Street and George Street, with the vitality of the town not spreading much further than within this area.

It appears that land uses on the periphery of Stafford Street and south Stafford Street do not generate high levels of footfall and are not overly active. Perhaps this is an indication that the retail element of the town centre needs to be consolidated and recognition given to the location and demand for larger retail, office and services on the periphery. To some extent the District Plan attempts to establish this through the separation of the Timaru Commercial 1A Zone into three zones, providing for the main retail area (Commercial 1A Zone), general commercial area (Commercial 1B Zone) and large box retail area (Commercial 1C) concentrically. However, it seems apparent with the dilution in the quality of shops in the southern end of Stafford Street that the extent of the Commercial 1A Zone is too large. A solution may be to consolidate the Commercial 1A Zone into a core shopping area and rezone underutilised parts of the existing Commercial 1A Zone to facilitate activities that are more viable in this area. Ideally new activities should strengthen and compliment the core shopping area.

4.3.6 Urban Design/Ambiance

Urban design involves the arrangement and design of buildings, public spaces, services, and amenities. It is the process of giving form, shape, and character to groups of buildings, specific areas, and towns. It blends architecture, landscape architecture, planning and engineering together to make an urban area functional and attractive.

Urban design is about making connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric. It draws together the many strands of place-making,

³ The food and entertainment facilities in this area include: The Oxford, Royal Garden, Factory, Theatre Royal, Bar 1, and The Mill Theatre. Koji and The Speight's Ale House are located off George Street.

environmental stewardship, social equity and economic viability into the creation of places with a distinct feel and identity.

Good urban design can be used to bind parts of the town centre together to create one cohesive, integrated, attractive, functional, comfortable and special shopping, dining, business and recreational core. The core of the town centre needs to be completely unlike the out of centre shopping areas, creating a point of difference that will attract people to it. As the main form of Timaru town centre is already established, although in a slightly fragmented way, some key areas of urban design could help draw these strands together and create a vision for the town.

The creation of a vision for the town centre is the most problematic element at this stage, as the landowners and Council have not jointly focused on this crucial element yet.

The Town Centre Refresh Project, which has limited funding from Council, will facilitate some urban renewal, but does not have the budget to create a new vision for the centre; it is merely providing a tidy-up. Perhaps consultation with the landowners to focus on the crucial element of good urban design could win support.

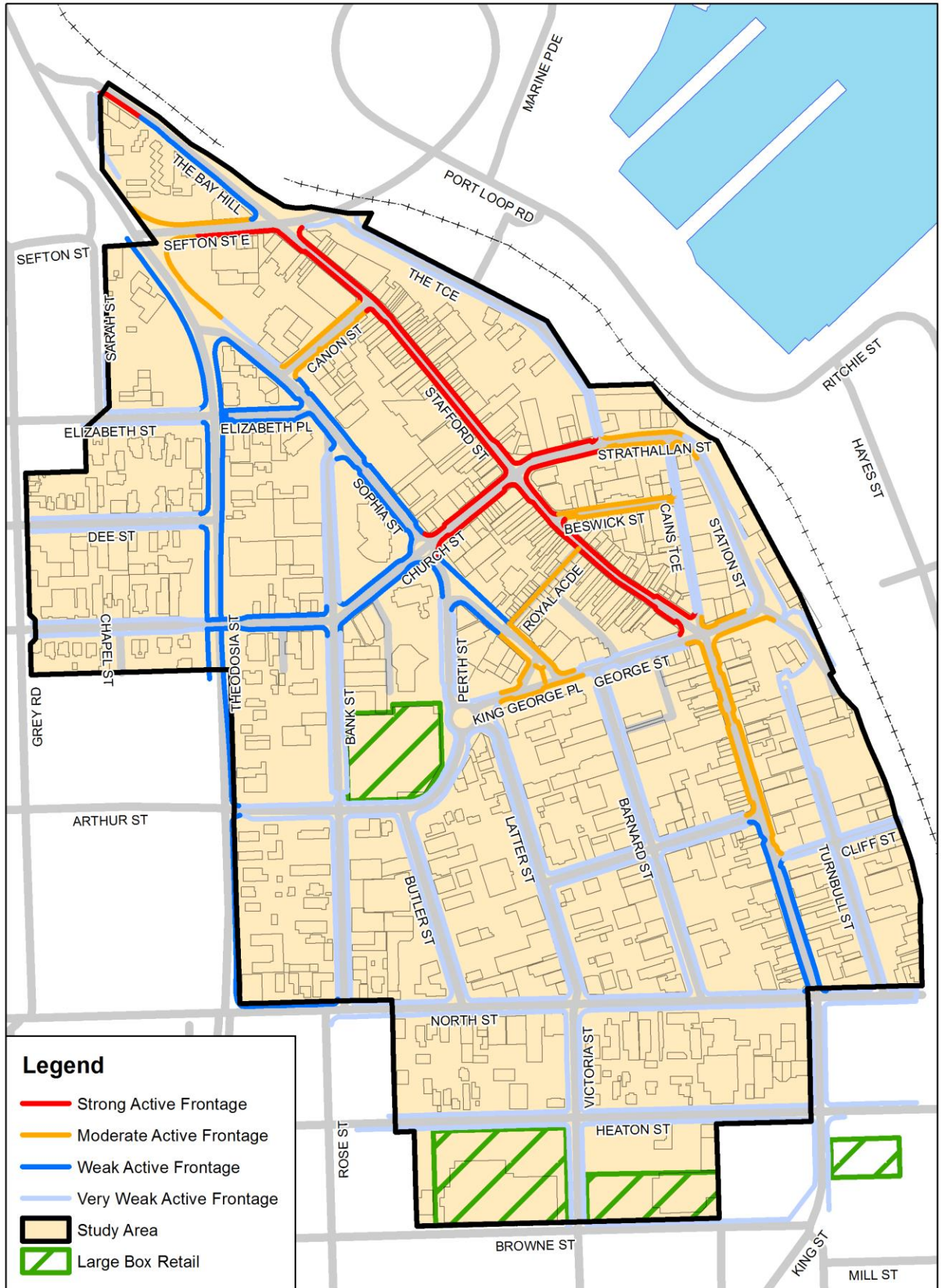


Figure 17 – Map Showing Active Street Frontages in the Timaru Commercial Zone

4.4 PEDESTRIAN OPINION SURVEY

4.4.1 General

A pedestrian survey was carried out during the last week of January 2015 to ascertain people's perceptions of Timaru's town centre. A total of 87 surveys were completed over three days. The key findings of the pedestrian survey are addressed below under the following headings:

- Attractive aspects of the town centre;
- Unattractive aspects of the town centre;
- Suggested improvements;
- Evening / night-time activities.

4.4.2 Attractive Aspects of Timaru Town Centre

The main aspects that respondents found attractive about the Timaru town centre are its accessibility in terms of its ease to get around and its compactness. This may be attributable to the main shopping area being located between Canon Street in the north and George Street to the south. It also indicates that peoples' perceptions of 'the town centre' are limited to a small segment of Stafford Street and they do not consider the outer commercial zones as forming part of it.

Many respondents commented that they were happy with the retail offer and variety of shops. This is consistent with the TRMA which identifies 76% of retail spend generated within the district is spent within the district.

Of great appeal to many people are the street trees, planter boxes, flowers and open spaces that are present. These contribute to the appearance and attractiveness of the main street.

A number of respondents commented that they enjoyed shopping along the main street; that it was a nice environment; and had a completely different, more enjoyable feel compared to shopping in a mall. Similar, were the positive comments on the appearance of the town centre, which include the built form, the landscaping and cleanliness etc.

Overall, there were many aspects of the town centre which the public enjoyed. These attributes are something which can be maintained and enhanced as part of Council's CBD

Refresh Project, through the DPR and other initiatives. The most attractive aspects of the town centre identified by respondents are listed below, with the most attractive aspects having the largest font.

Accessible¹ Shops²

Compact³ Street⁴ Trees⁵

Convenient⁶ Friendly⁷

Cafes⁸ Town⁹ Clean¹⁰

Good Size¹¹ Proximity¹²

Bay¹³ Handy¹⁴ Walk¹⁵ Road¹⁶

4.4.3 Unattractive Aspects of Timaru

An encouraging 25% of respondents did not have anything negative to say about the town centre. The biggest ‘problem’ for people surveyed was the traffic and congestion. There were suggestions of pedestrianizing the main street, making it one way only, and removing parking along the main street. Traffic and congestion was seen as an issue by 20% of respondents.

The second least appealing aspect of the town centre was the slippery tiles. One third of comments from the pedestrian survey suggested that a change of paving was required. It is well known that the paving can be slippery at times. This is discussed in more detail later in this report.

The low quality and vacancy of premises in the southern end of Stafford Street was also seen as an issue by some people. People commented that there was a noticeable separation

between the two ends of Stafford Street, with the south end detracting from the amenity of the town centre. Currently vacancies in the town centre occupy approximately 9% of the stores. It is considered that while this level of vacancy may be common post the global financial crisis, it is higher than desirable⁴. An improvement in the vacancy level is considered necessary to elevate the quality and performance of the town centre. Respondents also commented that there is no core to the town centre and there is a need to have a focal point/place. The most unattractive elements of Timaru that were identified by respondents included (most common in the largest font):

Traffic¹Slippery Tiles²

Parking³South End⁴

Lack of Retail⁵Street Furniture⁶

No Core⁷Early closing⁸Skateboarders⁹

Inaccessible Shops¹⁰Neglected Buildings¹¹

4.4.4 Suggested Improvements for Timaru Town Centre

The main trends in responses to how the town centre could be improved to better meet respondent's expectations are summarised below.

(A) Paving

The foremost suggestion was to improve or change the paving. Over 30% of respondents commented that the paving in the town centre should be changed. Council is already aware of this issue and has been investigating solutions. This is being looked at within an overall CBD Refresh project, which will begin later this year.

⁴ Timaru District Retail Audit, prepared by Property Economics, February 2015

(B) Parking

Approximately one third of the respondents raised insufficient parking as an issue with the town centre. There are over 1,100 public car parking spaces in the town centre, which seems like a generous supply for a town of this size. It may be that people are not familiar with the location of the public car parks, or have an unrealistic expectation to park outside the shop they are visiting.

An answer to the congestion issue or the perception of there being many vehicles within the town centre could be the pedestrianisation of Stafford Street. Part of the street could be pedestrianised and developed as an open space. This could facilitate the creation of larger areas of outdoor dining; provide a meeting point, areas for street entertainers, vendors, artists etc.

(C) Street Furniture

Over 20% of respondents commented that the existing street furniture is outdated and should be modernised. The quality and quantity of street furniture contributes to the attractiveness and appeal of an area. As mentioned, the CBD Refresh project is underway and should investigate this issue further.

(D) Cafes/Restaurants

The lack of cafes and restaurants ranked as an issue for 19% of respondents. This is surprising given that food and beverage services (i.e. cafes, restaurants, pubs, taverns, bars and takeaways food outlets) represent the largest portion of the market in terms of store count with 29 stores, or 23% of the total retail supply and 16% of the gross floor area⁵.

Again, some thought needs to be given to the basis for these opinions. For instance, is it that the majority of the cafes and restaurants close early on Saturdays and do not open on Sundays? This is when most people are off work and have time to socialise and meet for food or drink. Or it could be the diversity of the food outlets, for example there may be plenty of take-aways or bakeries, where dine-in options are lacking.

⁵ Timaru District Retail Audit, February 2015, prepared by Property Economics

The TRMA has forecast that there will be growth in the food and beverage sector of 29% from 2015 to 2033, with expenditure growing from \$85m to \$110m over this period. The predicted growth in this market is an opportunity for the town centre.



Figure 18 – Map Showing the Location of Public Car Parks & Pedestrian Access Routes in the Town Centre

(E) Buildings

Over 30% of respondents commented that the enhancement of heritage buildings and the maintenance of buildings in the town centre is an issue that needs to be addressed. The District Plan requires resource consent for any significant alteration or development of a heritage building. However, it does not and cannot require buildings to be regularly maintained.

The tenancy of a building can negatively affect its maintenance. For instance, if a building is vacant it is generally not maintained to the same standard as when it is fully tenanted. Regulatory constraints can also act as a disincentive to some building owners maintaining their building. For instance, people may be hesitant to own or occupy a heritage building if they consider that regulations constrain its use and development. Additionally, some building owners of heritage structures have operated a 'demolition by neglect' practice, where a building is allowed to go so far into disrepair that they say it is unsalvageable. Some options are suggested for the use of vacant buildings in 'Part 6 – Issues and Opportunities' of this report.

(F) Opening Hours

The survey asked people whether the opening times of shops and services met their needs. Sixty-nine percent of respondents said they did, with the remainder suggesting that longer opening hours were needed. This included at least one late opening night a week and longer opening hours at weekends. Historically shops in the town centre close at 2pm on Saturday and do not open Sundays. This trend has been changing slowly with the introduction of more national retailers on the high street, which generally operate longer opening hours.

4.4.5 After Hours Activities

Respondents were asked if they used the town centre after business hours. Fifty-five percent said they did, with the main reasons being for entertainment, socialising and dining. Almost half of respondents said they only came to town on certain nights and left before it got too late. Reasons cited for this include a perception that the town centre gets dangerous after a certain hour. It is likely there is good reason for this perception whether it is true that the town centre is dangerous at night or not. The lack of people and activity in large parts of the town centre would make most people feel unsafe.

5.0 TIMARU DISTRICT PLAN

This section reviews the District Plan's provisions that relate to the town centre. The purpose of this exercise is to determine if the District Plan causes any issues or opportunities for new development, or the operation of activities in the town centre.

The District Plan's town centre zone is the 'Commercial 1 (Inner Urban) Zone'. This zone applies to the town centres of Timaru, Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point. The District Plan states that these areas are characterised by the presence of historic buildings and other features of cultural or historical importance. The Timaru Commercial 1 Zone is split in three subzones. The District Plan's zone statement for these zones is provided below:

- *Commercial 1A which includes those parts of the main retail area of the Inner City with the highest heritage and townscape values which should be retained to provide an attractive pedestrian-orientated environment for a wide range of commercial and social activities including apparel, personal goods and other specialty shopping facilities, personal, professional, financial and business services, tourist and permanent accommodation and recreational and community facilities.*
- *Commercial 1B includes the balance of the historical central business area adjoining the Commercial 1A Zone of the Inner City where an equivalent range of commercial activities should be encouraged with a moderate standard of amenity and less emphasis on high quality pedestrian integration.*
- *Commercial 1C includes areas on the outer edge of the Inner City where provision is made for a mix of large-scale convenience retailing activities which cannot be accommodated more centrally within the Inner City, and industrial activities without significant adverse effects on adjoining activities. The social function and viability of the Commercial 1A and 1B Zones is dependent upon their continued population by a wide range of commercial activities, including a diversity of retail outlets unmatched in the alternative zones or sub-zones⁶.*

⁶ Timaru District Plan, Part D3, Section 3, Policy 3.1.2.1 (1)

5.1 COMMERCIAL 1A ZONE – RULES AND STANDARDS

5.1.1 Permitted Activities

Within the Commercial 1A Zone (Com1A) there are a number of retail, office and business services permitted. Two activities permitted include day-care centres and brothels/businesses of prostitution. Neither of these activities is currently located in the Com1A Zone, which may indicate the inappropriateness of these activities in this location. These two uses are not appropriate in a town centre for varying reasons, and it is suggested that they be removed as permitted activities from this zone as part of the DPR. It is suggested that these uses would be more suited to being located in the Commercial 1B or Commercial 1C Zones.

5.1.2 Controlled Activities

Restaurants or Licensed Premises are controlled activities, with Council restricting its discretion to the environmental effects associated with noise and cleansing of the locality. While the virtue of this control may have merit, there are no objectives or policies that relate to the 'cleansing of the locality' and how it can be implemented is therefore unclear. This could be addressed by a Performance Standard as opposed to a Rule.

In terms of noise, there are specific Performance Standards relating to noise that apply to all activities in the zone. The requirement for resource consent for this use should therefore not be obligatory.

5.1.3 Demolition/Erection of Buildings

The demolition and erection of a building visible or along a street frontage requires resource consent. It is arguable that the Performance Standards set the guidelines for the erection of a building, and therefore once compliance with these is met, resource consent should not be required. As regards the demolition of buildings, the Act does not generally deal with demolition, with the exception of when it applies to heritage structures. It seems that this rule requiring resource consent for both the demolition and erection of a new building is overly onerous. However, it is currently the only mechanism to control the built form in the town centre.

It is therefore suggested that if this requirement is reviewed, the Performance Standards for the zone also need to be revised and strengthened, to ensure the anticipated design outcome is achieved. It is also proposed that buildings within the town centre are classified

to ascertain if there is any merit in establishing 'character areas' or 'character zones'. This would provide another layer of protection for the existing character of the urban environment.

5.1.4 Building Design

The Performance Standards for Com1A control the location of buildings along the street (i.e. no set back), maximum building height (20m north of Sefton Street East and 12m for all other parts), and set backs in relation to the residential zone. They also provide for active street frontages and verandahs along Stafford Street.

The 20m height limit applies to The Bay Hill area. This limit would potentially allow for a six-storey building. This height limit would allow for the Bay Hill area to be redeveloped with a landmark building and form a distinctive entry to the town centre. This height limit should remain to give greater scope for any future development in this area.

The 12m height limit in other parts of the zone would achieve a three-and-a-half-storey building. Buildings along the main portion of Stafford Street are generally three storeys currently. This building height seems to be logical to continue given the historic character of the town centre. It is suggested that buildings could be higher on the south side of Stafford Street to avail of solar gain. This in turn could generate greater densities, more vitality and be more viable.

There are no minimum building height levels, meaning that a one-storey building could theoretically be built within the zone. This would result in underutilisation of land, which should be discouraged. It is suggested that a minimum height of say 8m would be suitable to apply, requiring a minimum two-storey building. Perhaps the minimum and maximum height of buildings could be reviewed on a street by street basis.

The only area of the Com1A Zone that adjoins a residential zone is to the north and west of The Bay Hill and to the north of The Terrace. In both these areas, the zones are separated from each other by a road and therefore the 3m setback provision of buildings is redundant.

5.1.5 Active Street Frontages

It is questionable whether the Performance Standards that relate to ground floor frontage in the Com1A Zone actually achieve a high quality environment. The standards are more related to what is not wanted, i.e. offices and residential on the ground floor, rather than

focusing on good design outcomes. Owing to their vagueness, the current standards create difficulties in articulating what the desired urban design outcome is. Thought should be given to development controls and assessment criteria that are tailored to the town centre. This includes not just for active street frontages, but for the design outcome of a total building. The advantages of this approach include potential enhanced communication to developers and the community as to how building frontages can contribute to the desired urban design outcome on any given street.

5.1.6 Verandahs

The requirement for verandahs across the frontage of buildings fronting Stafford Street is principally to achieve shelter. Owing to the historic character of Timaru town centre, the local environment, and the fact that the town centre is our core shopping area, it is suggested that the requirement for verandahs remain. The District Plan's specifications for actual building design, colours and materials are silent.

There is no design guidance for new buildings, leading to variances in the overall character and quality of buildings in the area. There could be more guidance in terms of appropriate design of new buildings, the redevelopment of heritage buildings, including a schedule of materials and colours.

5.1.7 Noise

The noise standards relate to the nearest residential zone boundary and are the same for the three Commercial 1 Zones. Again, as identified above, there are few areas which adjoin the residential zone. This is favourable to the establishment of residential properties within the town centre, as if the standards related to residential properties instead of the zone, town centre activities would find it difficult to comply with the noise levels.

5.1.8 Signage

All signs are permitted in the Commercial Zones except those erected on heritage buildings. It is accepted that signs are an essential part of the commercial character of the town centre, but a balance should be achieved between commercialism, architectural and streetscape quality. Signage in commercial zones can be reviewed during the DPR.

5.1.9 Residential Activities

Although permitted in the commercial zones, residential activity in the town centre has been relatively limited. There may be many factors that contribute to the low level of town centre living, but the main reasons are thought to be:

- There is an older demographic of people in Timaru who are more inclined to live in the suburbs.
- Due to the relatively low cost of housing in Timaru, young people can afford to buy a house with land. The median house price in Timaru was \$309,500 in September 2015. The median house price was \$280,000 in September 2014 which puts annual growth at 10.5%⁷.
- The requirement for one car parking space per unit in the Com1A Zone and two car parking spaces per unit in the other commercial zones may limit the amount of household units being accommodated in the existing buildings which tend to occupy the entire ground area.
- There are no design guidelines for apartments, townhouses or duplexes in the town centre, the absence of which do not encourage such uses.
- There is no active promotion or incentives for town centre living or lifestyles.

With these matters in mind, it is suggested that further consideration is given to how residential development can be encouraged in the town centre.

5.1.10 Car Parking

The District Plan requirement for on-site car parking may be an obstacle to new development. Many buildings occupy the entire allotment area, thus foreclosing the option of providing on-site car parking. While many sites have existing use rights to not provide on-site car parking, this is often difficult to prove. The District Plan allows cash to be paid in lieu of on-site car parking. However, this can equate to a significant amount of money and be a major disincentive to development, considering that the return on investment on new development in the Timaru town centre is relatively low. In tandem with an investigation into the provision of public car parking, the requirement for private car parking is something that should also be revisited in the DPR.

⁷ Information from interest.co.nz

5.1.11 Discussion

The land use survey identifies that the Commercial 1A Zone has the highest concentration of comparison retail activities. This is especially apparent along Stafford Street between Canon Street in the north and George Street to the south. The southern portion of the Commercial 1A Zone displays very mixed land use, with a hub of food and entertainment activities located at the intersection of Stafford Street, George Street and Cains Terrace. The very south end of Stafford Street has a mix of retail trade and low end comparison uses, and also a high proportion of vacant buildings and sites.

It therefore seems apparent that the activities anticipated in the Commercial 1A Zone have been realised in a certain portion of the zone, but become diluted in the southern portion of the zone. The main reason for this may be that the population of the town and district cannot support such a wide spread of high end comparison, service and business activities. The Commercial 1A Zone appears to be too long, running approximately 1.3km north to south. Accordingly, there may be merit in redefining and consolidating the Commercial 1A Zone to create a distinct core high street area. However, before this is pursued further, serious thought needs to be given as to what the function of the southern area of Stafford Street should be. Consultation with affected landowners and business should be conducted as a preliminary matter.

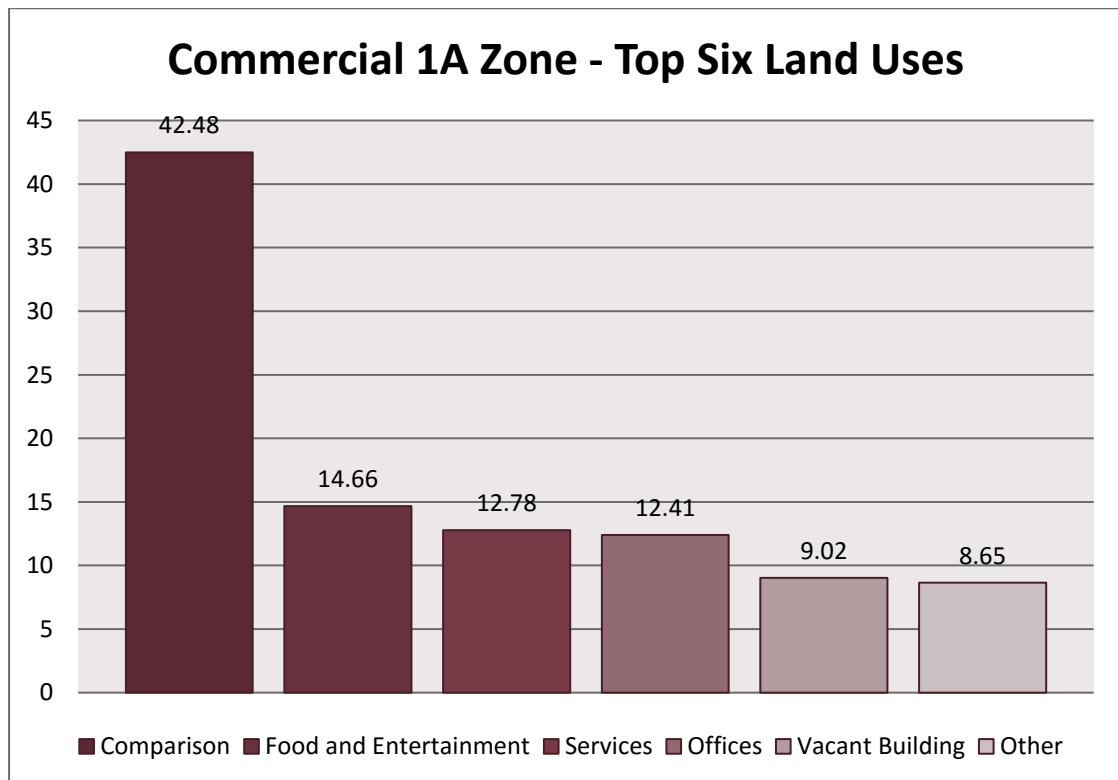


Figure 19 – Top Six Land Uses Commercial 1A Zone. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

5.2 COMMERCIAL 1B ZONE – RULES AND STANDARDS

5.2.1 Permitted Activities

The Commercial 1B Zone (Com 1B) provides for a range of commercial, business, office and service activities. The range of permitted commercial activities is far wider than in the Com1A Zone.

5.2.2 Building Design

The Performance Standards specify a maximum general building height of 10m and a setback of 3m adjoining a residential zone. In terms of the height, it is unclear what level of building 10m is seeking to achieve, as 10m is generally taller than a two-storey building but not as high as a three-storey building. It may perhaps be more applicable to apply minimum and maximum stories to facilitate a range of development in this zone.

The Com1B Zone adjoins the Residential 2 Zone in a few isolated places. So in relation to the performance standards relating to the interface of commercial with residential, they are somewhat redundant.

5.2.3 Active Street Frontages

Active street frontages are not required in this zone, i.e. there are no performance standards relating to ground floor frontage or verandahs. However, owing to the fact that many of the historical buildings and streetscapes are located in the inner area of this zone, there is potential to redefine this area, recognising the requirement for active street frontages and higher amenity value in some areas.

5.2.4 Discussion

The Commercial 1B Zone contains a wider range of commercial activities than the Commercial 1A Zone. As there are 13 heritage buildings listed in the District Plan in the Commercial 1B Zone, parts of the zone make a significant contribution to the town centre's historic character. The District Plan states that less emphasis on '*high quality pedestrian integration*' should occur in this zone (compared to the Commercial 1A Zone). However, based on the Environmental Survey, the street with the best results overall was located in this zone, being George Street to Sophia Street. A clear hub within this zone is the civic area, comprising the library, museum and Council offices. This zone also contains a high proportion of offices.

Mitre 10 Mega is located in this zone. It is noted that part of the Mitre 10 site is zoned Industrial, which would allow for this type of use. This use is more aligned with the current Commercial 1C Zone.

Although the area between North Street and Stafford Street is dominated with light industrial and retail trade activities, there is a diverse range of activities located in this area, including office, car-sales, retail comparison, car-parks etc. While this mixture of uses aligns with the intention of the District Plan’s Commercial 1B Zone, it might be worth further considering the role of this area. Opportunities do exist in this area to accommodate retail warehouse development that would support the town centre.

It seems apparent that parts of the Commercial 1B Zone are functioning as anticipated, while other areas portray ‘inner city’ characteristics and others industrial or trade characteristics. The role and the boundaries of this zone should therefore be considered further. Consultation should be conducted as an initial step in further considering this area.

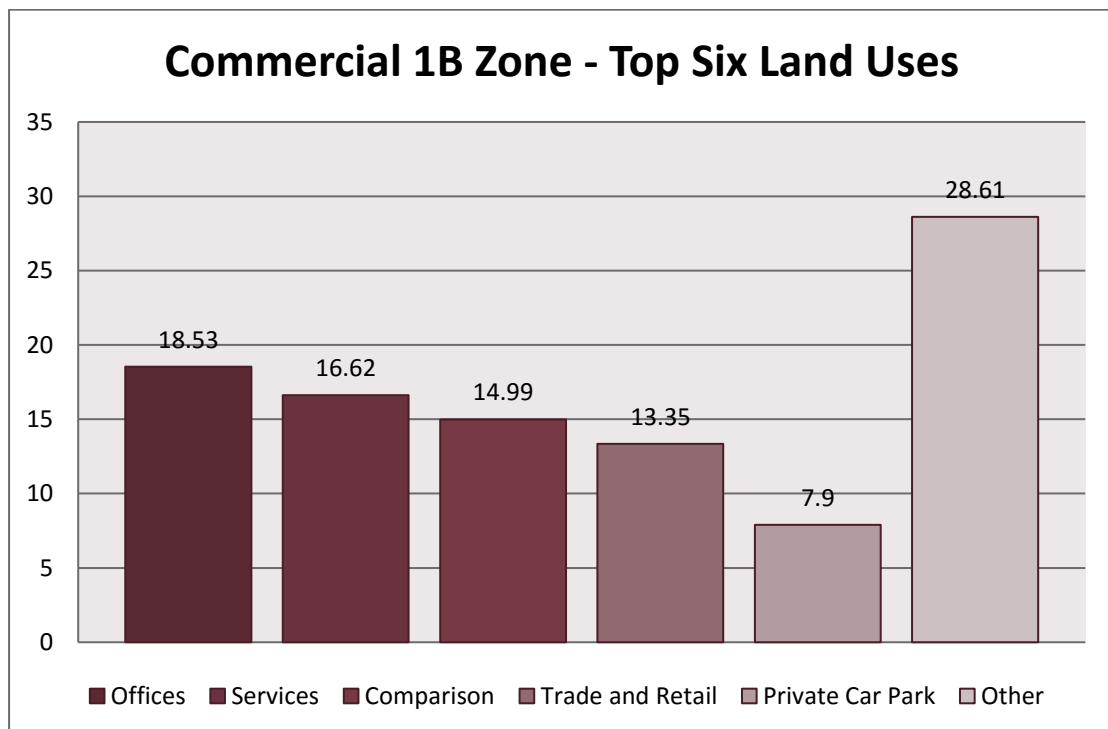


Figure 20 – Top Six Land Uses Commercial 1B Zone. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

5.3 COMMERCIAL 1C ZONE – RULES AND STANDARDS

5.3.1 Activities

The Commercial 1C Zone (Com1C) permits a range of commercial and light industrial type activities. The distinction with this zone is that it specifies shop floor areas in certain parts of the zone. These generally provide for shops ranging from a minimum of 500sq.m to 2,000sq.m in area. The remainder of the Performance Standards are the same as the Com1B Zone.

5.3.2 Discussion

Existing uses in the Commercial 1C Zone are mixed. The only area that displays its anticipated large-scale convenience retailing is to the south side of Heaton Street, where the Warehouse and Countdown supermarket are located. However, with some large retail developments in the Commercial 1B and 1C Zone such as Mitre 10 Mega, the Warehouse, Countdown, along with a number of smaller retail businesses, this area is an emerging large format retail area.

The other areas zoned Commercial 1C are largely still comprised of small lots that have not been amalgamated to realise large-scale uses. Fragmented landownership patterns are a major constraint for large scale retail developments. Landowners would need to work together to amalgamate small allotments to overcome this constraint and attract this type of development.

It is apparent that the Commercial 1C Zone to the west of town is unlikely to be developed for large-scale development, as this area contains a cluster of service activities, mainly based around health care, for example doctors, physiotherapists and pharmacies. It can therefore be concluded that the Commercial 1C Zone would benefit from a comprehensive review.

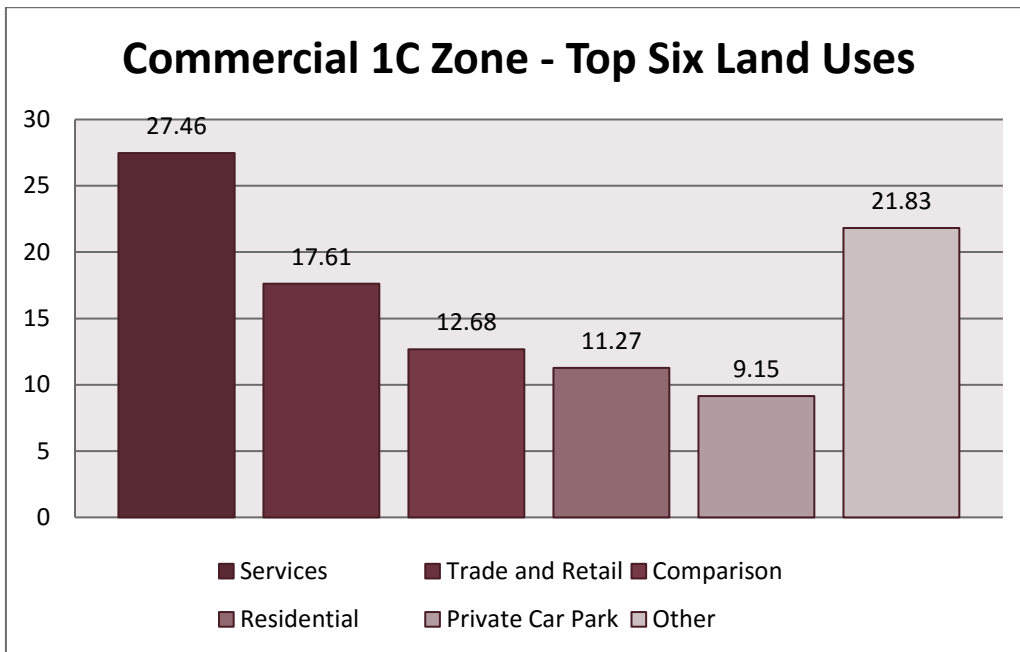


Figure 21 – Top Six Land Uses Commercial 1C Zone. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

5.4 HERITAGE

The Timaru Inner City Heritage Audit (1995) summarises the heritage significance of the Timaru town centre as follows:

“The built heritage of the Timaru Inner City area must rank as one of the finest Victorian-Edwardian towns in Australasia... The town is a unique collection of flamboyant Victorian and Edwardian commercial building facades, imposing civic and government buildings, handsome churches, early settlement buildings, large, imposing industrial or grain stores mills along the old foreshore and railway line, residential dwellings of varying style on the fringe of the commercial area. There is an interesting mix of construction materials in the town, predominately brick and plaster, but with an important use of Oamaru stone and the distinctive Timaru volcanic bluestone. There is a very rare building, the Landing Services Building, being the only one of its kind remaining in Australasia, and the Royal Arcade is also a very special feature of the town. This is the building heritage of Timaru.”

Within the Timaru Commercial 1 Zones there are thirty heritage buildings identified by the District Plan. Many of the heritage buildings maintain a Victorian character, embellished here and there with Edwardian and 1920’s buildings. Although not all of the buildings along Stafford Street are listed heritage buildings, many buildings still exhibit some Victorian character and combined with the listed heritage buildings, provide (with some exceptions) a

continuity of heritage facades. This gives Stafford Street a strong historic character. These buildings tell a story of the town's past and make a significant contribution to the character and amenity of the town centre.

However, a number of significant buildings have been demolished or substantially modified over the years. There is an increased threat to the remaining heritage buildings brought on by the proposed changes to the Building Act which will require earthquake prone buildings to be strengthened. The concern is that many of the historic buildings in the town will need work to comply with the proposed changes, making their continued occupation less viable.

In 1995 a Heritage Audit was completed on behalf of the Timaru District Council by Barrie Bracefield (Registered Architect, Timaru) and Dinah Holman (Planning Consultant, Heritage Conservation, Auckland). This audit identified a number of heritage precincts located within the town centre. Most of these precincts and the buildings within them (but not all) have been retained. These precincts have been mapped in Figure 23. Further to the 1995 Audit, an Inventory of the Timaru District Built Heritage was undertaken by Opus on behalf of the Council in July 2004. The District Plan Review will be an opportunity to reconsider its list of historic buildings taking into account this inventory.

The heritage buildings of the town are a significant asset which contributes to the unique identity of Timaru. If capitalised upon, the maintenance and retention of the heritage fabric of the town centre could create economic benefits. For instance, the Landing Services Building has been restored and is currently operating as a successful bar, restaurant and function centre, and also houses the iSite and the Te Ana Maori Rock Art Centre. This has been a productive reuse of a previously underutilised building. With its revival it has created a number of jobs, and attracts tourism to the town. Some activities (restaurants, bars, cafes, offices) are willing to pay higher rentals to occupy heritage buildings due to the fact that the character of the heritage building contributes to the ambience and authenticity of their customers' experience. Oamaru has capitalised on its historic fabric, with it now being a recognised tourist attraction.

Retaining, enhancing and celebrating Timaru's historic built heritage is definitely an opportunity to provide economic stimuli to the District.

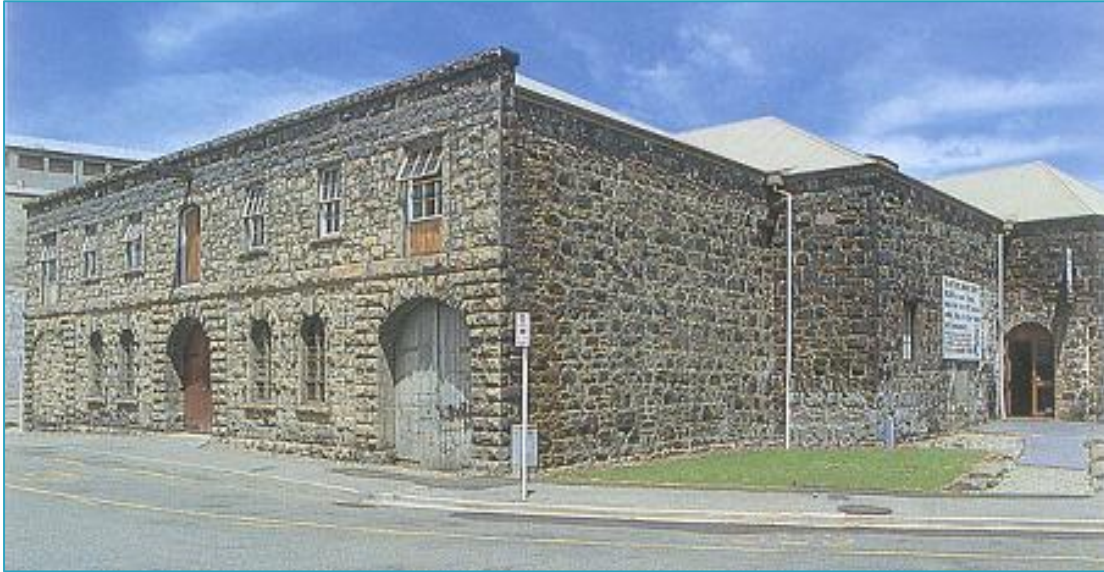


Figure 22 – Timaru’s Landing Services Building – Before (Top) and After Renovation (Bottom)

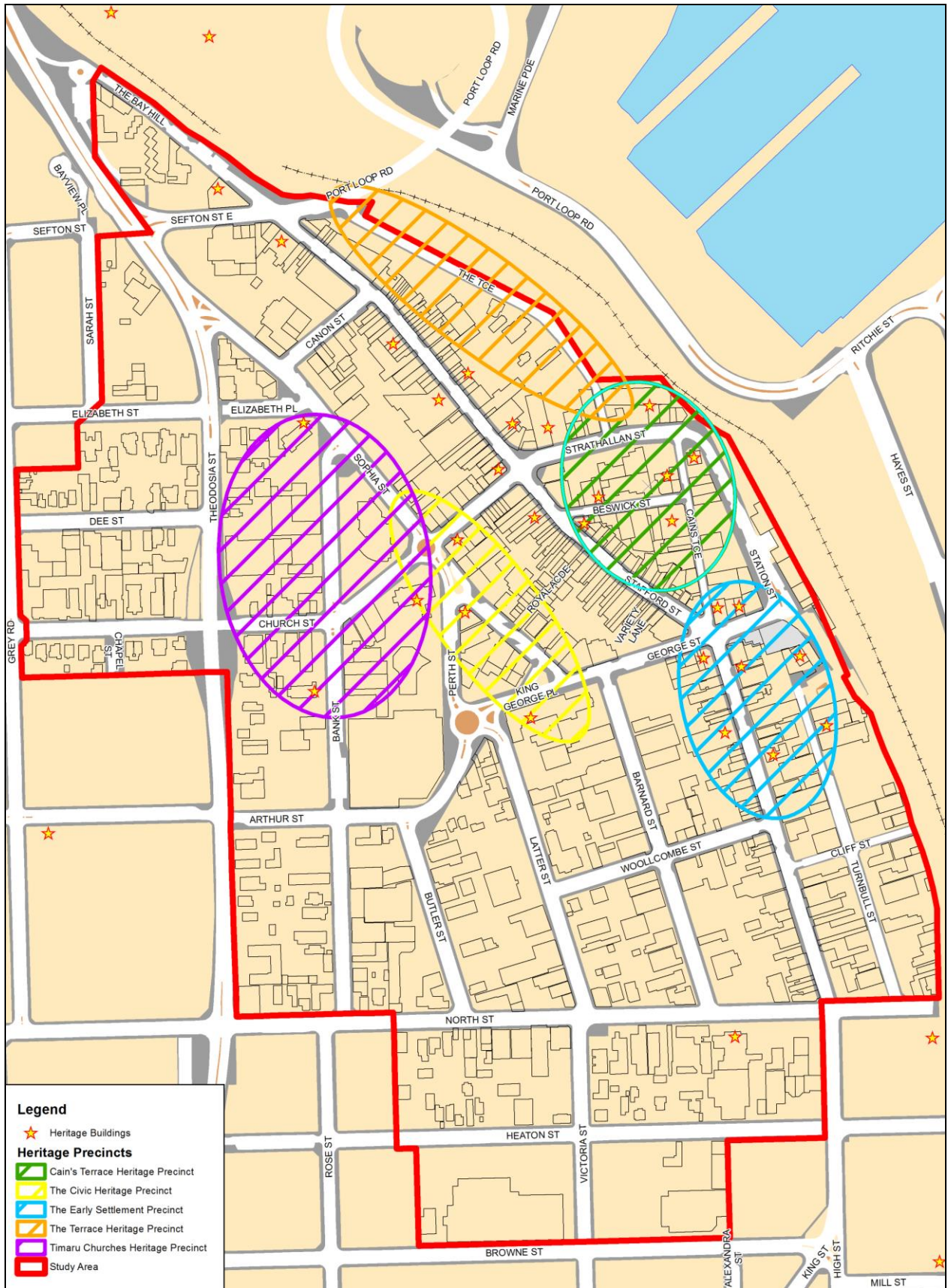


Figure 23: Timaru Inner City Heritage Precincts Identified in the Heritage Audit 1995

6.0 COUNCIL BYLAWS

The Timaru District Consolidated Bylaw 2013 is a list of local bylaws established by the Council to regulate a range of activities, including vehicle parking, traffic, animal control and the management of public areas etc. The Bylaws affect activities in the town centre and are therefore worthy of consideration. In relation to this study, the following bylaws are considered relevant:

Chapter 2 – Public Places

- Numerous restrictions regarding signage.
- Buskers are allowed to operate throughout the district except at the corner of Strathallan and Stafford Streets, and the Piazza, where the prior approval of Council is required. It is stated that any form of busking should not create a noise nuisance.
- Congregation so as to cause an inconvenience or obstruction to persons passing is not permitted by Clause 218.

Chapter 3 – Trading in Public Places

- The sale of goods is not permitted except with having first obtained a license from Council or resource consent (Clause 301).

Chapter 4 – Liquor Ban in Public Places

- The consumption of liquor is banned from a specified list of streets and places.

Chapter 11 – Traffic Speed Limits

- Within the town centre 20, 30 and 50 km/hr speed limits apply. These are illustrated in Figure 24.

In addition to the bylaws, national laws (Land Transport Amendment Act (no 2) 2014) relating to the drink driving limit are a relevant matter to consider. From 1 December 2014 the alcohol limit for drivers aged 20 years and over lowered from 400mcg of alcohol per litre of breath to 250mcg. The blood alcohol limit lowered from 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood (0.08), to 50mg (0.05). For drivers under 20, the limit stays at zero. The law says you must not drive if the amount of alcohol in your breath or blood exceeds these limits.

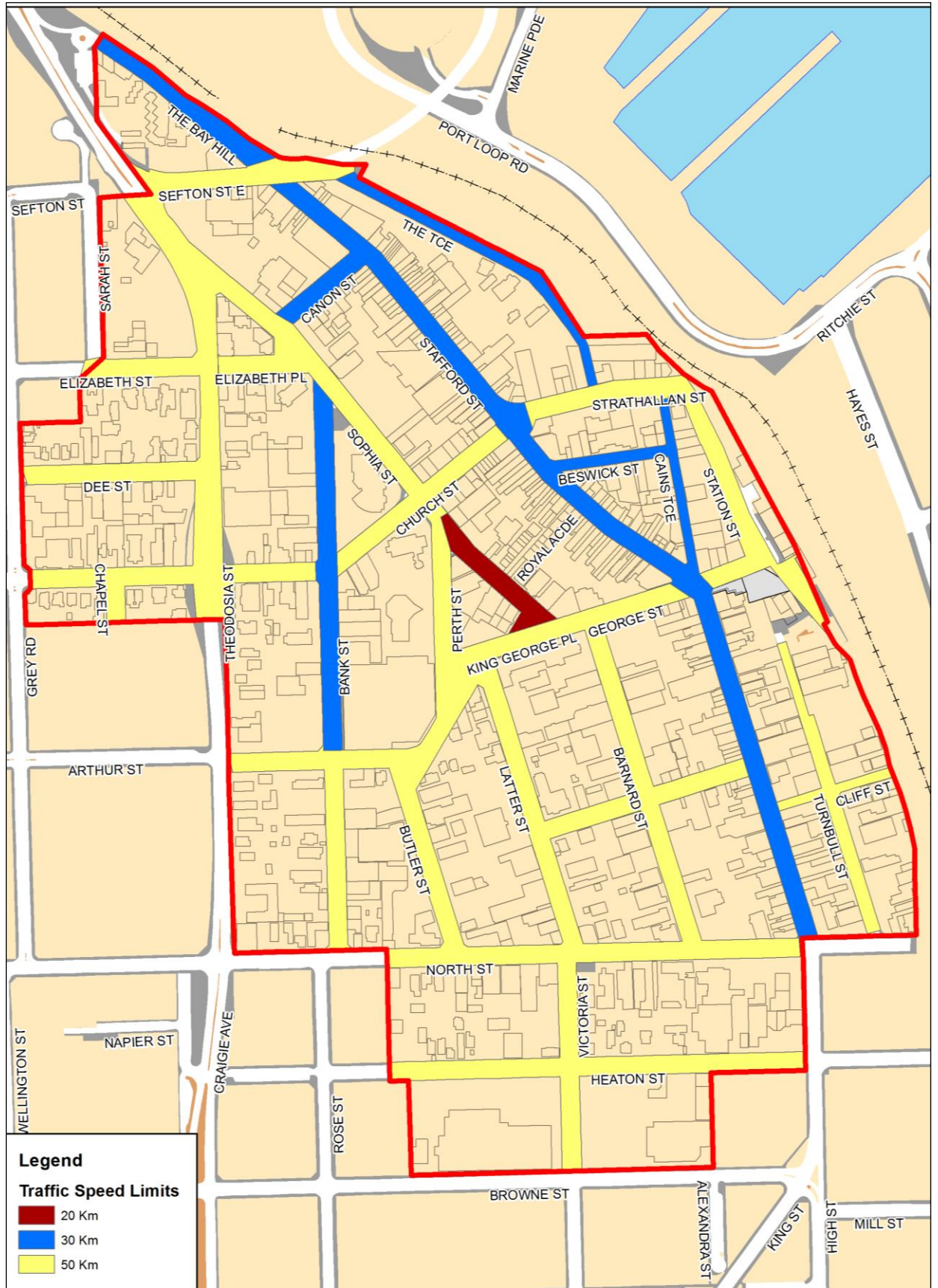


Figure 24: Traffic Speeds in Timaru Town Centre

6.1 DISCUSSION

The limitations on busking at the Piazza and Strathallan Corner recognise that these areas have been created for the benefit of all the community to enjoy, and also that some people may find some types of busking offensive or irritating. This is recognised by the requirement to apply to Council for permission to busk at these locations. It could be argued that permitting busking at these locations would enhance the experience people have and contribute to town centre vibrancy. Nonetheless, it can occur, subject to a successful application.

Trading on a public place is not permitted without having first obtained a license from Council. License fees range from \$100 to \$175 for monthly to annual stands/stalls. This fee seems reasonable and should not be prohibitive to traders. Additionally, permits to occupy public places can be obtained from premises for street dining areas. These can be obtained for food and entertainment venues to expand their business area. It would be great to see more of this occurring which would create vibrancy and activity along the street. The liquor ban excludes premises that have permits to occupy areas of public streets.

The law in relation to drink driving may be acting as a deterrent to people patronising town centre restaurants and licensed premises. People may be less inclined to want to travel into the town centre, either by taxi or car, due to the associated greater costs or the inability to drink alcohol.

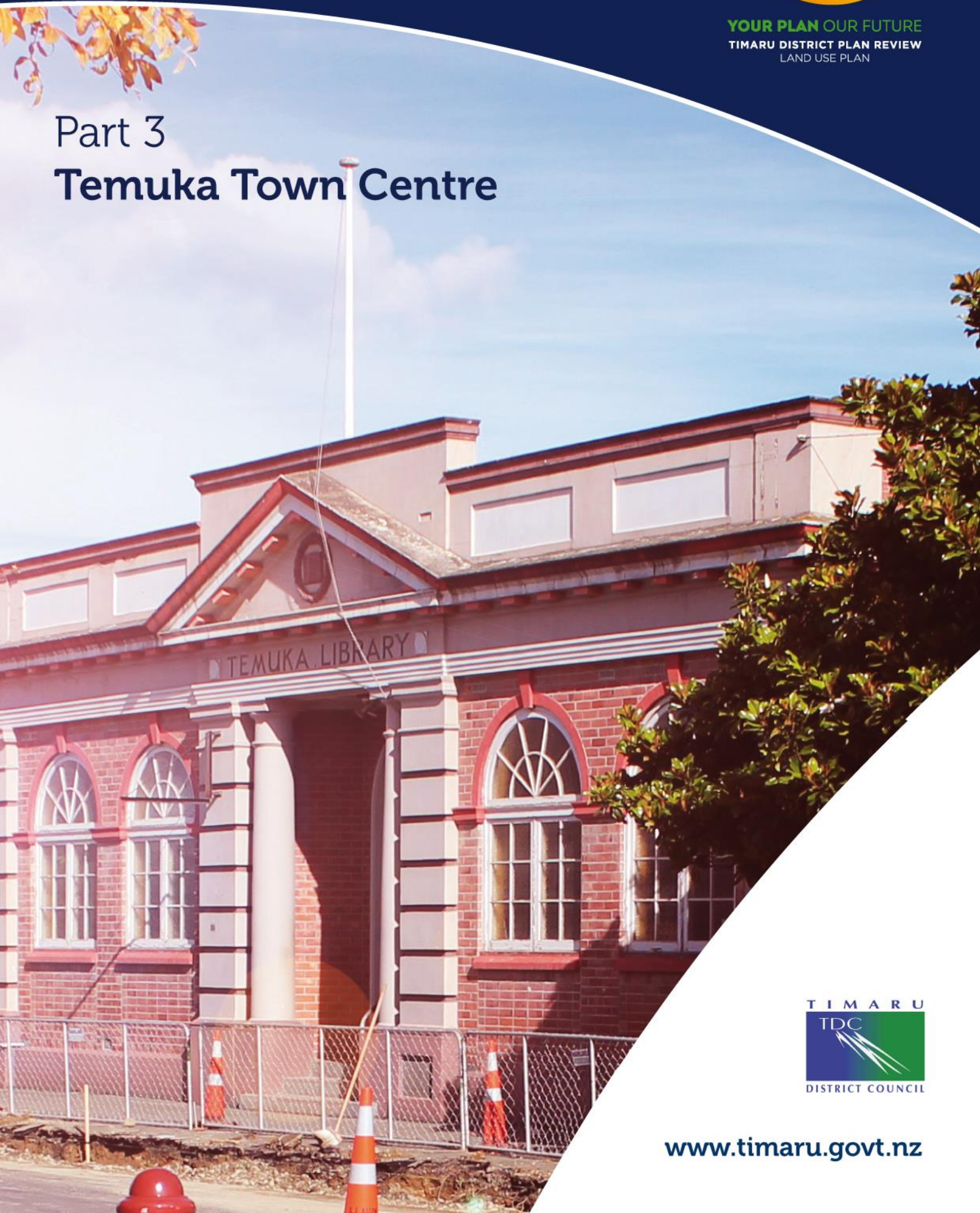
The traffic speed limits are variable within the town centre. This is to reflect the driving/pedestrian environment, and ensure the appropriate safety of all users. The speed limits could perhaps be revised or the design of the streets amended to create a more pedestrian friendly environment within the core of the town centre. Overall, it appears that the Bylaws are not creating a barrier to activities in the town centre.

District Town Centres Study 2016



YOUR PLAN OUR FUTURE
TIMARU DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW
LAND USE PLAN

Part 3 Temuka Town Centre



www.timaru.govt.nz

PART 3 TEMUKA TOWN CENTRE

INTRODUCTION TO TEMUKA TOWN CENTRE

Temuka is located 15km north of Timaru and 142km south of Christchurch. It is located at the centre of a rich sheep and dairy farming region, for which it is a service town. With a population of 4,247 people (census 2013) it is the second largest town in South Canterbury. Temuka is home to two primary schools and one secondary school.

Temuka is accessed by State Highway Number 1 and the Main South Line railway allowing for major cargo handling. Temuka is north of the Opihi and Temuka rivers. The local secondary school, Opihi College, takes its name from the Opihi River. Both rivers are popular with locals and tourists. Almost all traffic passing north or south goes through or around Temuka.

The commercial area of Temuka is largely based around being an agricultural support town. There are many businesses within the town, providing key services for rural activities, such as farm supplies, garages, hardware and electrical suppliers. Of note also, is the Temuka Sale Yards which is located just to the west of the town. The Temuka Sale Yards draw visitors to the town on a weekly and seasonal basis. Many services within the town may be dependent or supported by this activity, which is claimed to be one of the oldest and largest operating sales yards in New Zealand.

7.0 HEALTH CHECK

7.1 LAND USE SURVEY

Temuka town centre is zoned Commercial 1 by the DP. The Commercial 1 Zone extends approximately 530m north to south along King Street, one block to the east, and only half a block to the west. The Commercial 1 Zone is adjoined by the industrial, residential and recreation zones. The state highway bypasses the town centre to the west, and the north/south railway line and yards are located to the east. Refer to Figure 26 which illustrates the extent of the Commercial 1 Zone and adjoining zones.

As with Timaru, the ground floor of each building within the Commercial 1 Zone of Temuka was mapped and categorised using the same classification.

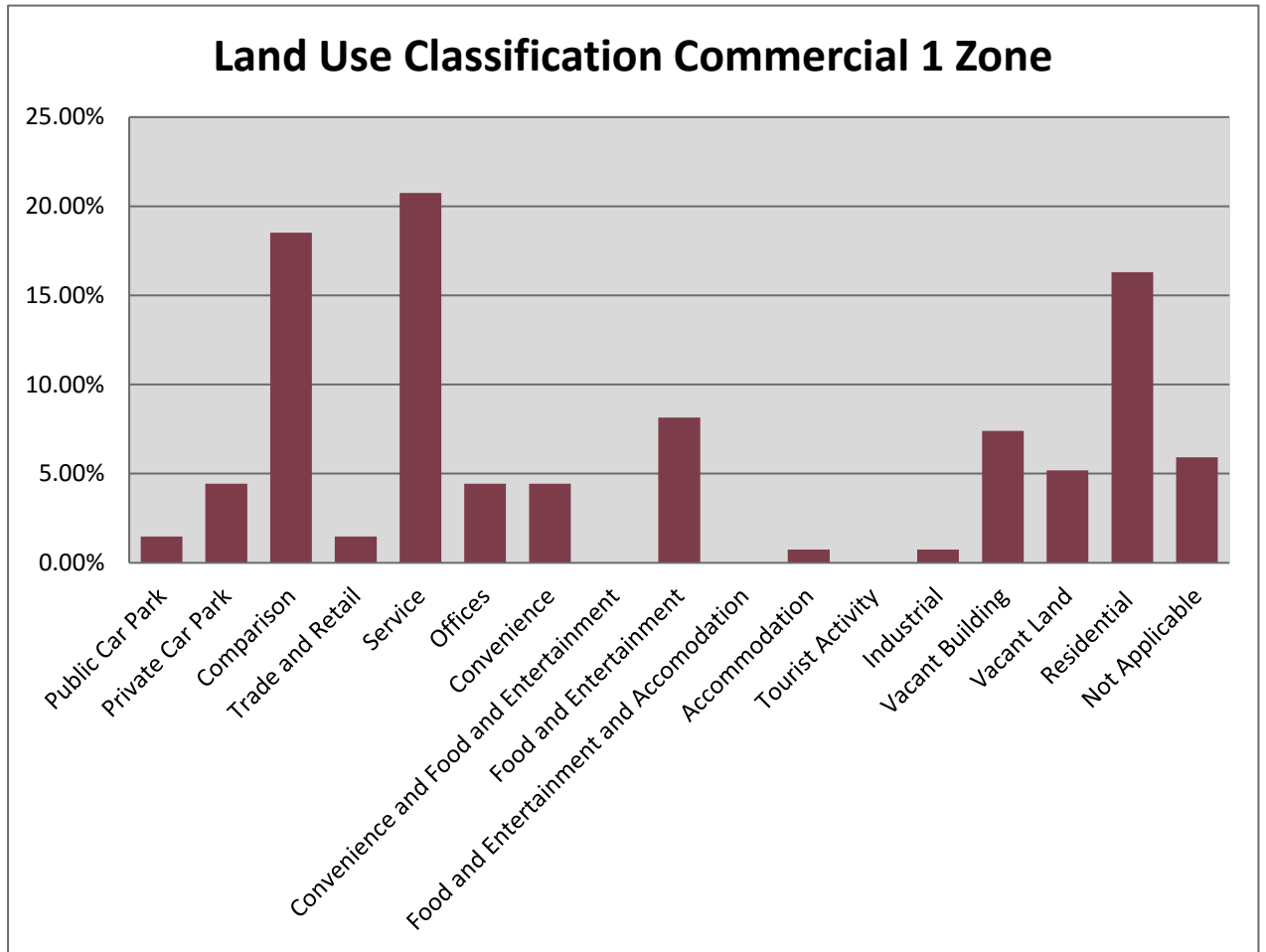


Figure 25 – Land Use Classification. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

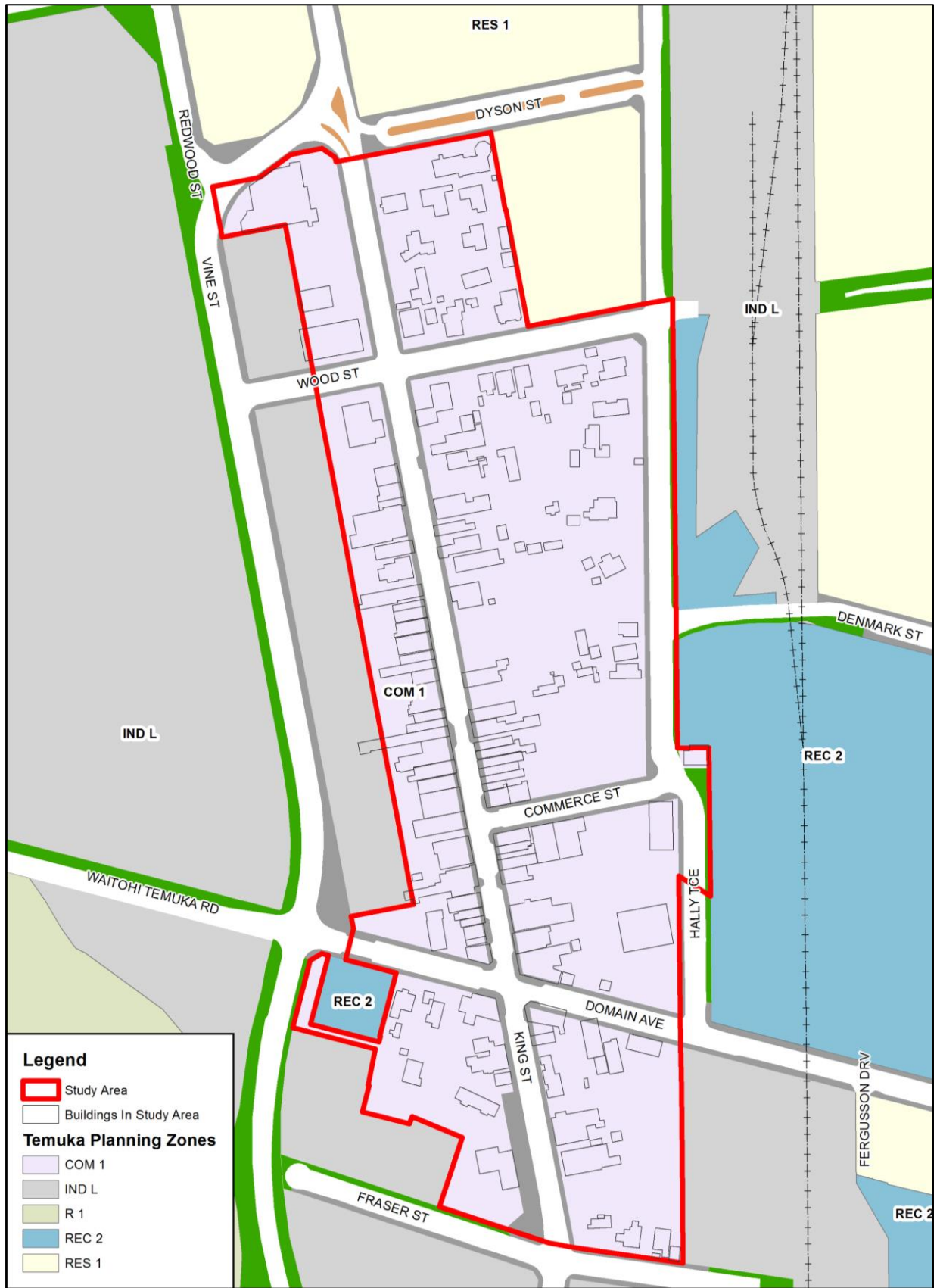


Figure 26 – Temuka Land Use Zoning Map

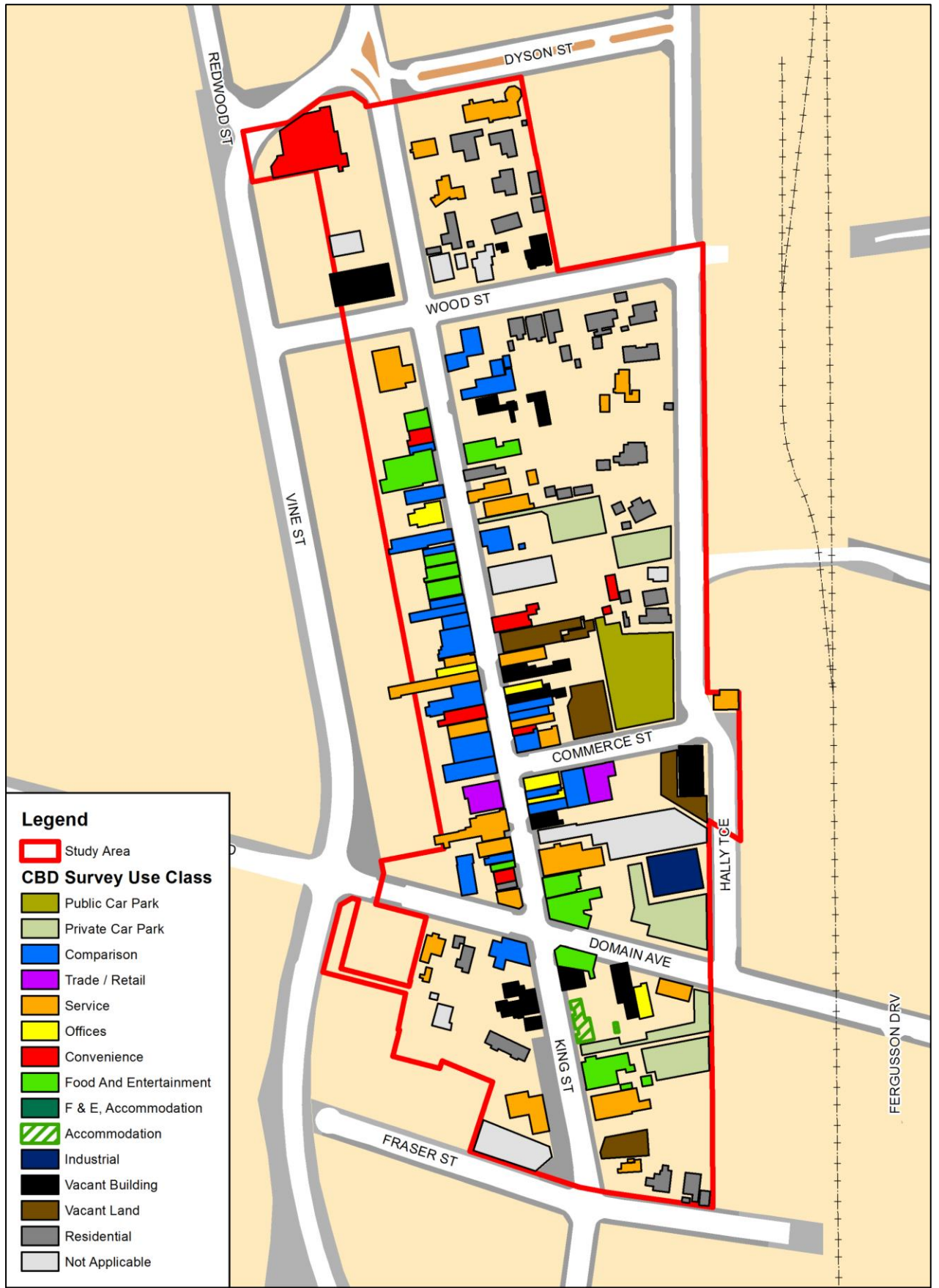


Figure 27 – Temuka’s Commercial Zone Land Use Classification

(A) Findings

The largest number of premises in Temuka is occupied by the services sector, at 20.74%. This is followed by comparison goods stores, occupying 18.52% of buildings. Residential activities occupy the third largest land use (16.3%). This differs to Timaru and Geraldine, which do not have high proportions of residential activities in their town centre. This may be an indication of the relatively minor commercial activities present in Temuka town.

There are a high proportion of vacancies in Temuka, with 7.41% of buildings unoccupied and 5.19% of land vacant. It is acknowledged that the Canterbury earthquakes had an impact on the building stock, with a number of buildings having to be demolished or left unoccupied. It is anticipated that these sites and buildings will be redeveloped or re-inhabited in the future.

The bypassing of the main street of the town with SH1 to the west has taken the heavy traffic out of the town centre, and now a lot of potential visitors do not pass through the town, with Temuka missing out on their custom.

(B) Type of Retailer

Temuka does not contain many national retailers other than those associated with rural trade and services. It is evident that the town is operating as a support town for the rural hinterland area and rural industrial activities. Other retailers tend to be low order or bargain goods stores ('other stores').

7.2 ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT**(A) General**

Access to Temuka town centre is predominately car based, with 78% of the survey respondents travelling there by car. However, 24% of the survey respondents walked into the centre, which is comparatively high. This reflects that residential activities are the third largest land use in the town centre and most of Temuka's residential areas are located within a 2km radius of the town centre.

(B) Car Parking

There are 110 public car parking spaces provided in two Council owned car parks, and a further 134 on-street public car parking spaces.

(C) Bicycle Facilities

There are a couple of bicycle stands located along the main street, forming part of the urban street furniture. No respondents of the pedestrian survey indicated that they had cycled to town. Although, encouragingly a cycle stand was being used at the time.

(D) Public Transport

Temuka is serviced by the Metro and Intercity bus service's Monday to Friday, with the Intercity bus also providing a service during the weekends. The service is quite limited with four to five buses per day during the week and two to three scheduled runs at the weekends. However, the times of the service seems to cover the morning and evening peak periods, facilitating transport to Timaru for workers.

(E) Pedestrian Routes

The town is centred along a main street, running north to south. There are two pedestrian crossings located along King Street. There is another crossing point, with a central island located at the north end of the town adjacent to New World, although this is not a formal crossing.

(F) Directional Signage

There is directional signage present along King Street indicating the visitor centre, the public toilets, and parking. Most facilities are located off King Street, and therefore the requirement for directional signage is limited.

7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

The Environmental Survey was conducted using the same method as the Timaru study. Six streets within the Commercial 1 Zone were rated. These areas are indicated in Figure 28 above. A table of the results is provided in Appendix 3 and discussed below.

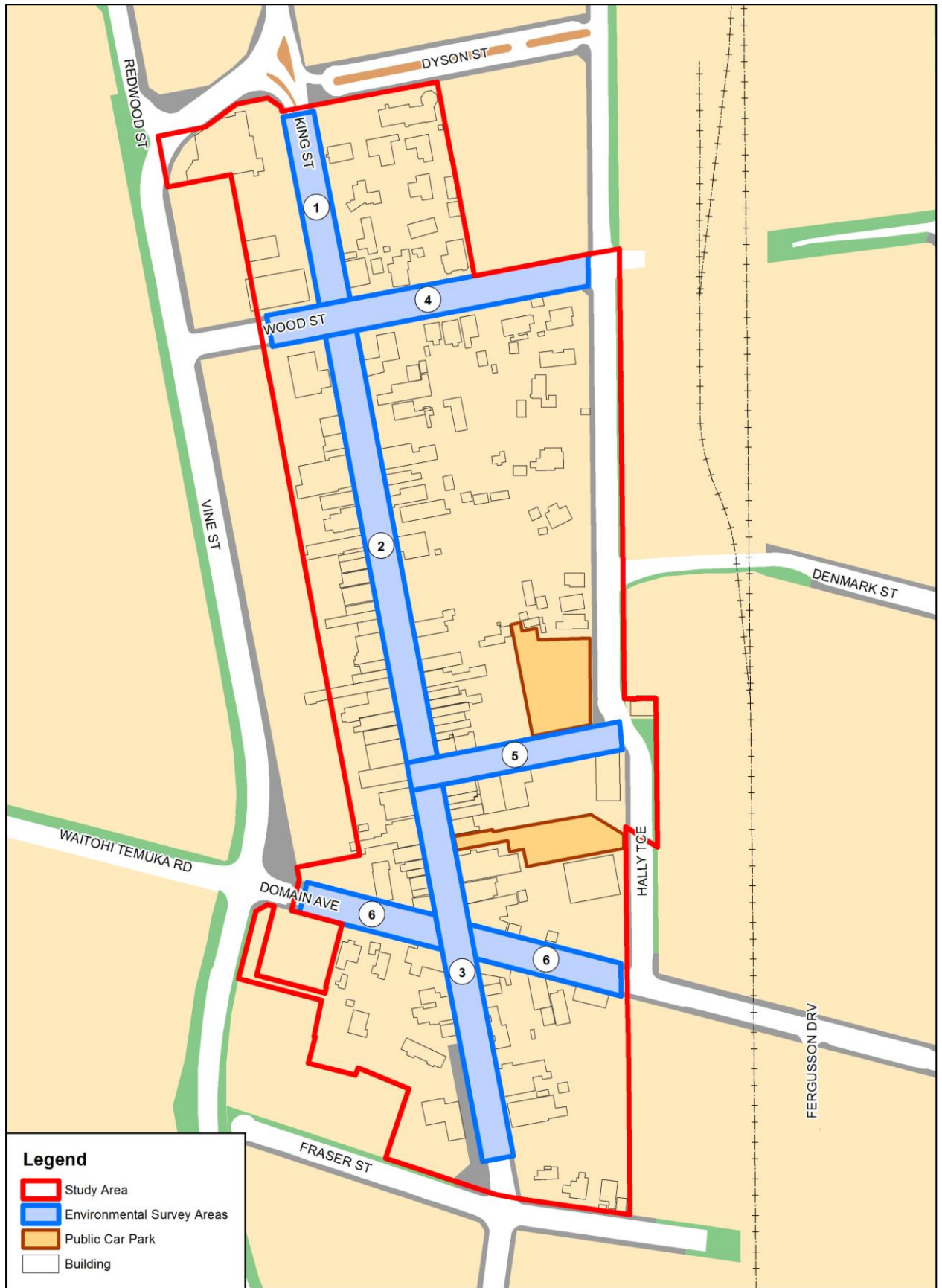


Figure 28 – Temuka Environmental Survey Areas and Public Car Parks; These correspond with the Environmental Survey Spreadsheet in Appendix 3

7.3.1 Discussion

King Street (Wood to Commerce Street)

The central area of King Street, being Wood to Commerce Street, rated the highest in the Environmental Survey. The footpaths along this length of the street are in good condition, providing good pedestrian movement. There is a pedestrian crossing, with car parking along both sides of the street. There is an area of open space on the east side of King Street, which provides sculptures, seating, tables and a games area. The buildings along this portion of the street appear to be in good condition. This area is the physical core of the town centre.



Figure 29 – Typical Streetscape and urban space, central King Street

King Street (Commerce to Fraser Street)

Continuing on south through the town, the area which ranked second was from Commerce to Fraser Street. The environment of this area was mostly maintained to the same level as further north on King Street. However, there is a new footpath located south of Domain Avenue, which has high kerbs, with no dish kerbing present. Therefore, this will be a difficult environment for the less mobile to utilise. No street trees have been included within the new footpath area, which detracts from the quality of the area.



Figure 30 – New pavement south of Domain Avenue

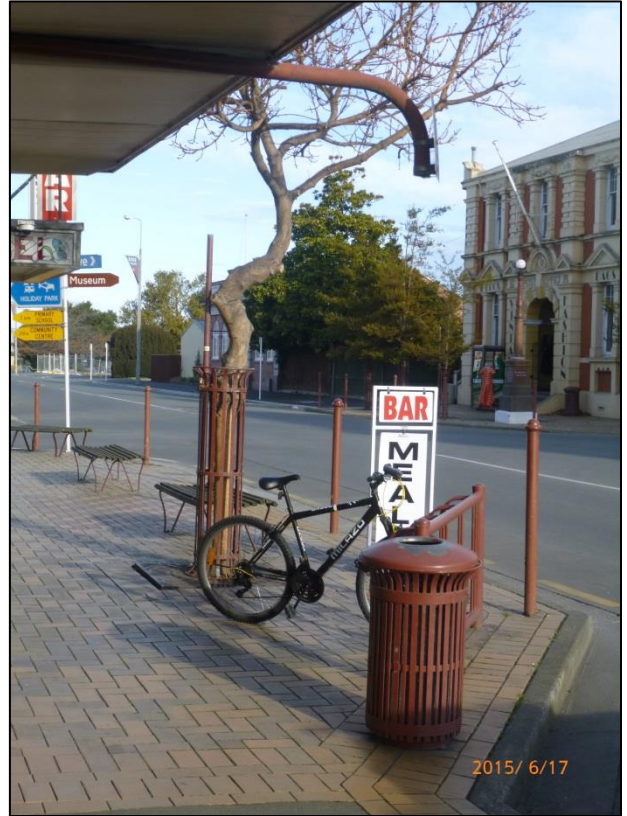


Figure 31 Bike Stand and Street Furniture, south King Street

Domain Avenue

This area ranked third due to its lack of public transport facilities, signage, seating and landscaping. The street does have ample provision of on-street car parking. There are few developments and activities located along the east side of Domain Avenue, with it predominately leading to the Temuka Domain and residential area. To the west there is some commercial activities. This street does not generate a lot of pedestrian activity.

King Street (Dyson to Wood)

This is the northern portion of the town centre, and has ranked lowest along the length of King Street. Whilst the area has rated high due to the presence of two bus stops, the shelter on the eastern side of the road is not well maintained.

There is a mix of commercial, industrial and residential activities approaching the intersection with SH1, which confuses the character of the area. There are lots of vehicle crossings, which limit the availability of on-street car parking and reduce ease of pedestrian movement. Some street trees are present, but there are no garden beds. This area provides the northern entrance to the town, and therefore a higher environmental amenity would be expected. It was noted that in general, the urban realm is quite dilapidated. Although the features are nice, for example ornate street lights, seating and bins, they have not been maintained very well and are looking in need of restoration. This is something that can be looked at as part of the Town Centre Renewal Project.



Figure 32 – Northern entrance to the town



Figure 33 – Bus stop and pavement, north King Street



Figure 34 – Street tree removed - a new tree or the pavement have been reinstated

Commerce Street

Generally speaking, this street is clean and tidy. However, the lack of transport facilities, seating, open space and landscaping let it down. Signage is present indicating the location

of public car parking. Development thins out further away from King Street, with some vacant land and sites present.

Wood Street

The western portion of this street, towards SH1, accommodates industrial activities. While to the east of King Street, there are industrial activities around the intersection which then lead on to residential uses. This street does not contribute significantly to the commercial core of the area.

Findings

Overall, the Environmental Survey has highlighted that Temuka has a nice core, but is let down by its peripheral streets and areas. The street furniture and urban design, although nice, has not been maintained, and is looking tired and in need of cleaning and/or painting. There are areas within the public realm that require maintenance, for example, trees have been removed, without the pavement being reinstated around it. The Temuka Refresh Project should provide an opportunity to give the town centre a facelift and revive the appearance of the streetscape environment.

7.4 PEDESTRIAN OPINION SURVEY

A pedestrian opinion survey was carried out during January 2015 to ascertain people's perceptions of Temuka's town centre. A total of 40 people completed the survey. The majority of respondents (27) were from Temuka, with the remaining people being from Timaru, Geraldine, Pleasant Point and three were visitors from out of the district. Respondents comprised 60% females and 40% males, with 77% of respondents aged over forty.

Thirty-eight per cent of respondents stated that their main reason for coming into town was to access service facilities; and the same amount were in town for comparison shopping. Business/work was the next biggest reason, with 30% of respondents being in town for this reason. Almost 70% of respondents spent only up to an hour in town, while 20% stayed more than three hours. The latter is likely to correspond with the number of respondents who work in the town.

The majority of people surveyed said they came to the town centre daily or weekly (87%). This is likely to be people who work in the town centre, or live close by. Ten per cent of people only visited the town on a monthly basis.

The key findings of the survey are addressed below under the following headings:

- Attractive aspects of Temuka
- Unattractive aspects of Temuka
- Suggested improvements for the Temuka town centre

7.4.1 Attractive Aspects of Temuka

Many respondents commented that the most attractive aspect of Temuka was its friendly and local nature. The service provided by shop owners was applauded by respondents.

The compactness of the town is also seen as an attractive feature. The town is based along a main street, with most of the commercial activities occurring along a 400m stretch of King Street. The quietness of the town was seen as a good quality. This affirms the town's rural support function, as opposed to it being in competition with Timaru town centre.

Friendly¹ **Compact**²

Service³ **Local**⁴

Parking⁵ **Quiet**⁶

7.4.2 Unattractive Aspects of Temuka

Fourteen people surveyed skipped this question, indicating that they were happy with the town centre and did not have anything negative to say about it. Additionally, a further four respondents answered that they thought there were no unattractive aspects of the town centre. This is encouraging, and reinforces the attractive aspects of the town centre.

Of the 26 respondents to this question, 27% were concerned with the number of vacant and neglected buildings in the town centre. In total 12% of buildings and sites are vacant in the town centre. This is a justifiable concern, as vacant buildings and sites are clearly visible to all visitors, and can be a sign of a downturn in economic activity or of an unappealing area.

Twenty-three per cent of respondents said they were unhappy with the parking arrangements in the town centre, be it lack of parking, that it's too spread out, safety measures taking up parking spaces, or too many pedestrian crossings taking up parking

spaces, the general feeling from this group was that they would like to see more parking available.

Other issues of concern were the safety of earthquake prone buildings, lack of retail and outside dining, the quality of the streetscape and trees, the slippery tiles and anti-social behaviour.

Empty Shops/Sites

Parking Nothing

Streetscape Quality of Street trees

7.4.3 Suggested Improvements for Temuka Town Centre

Almost half the respondents chose to skip this question, indicating they did not have any suggestions to improve the town centre. This implies that for many people the town centre meets its functional demands.

The improvements suggested were a general reflection of the unattractive aspects of the town centre. Thirty-eight per cent of respondents would like to see less vacant sites and buildings. The level of vacancies is critical for property owners and occupiers, as it can directly reflect and influence the operation and functionality of a town centre.

Twenty-four per cent would like more parking, with a range of parking requirements cited, such as parking provided directly outside premises, more accessible parking, parking for larger vehicles and generally more on-street parking. This is quite surprising given that there are 244 public parking spaces available within the town centre. Additionally, 24% of respondents walked into the town centre, which would indicate that the town is accessible to the residential area. However, given that the issue of parking demand, allocation and the type of spaces provided has been cited as an issue it is perhaps something that can be investigated in greater detail by Council's Land Transport Unit.

Of equal importance to respondents was the provision of more eateries, public open space, and a change to the pavement. The public open space and change to the pavement will be reviewed as part of the Town Centre Refresh Project. The provision of more restaurants and cafes is an economic issue and will require private investigation/investment.

8.0 DISTRICT PLAN & COUNCIL BYLAWS

This section reviews the DP's provisions that relate to Temuka town centre to ascertain if it causes any issues for new development, or the operation of activities, in the town centre.

8.1 COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE

This zone is intended to be characterised by the presence of historic buildings and other features of cultural or historical importance. There are currently eleven listed heritage buildings and structures located within Temuka's Commercial 1 Zone. Most of these are located in a cluster along King Street, south of the Commerce Street intersection.

8.1.1 Activities

Office, retail and business services and activities are permitted in this zone without the need for resource consent. However, there are controls in place for locating larger commercial or industrial type development in the town centre. Resource consent is required for the demolition or erection of any building fronting onto King Street. Additionally, there are requirements for the erection of verandahs on buildings along King Street. Otherwise, there are few other design controls.

The existing uses in Temuka town centre are not consistent with the anticipated uses in the zone. The central area of King Street, between Wood Street and Domain Avenue contain the bulk of the commercial activities, while the remainder of King Street, Wood Street and Commerce Street contain a mix of residential, light industrial and vacant land. This may be a reflection of the small size of Temuka and its inability to sustain a large and vibrant town centre. It seems to point in the direction of needing to consolidate commercial uses to encourage more activity and vibrancy where it counts. Activities supplementary to the core business uses could then be located around this core area. Taking this into account, it appears that the DP's land use zoning is not an accurate reflection of the existing land uses and should be revised in the DPR.

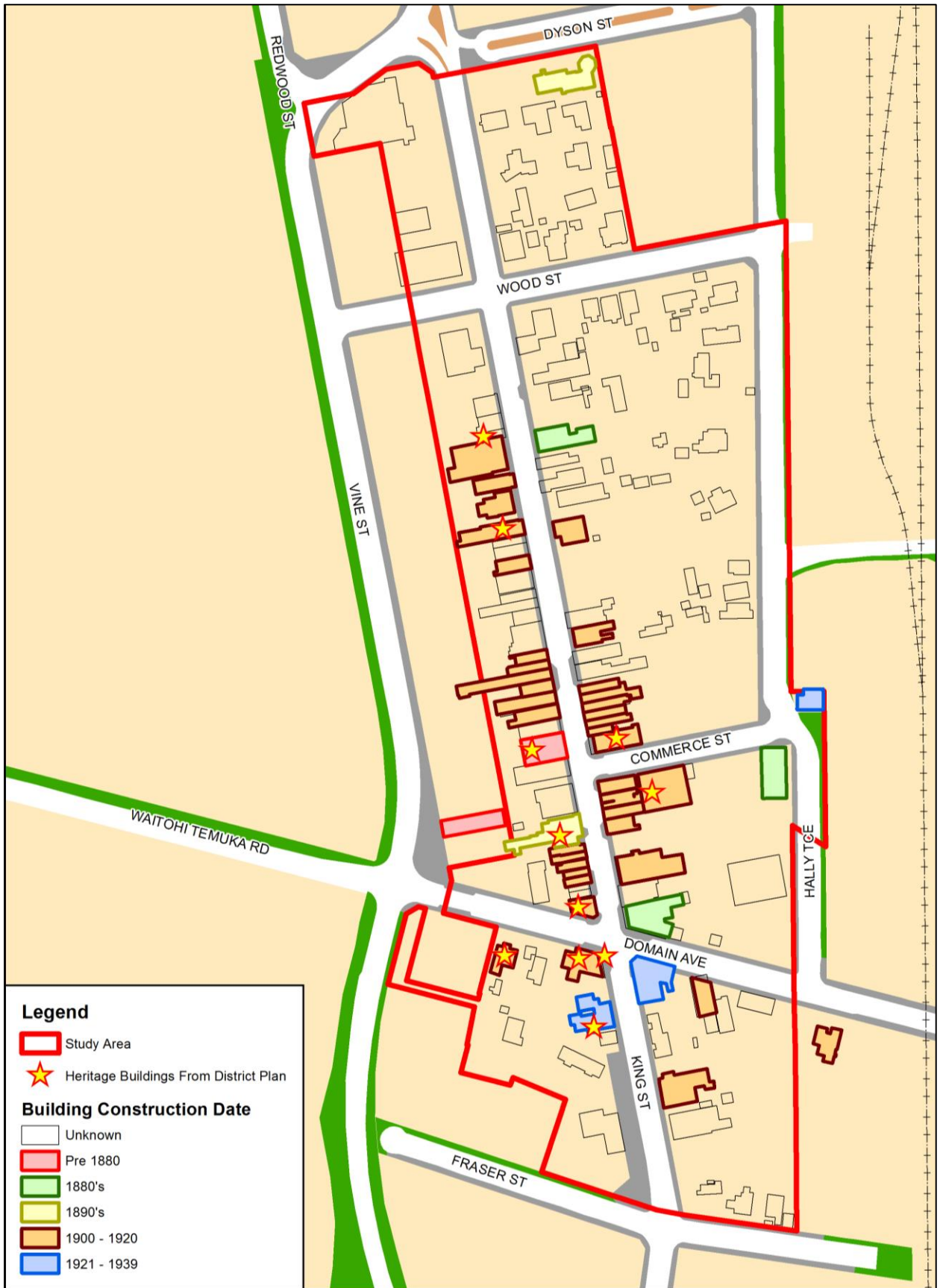


Figure 35: Temuka CBD Heritage

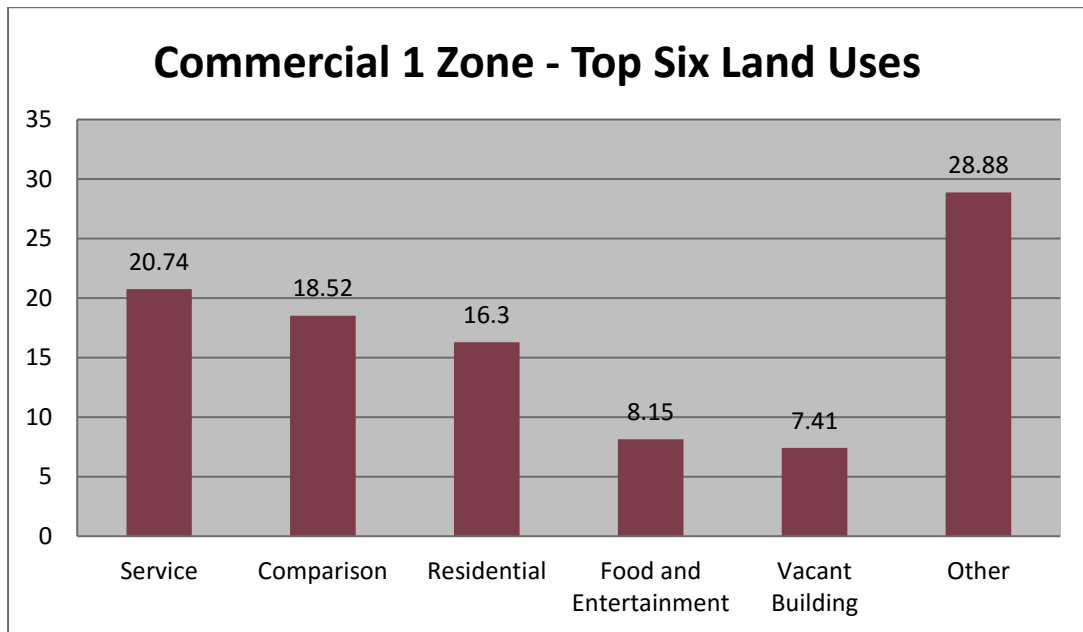


Figure 36: Top Six Town Centre Land Uses. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

8.2 COUNCIL BYLAWS

The relevant bylaws have been outlined in Part 2, Section 3.0 of this report. The following differ and/or are relevant to Temuka:

- There is a liquor ban in place at all times for the Temuka Town Square and along King Street (from Wood Street to Fraser Street).
- All roads in the Commercial 1 Zone have a posted speed limit of 50km/hr.

There were no concerns over speeding in the town centre, which may be attributable to the level of traffic calming, pedestrian crossings and pedestrian safety areas along King Street.

Anti-social behaviour was cited as being a problem in the pedestrian survey. It is considered that the enforcement of the alcohol ban can help eliminate this problem.

There are no other bylaws which are considered to restrict economic, social or public development in Temuka.

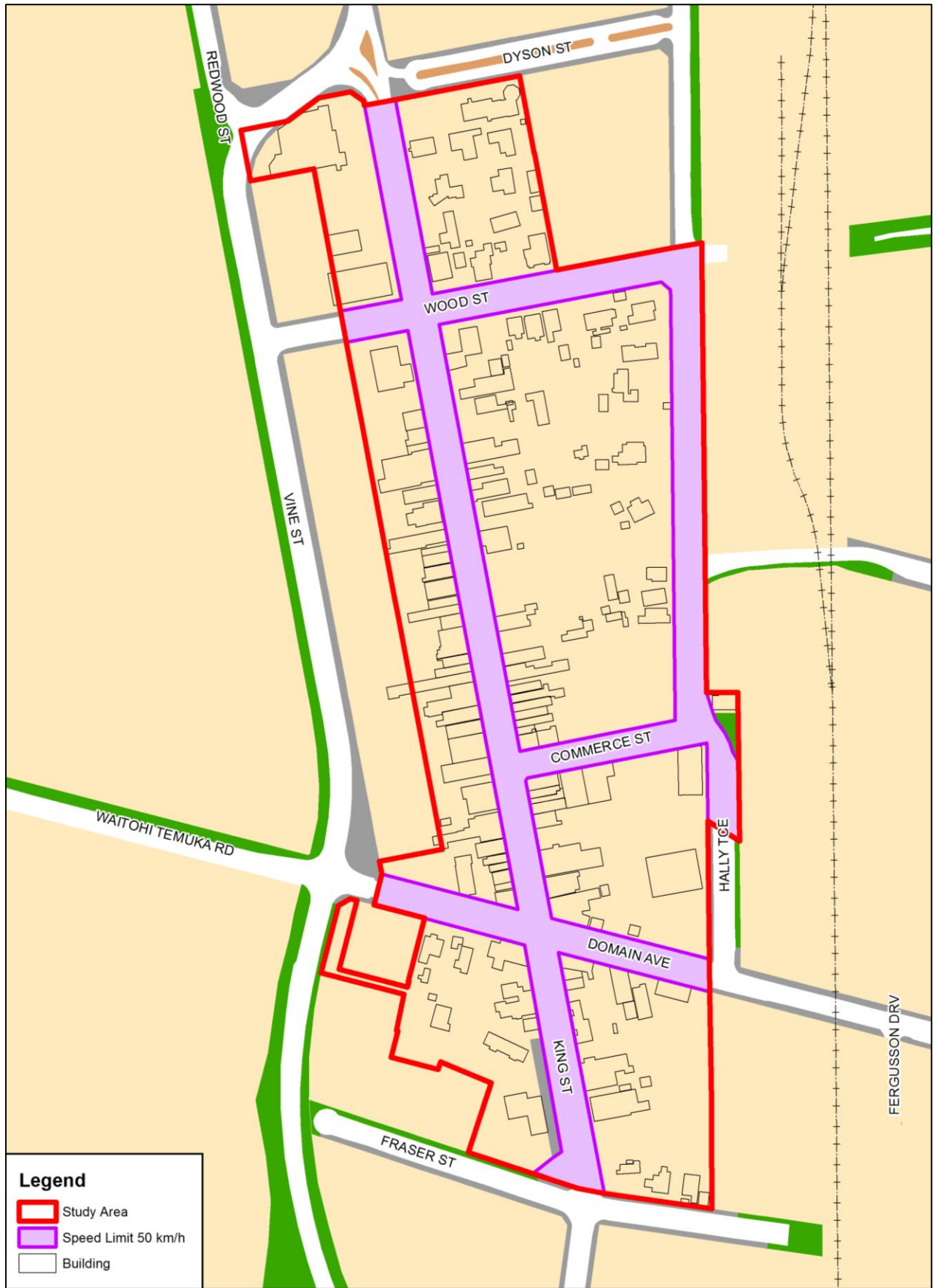


Figure 37: Temuka Traffic Speed



Part 4

Geraldine Town Centre



PART 4 GERALDINE TOWN CENTRE

INTRODUCTION TO GERALDINE TOWN CENTRE

Geraldine is about 140km south of Christchurch, and inland from Timaru, which is 35km to the south. Geraldine is located on the inland scenic route from Christchurch to Mount Cook, providing an opportunity for tourists and visitors to stop and spend time in the town.

Geraldine has a country village atmosphere, with an old forest on its periphery, early settler's cottages and little arts and crafts businesses. It has a reputation as a home to artists and artisans with many art works sold in the town itself or from nearby studios. Geraldine has a number of eateries, cafes, restaurants and bars that stretch along the main street.

The commercial area contains 48 retail stores, covering nearly 11,000sq.m of retail gross floor area⁸. While this is significantly less than Timaru, it still comprises 11% of the total gross floor area of retail in the district.

9.0 HEALTH CHECK

9.1 LAND USE SURVEY

The Geraldine town centre is predominately zoned Commercial 1 by the District Plan (DP). The Commercial 1 Zone extends approximately 500m north to south along Talbot Street and one block to the south-west. The Commercial 1 Zone is adjoined by residential and recreational development, with Geraldine Domain located to the south. Refer to Figure 39 which illustrates the extent of the Commercial 1 Zone and adjoining zones.

As with all the centres, the ground floor of each building within the Commercial 1 Zone of Geraldine was mapped and categorised using the same classification.

⁸ Timaru Retail Market Assessment, Table 6, page 22

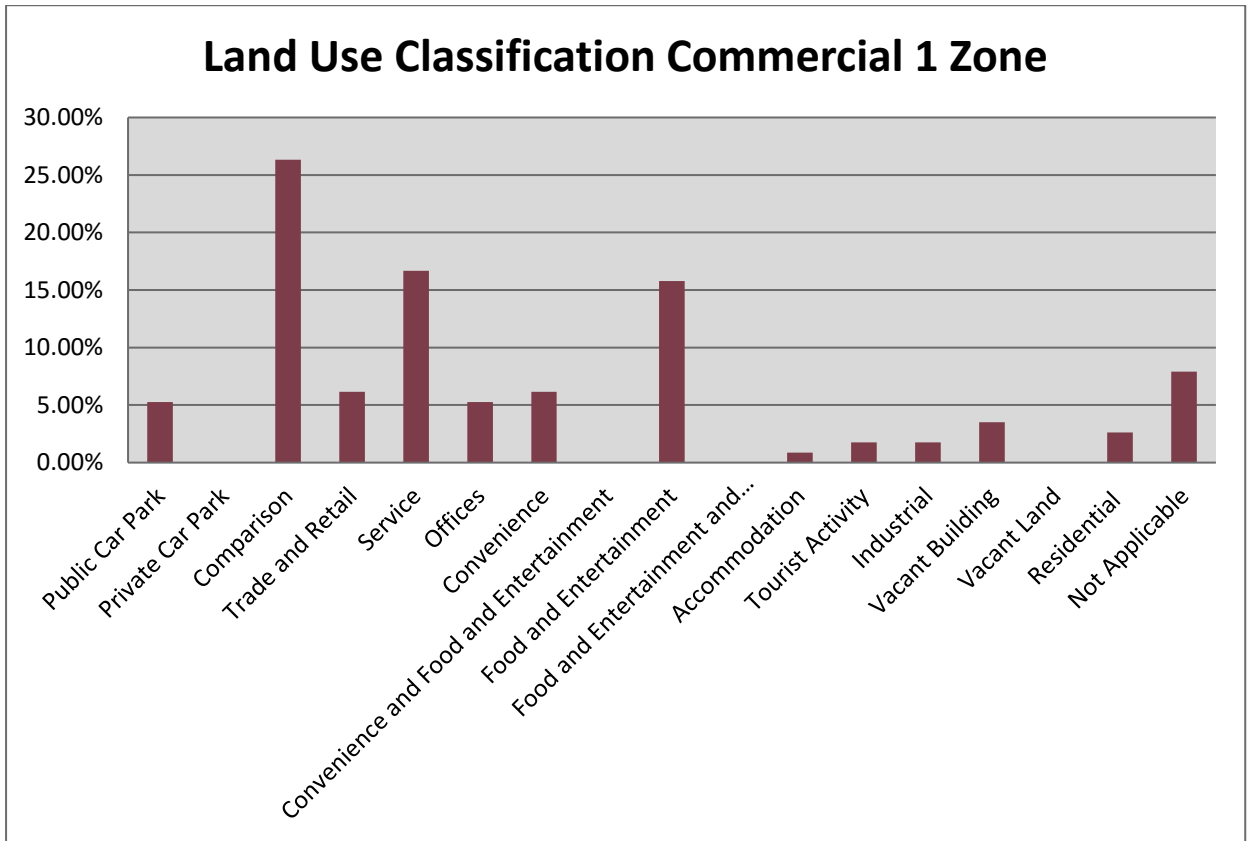


Figure 38 – Land Use Classification. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

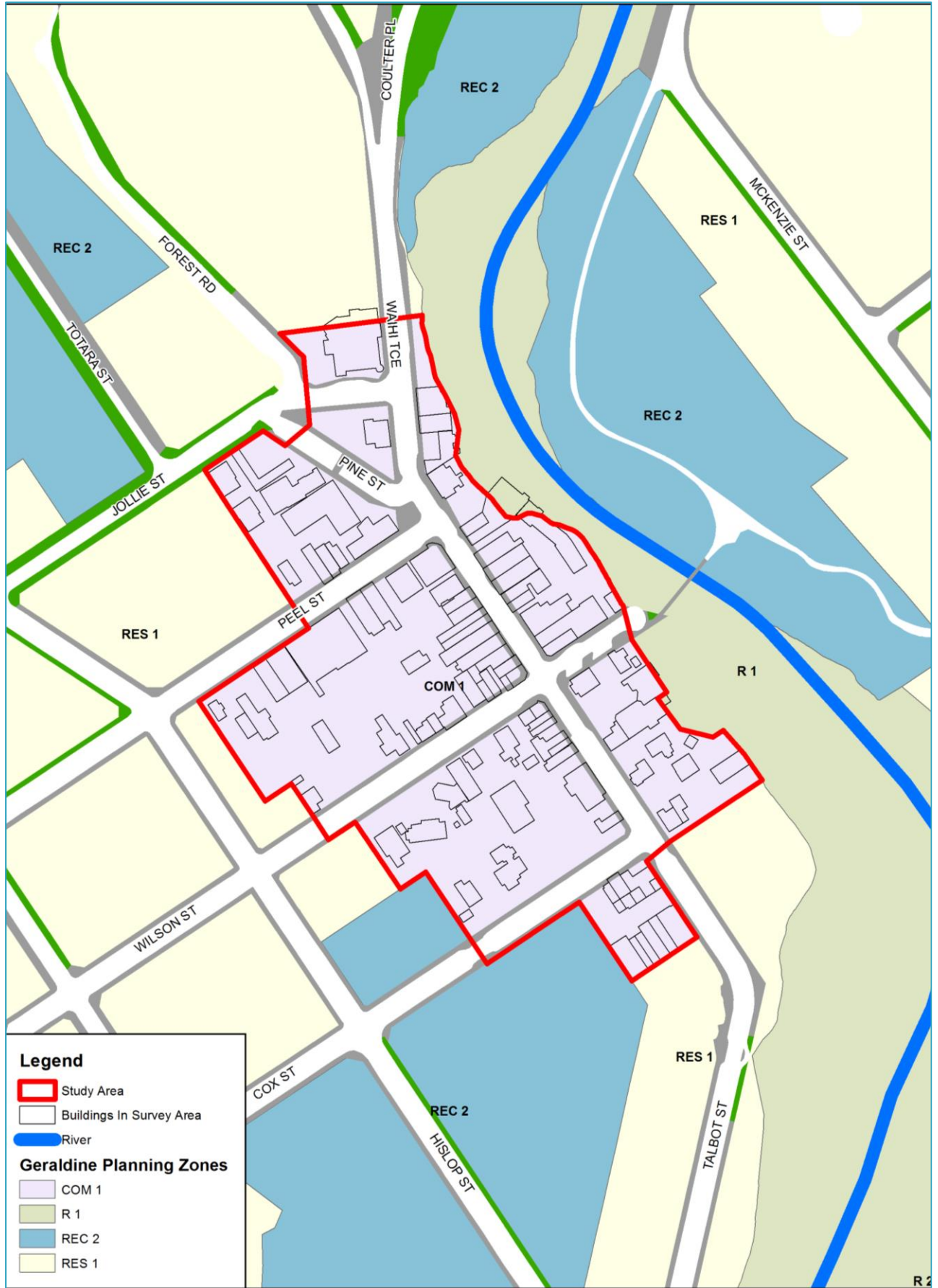


Figure 39 – Geraldine Land Use Zoning Map

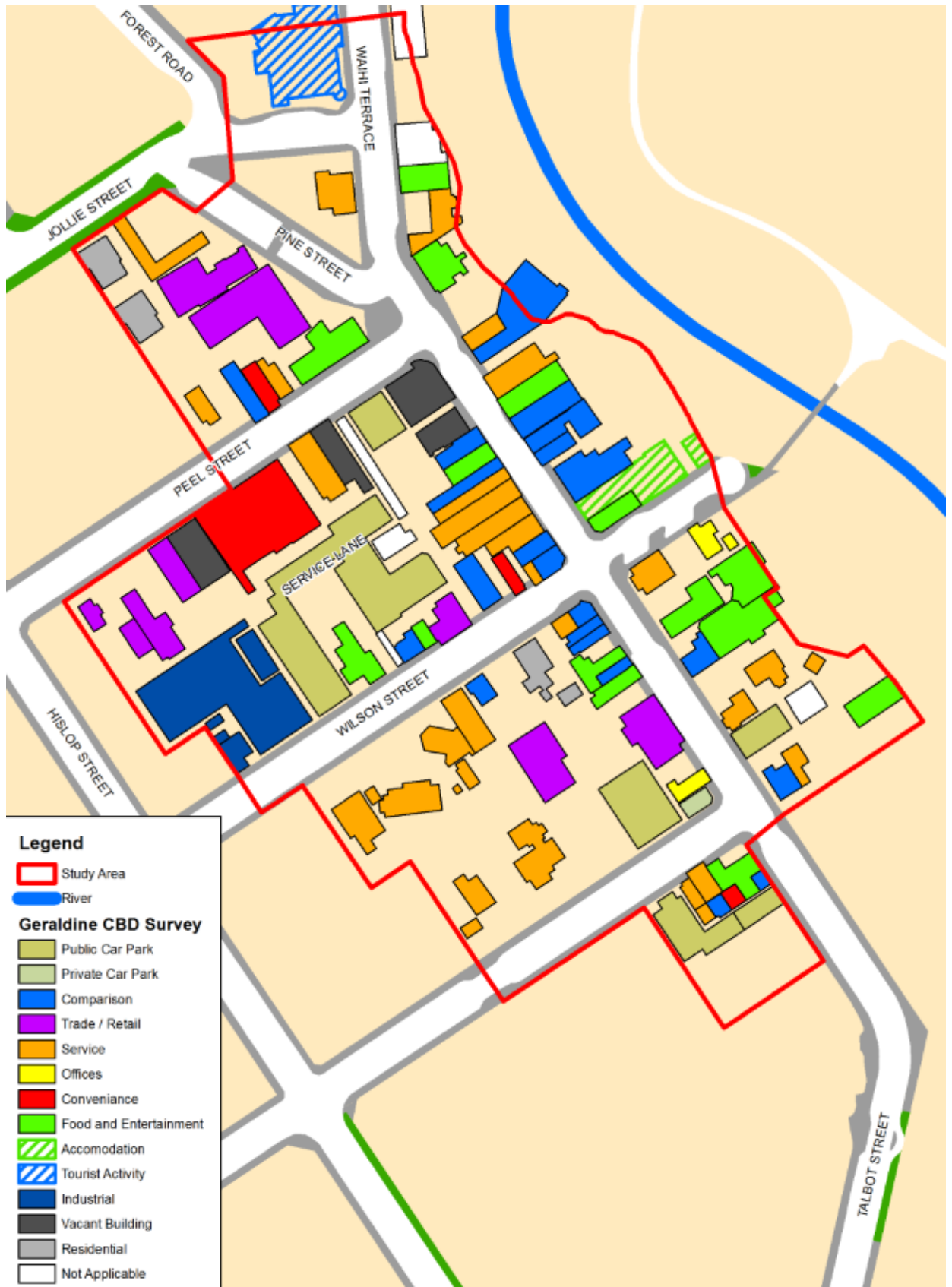


Figure 40 – Geraldine’s Commercial Zone Land Use Classification

(A) Findings

The largest number of premises in Geraldine is in the comparison goods sector at 26%, with service sector activities following behind at 16.7%. Food and entertainment activities are the third largest land use sector. Based on the comments made in the TRMA, it could be considered quite worrying that the service sector occupies such a large proportion of premises. Unlike Timaru, the DP makes no attempt to categorise or separate the different town centre activities. This is perhaps a reflection of the small size of Geraldine town centre, where a couple of streets are sufficient to accommodate all town centre uses.

There are a low proportion of vacant premises in Geraldine, with a vacancy rate of just 3.5%. Compared to Timaru and Temuka this is quite low. This may be an indication of the compactness of Geraldine, with its size being proportional to its population. It may also be a reflection that Geraldine is located along a key tourist route, which supports retailing in the town.

(B) Type of Retailer

Geraldine does not contain many national retailers other than those associated with rural trade and services. National retailers would not be expected in a town of this size. Shops including fashion and accessories tend to be individually operated, boutique type premises. There are a lot of speciality shops selling cottage industry type products, such as cheeses, jams, chocolates, art and jewellery. Overall, the type of retailer in Geraldine is focused on providing a service to the surrounding rural population, whilst also catering to the visitor trade.

9.2 ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

(A) General

Access to Geraldine town centre is predominately car based, with 79% of the survey respondents travelling there by car. However, 25% of the survey respondents walked into the centre, which is comparatively high. This is likely to reflect that most of Geraldine's residential areas are located within 1km of the town centre.

(B) Car Parking

Based on the percentage of people who travel to Geraldine by vehicle, it is important to ensure there is an adequate level of car parking provided in the town centre. There are 50 public car parking spaces provided in two Council owned car parks, and a further 150 on-street public car parking spaces. As far as Council are aware this current provision is sufficient to cater for the existing needs of the town.

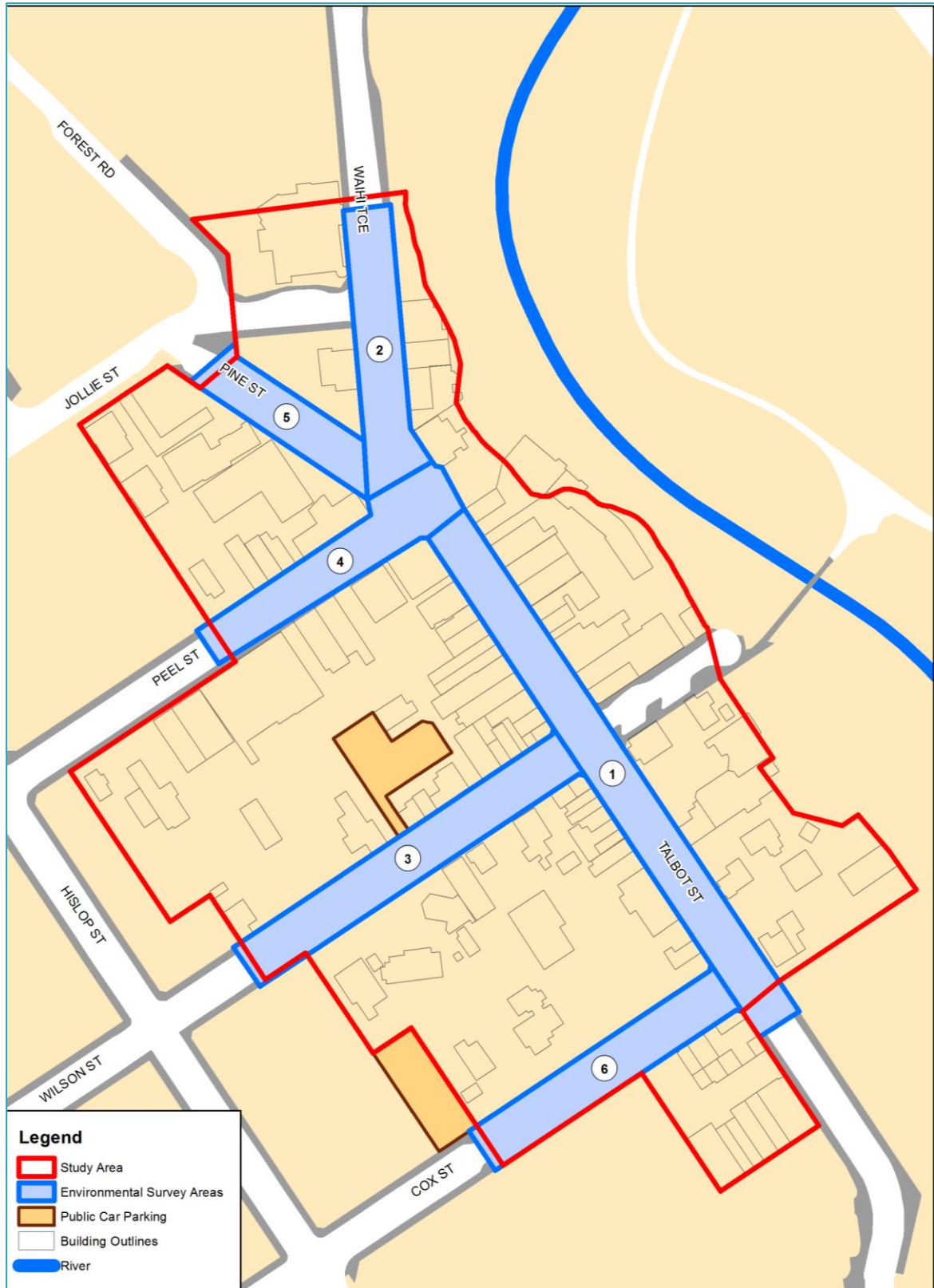


Figure 41 – Geraldine Environmental Survey Areas and Public Car Parks

(C) Bicycle Parking Facilities

There is limited provision of cycle facilities in Geraldine. It is acknowledged that there are cycle tracks close to the town, but the provision of urban cycling facilities appears to be limited. This is something that can be easily addressed.

(D) Public Transport

There is a public minibus/car service in Geraldine consisting of a small fleet of minibuses and a community car, operated by the Geraldine Community Vehicle Trust, using volunteer drivers and funding from Environment Canterbury. These minibuses and car provide a daily on-demand public transport service within Geraldine and to Timaru if required. Given the size of the town, this is considered to be an adequate public transport service.



Figure 42 – Geraldine Community Buses

(E) Pedestrian Routes

The main pedestrian routes are easily legible in the Geraldine town centre. There is a development at the corner of Talbot Street and Cox Street, which although allows vehicle parking and access, is pedestrian friendly and enables pedestrians to wander between the museum, gift shops and cafes.

Geraldine town centre has two pedestrian crossings, both on Talbot Street. One is located opposite the before mentioned development and the other approximately 200m further north. These crossings facilitate pedestrians to walk both sides of Talbot Street and explore the surrounding areas.

(F) Directional Signage

Geraldine has a relatively compact town centre so the need for directional signage to facilities located within it is limited. However there are some nearby areas which may interest visitors, such as Geraldine Domain, Waihi River walk and Geraldine Vintage Car and

Machinery Museum that could be signposted but currently are not. Furthermore the wider Geraldine area has many features and attractions which may also interest visitors, such as Peel Forest, mountain bike tracks and several river gorges. Plans are currently underway to create visitor information signs to be placed in Geraldine's town centre to inform visitors about these attractions and facilities.

9.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

The Environmental Survey was conducted using the same method as the Timaru study. Five streets within the Commercial 1 Zone were rated. These areas are indicated in Figure 41 above. A table of the results is provided in Appendix 3 and are discussed below.

9.3.1 Discussion

Cox Street

The Geraldine town centre generally presents well, with clean and tidy streets. The area with the best overall score is Cox Street, which contains tourist facilities, public toilets, parking, open space, street trees, seating and good pedestrian areas. The area around the Cox and Talbot Street intersection could generally be considered the hub of the town centre. Further down Cox Street, there is not much commercial development, and it is more catering for car parking and recreational facilities.



Figure 43: Central Cox Street; and eastern end of Cox Street

Talbot Street

Talbot Street, the main street in town, has scored second and third highest, with the south end having the highest score. This is mainly attributed to the availability of on-street parking and good footpaths. The only element that scored low in this area was the lack of bicycle

facilities. In the northern end of Talbot Street the quality of the environment, although still pleasant, is lessened due to a lower quality of buildings, open space and plantings, and the presence of industrial buildings. This area also lacks coherent street edging around the Peel Street / Waihi Terrace area.



Figure 44: Talbot Street, northern end

Figure 45: Central Talbot Street



Figure 46: Talbot Street, Southern end

Peel Street

The buildings along Peel Street are in reasonable condition. The area outside Fresh Choice supermarket is well maintained. However, there are no street trees or planting and the street contains numerous vehicle crossings along the footpaths. There is a stop for the community bus available here.



Figure 47: Central Peel Street

Wilson Street

The eastern end of Wilson Street contains a number of small shops, with historic looking features. It also has a bicycle stand, street trees, planting and seating areas. However, beyond the intersection and top end area, the quality of the street deteriorates, with poorer quality buildings, numerous vehicle crossings and lack of vegetation.

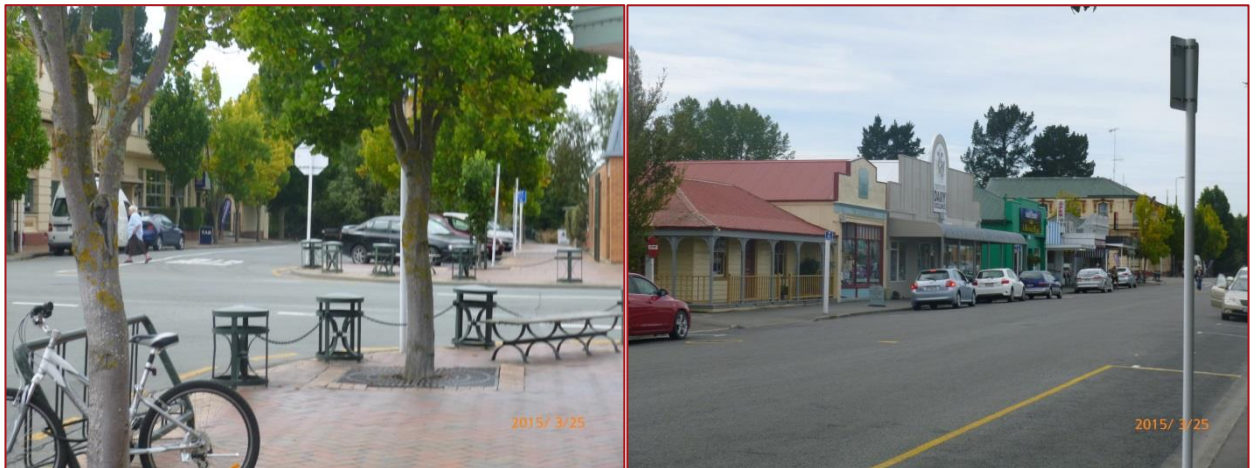


Figure 48: Wilson Street, eastern end central area**Pine Street**

Pine Street has rated the lowest of all the streets surveyed. This street is no longer a through street, with a central planted island separating the street north to south. This has turned the street generally into a parking area, to the north for Ritchies Coaches and to the south for parking associated with commercial developments nearby.

**Figure 49: Pine Street, southern end**

9.4 PEDESTRIAN OPINION SURVEY

A pedestrian opinion survey was carried out during January 2015 to ascertain people's perceptions of Geraldine's town centre. A total of 31 people completed the survey. As expected, 40% of respondents to the survey were from outside Geraldine. This was anticipated due to Geraldine's location on a main tourist route between Christchurch and Central Otago, it is a convenient and attractive stopover point between destinations.

There was a fairly even split between male and female respondents. The age group of respondents was not surprising, with 65% of respondents aged 55 or older. This is a reflection of the older demographic in the area, and also perhaps the time of day, with some retired visitors to the town surveyed.

Thirty-eight per cent of respondents stated that their main reason for coming into town was to access service facilities. Business/work and convenience shopping were the next two biggest reasons. Over half of respondents spent only up to an hour in town, while 20%

stayed more than three hours. The latter is likely to correspond with the number of respondents who work in the town.

The majority of people surveyed said they came to the town centre daily or weekly. This is likely to be people who work in the town centre, or a reflection of how accessible the town centre is from the residential area. Twenty per cent of people were visiting the town for the first time or on an annual visit. This reflects the volume of visitors to the town.

The key findings of the survey are addressed below under the following headings:

- Attractive aspects of Geraldine
- Unattractive aspects of Geraldine
- Suggested improvements for the Geraldine Town Centre

9.4.1 Attractive Aspects of Geraldine

According to the survey, the friendly nature and vibe of the town is its most attractive quality. Thirty-eight percent of respondents felt the town has a nice atmosphere and they felt 'at home' here. The next best quality was its compactness. People seem to appreciate the clustering of the town centre into easy navigable areas, and being able to get to where they want to go with ease.

The appearance of the town centre also appealed to many people (21%). This comprises of the streetscape, setting, buildings, size and scale of the town, which all contribute to creating a pleasant appearance. The attractive elements of Geraldine that were identified by respondents include (largest font = the most attractive elements):

Friendly¹ **Compact**²

Appearance³ **Vibrant**⁴

Shops⁵ **Tourism**⁶

9.4.2 Unattractive Aspects of Geraldine

Seventeen people surveyed skipped this question, indicating that they were happy with the town centre and did not have anything negative to say about it. This is encouraging, and reinforces the attractive aspects of the town centre.

Of those people who did respond to this question, 43% said they found the traffic through the town to be an issue. There were many reasons cited including a high volume of trucks and heavy vehicles, logging trucks, the speed the vehicles are travelling at and the consequent noise and safety implications. These comments reflect the fact that State Highway 79 runs through the middle of the town centre and possibly the rural nature of Geraldine and its hinterlands. Geraldine services a large rural area and as such, it is to be expected that vehicles associated with rural activities will be passing through the town. The unattractive elements of Geraldine that were identified by those people surveyed included (largest font = the most unattractive elements):

Traffic & Congestion¹

Not Clean & Tidy²

Vacant/Neglected Buildings³

Advertising Clutter³ Too Small³

Lack of Retail³ Tourism³

9.4.3 Suggested Improvements for Geraldine Town Centre

Half the respondents choose to skip this question indicating that they did not have any suggestions on improving the town centre. This suggests that the town centre meets its functional demands, and that a high proportion of those surveyed were visitors and therefore do not have an informed opinion to suggest improvements. The following is a summary of the issues raised by the remaining respondents.

9.4.4 Public Open Space

Forty percent of respondents commented that there is a need for more public open space. It was suggested that the following amenities be provided:

- More landscaping, including flower boxes;
- More trees on the main street;
- More public seating areas;
- Better maintenance of the existing landscaping;
- Better pedestrian links to the river from the town centre.

9.4.5 Parking

One third of respondents commented that more parking is required in the town centre. As stated, there are two hundred public car parking spaces in the Geraldine town centre, comprised of 50 spaces in two public car parks and 150 on-street parking spaces.

Given that there are a high number of tourists stopping over in Geraldine, it may be that there is seasonal or peak demand for car parking spaces at certain times of the day or year. There may also be a large demand for bus parking. It was commented that many businesses are using the on-street car parking and not leaving it available for visitors. Wider parking bays were requested and also more pedestrian crossings. The issue of parking demand, allocation and the type of spaces provided is something that can be investigated in greater detail by Council's Land Transport Unit.

9.4.6 Retailing

There were comments made that there is a need for greater retail offer in the town. There is a call for:

- better variety;
- a bigger supermarket;
- more shops (in general);
- more activities located at the north and south ends of town;
- more outdoor dining.

9.4.7 Urban Realm

Some people mentioned that there was a need to change the paving, upgrade the street furniture and provide better pedestrian links. These are issues that could be looked at as part of the Geraldine Town Centre Renewal Project.

10.0 DISTRICT PLAN & COUNCIL BYLAWS

This section reviews the DP's provisions that relate to the Geraldine town centre to ascertain if it causes any issues for new development, or the operation of activities, in the town centre.

10.1 COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE

This zone is intended to be characterised by the presence of historic buildings and other features of cultural or historical importance. There are currently three listed heritage buildings located within Geraldine's Commercial 1 Zone, with a further four located on its periphery. Apart from these building, the majority of the commercial development is contained within the zone.

10.1.1 Activities

Office, retail and business services and activities are permitted in this zone without the need for resource consent. However, there are controls in place for locating larger commercial or industrial type development in the town centre. There are requirements for the erection of verandahs on buildings along Talbot Street, otherwise there are few other design controls.

The existing uses in the Geraldine town centre are consistent with the permitted uses. Considering this and that there have been few resource consents granted for development which is not permitted, it appears that the DP's land use zoning of the town centre is appropriate and are not a barrier to new development.

10.1.2 Discussion

The main portion of the Commercial 1 Zone runs parallel along Talbot Street from Cox Street in the south to Peel Street in the north. There is a subtle break in the town centre activities as the road bends in the north and south. The northern part of the Commercial 1 Zone does not receive as much footfall as the central area of the town and is therefore somewhat separate. Its inclusion in the Commercial 1 Zone should therefore be investigated as part of the DPR.

It is suggested that the four heritage sites located on the periphery of the town centre be included in the Com1 Zone. The inclusion of the four heritage sites within the Commercial 1 Zone would not extend the zone in length, merely make it slightly wider. These buildings are

used for activities permitted in the Commercial 1 Zone, and are therefore more suitable to this zoning than Residential.

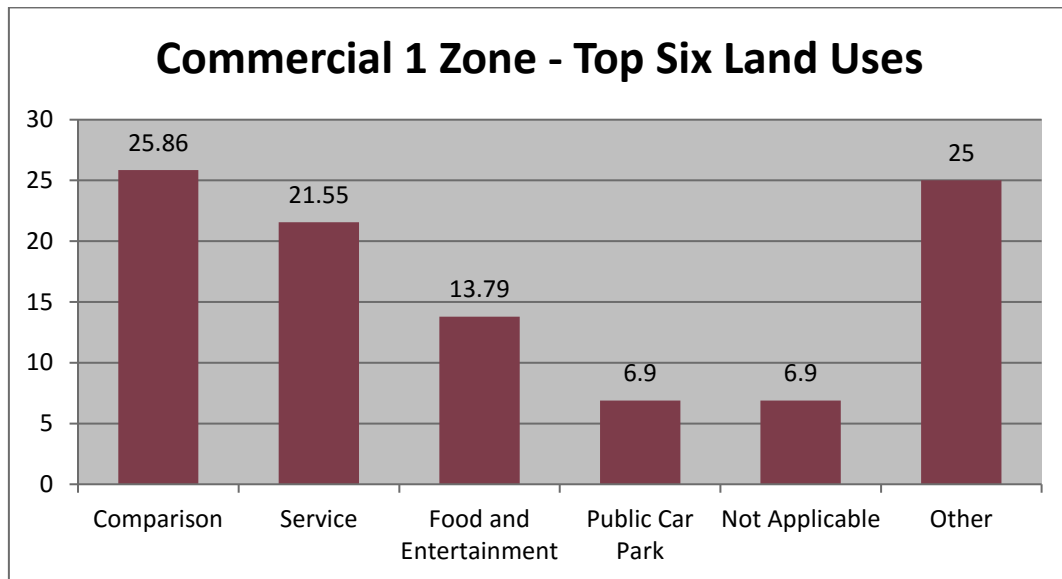


Figure 50: Top Six Town Centre Land Uses. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

10.2 COUNCIL BYLAWS

The relevant bylaws have been outlined in Part 2, Section 3.0 of this report. The following differ and/or are relevant to Geraldine:

- There is no liquor ban in public places in Geraldine.
- All roads in the Commercial 1 Zone have a posted speed limit of 50km/hr.

It is considered that the 50km/hr speed limit acts as a contributing factor to the traffic issues noted in the pedestrian opinion survey. It is suggested that these limits be reviewed to be more applicable to this specific environment. It is noted that NZ Transport Agency are the roading control authority for Talbot Street, as it is a state highway, and they would need to be approached about this.

There are no other bylaws which are considered to restrict economic, social or public development in Geraldine town.

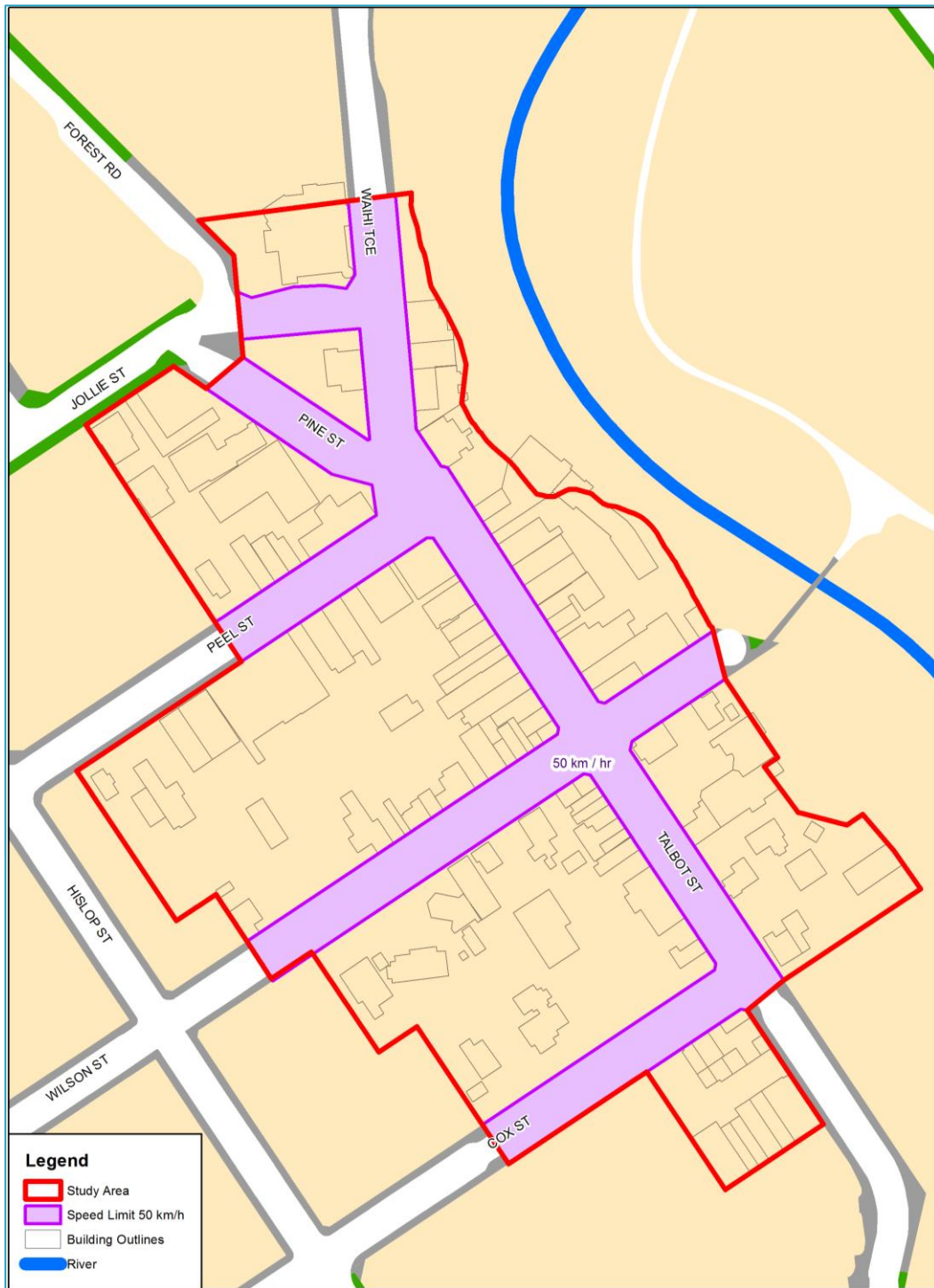


Figure 51: Geraldine Traffic Speeds



Part 5

Pleasant Point Town Centre



PART 5 PLEASANT POINT TOWN CENTRE

INTRODUCTION TO PLEASANT POINT TOWN CENTRE

Pleasant Point is a small country town, some 19 km inland from Timaru, on State Highway 8. A service town for the surrounding farming district, it has a population of 1,190 (census 2013) and its main attractions are the heritage railway and the Pleasant Point Museum and Railway, which operates steam locomotives.

For almost one hundred years, the Fairlie branch line railway passed through the town. It closed on 2 March 1968, and the heritage line utilises 2.5km of track along the branch's old route as a visitor attraction at various times throughout the year.

Māori rock art can be viewed nearby the town. Vineyards have also been established in the area. It has two rivers nearby the Opihi and the Te Ngawai. The two rivers meet each other just to the north of the town.

11.0 HEALTH CHECK

11.1 LAND USE SURVEY

Pleasant Point town centre is zoned Commercial 1 by the DP. The Commercial 1 Zone extends approximately 550m north to south along the northern side of Main Road (SH8) and for 150m north up Te Ngawai Road. The Commercial 1 Zone is adjoined by the Residential Zone and activities. The old Pleasant Point Railway line runs parallel with Main Road to the south. Point Lumber yard occupies a large area of residential zoned land to the north of the commercial area, accessed off Te Ngawai Road by Morris Lane. Refer to Figure 53 which illustrates the extent of the Commercial 1 and adjoining zones.

As with all the centres, the ground floor of each building within the Commercial 1 Zone of Pleasant Point was mapped and categorised using the same classification.

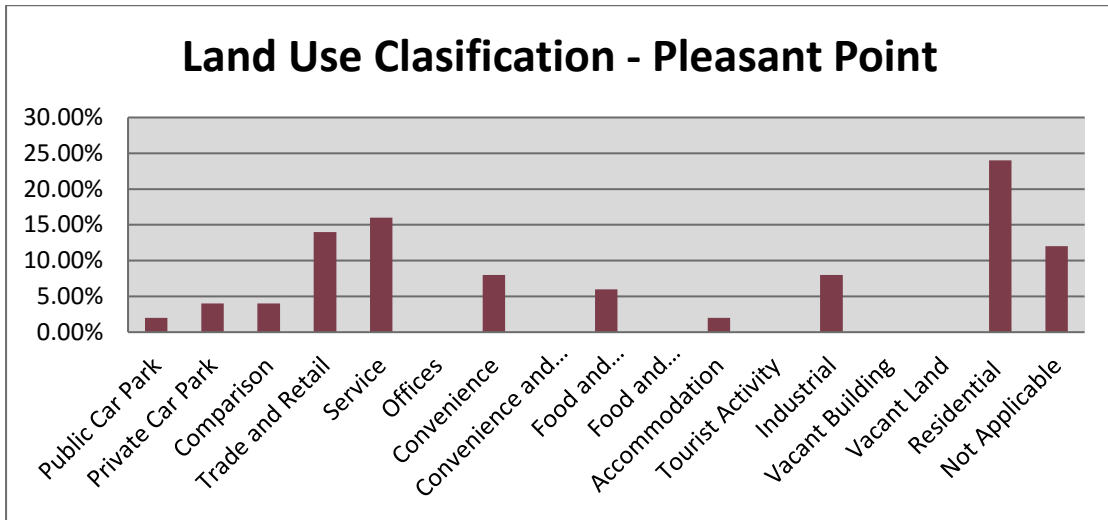


Figure 52 – Land Use Classification. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

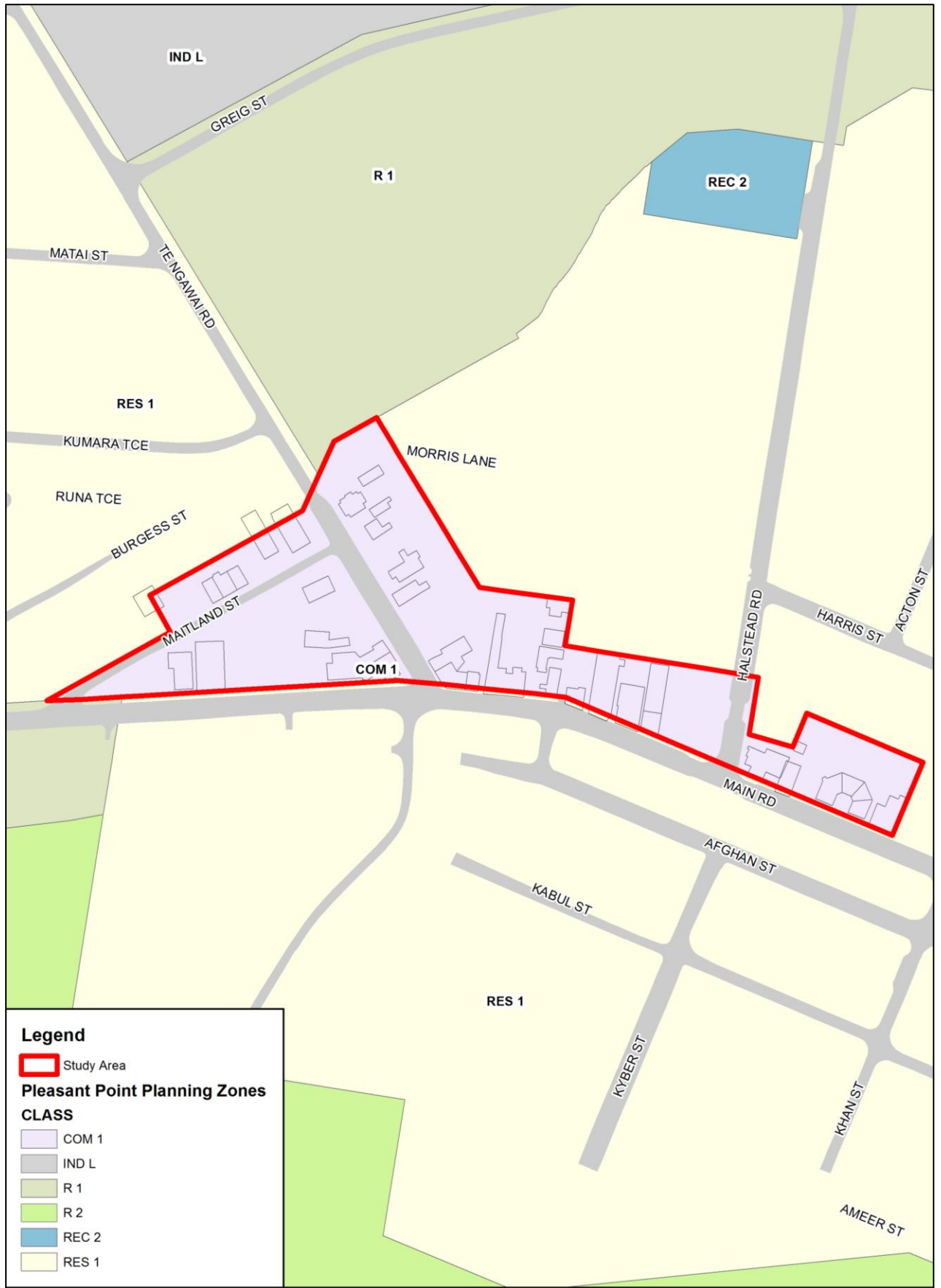


Figure 53 – Pleasant Point Land Use Zoning Map

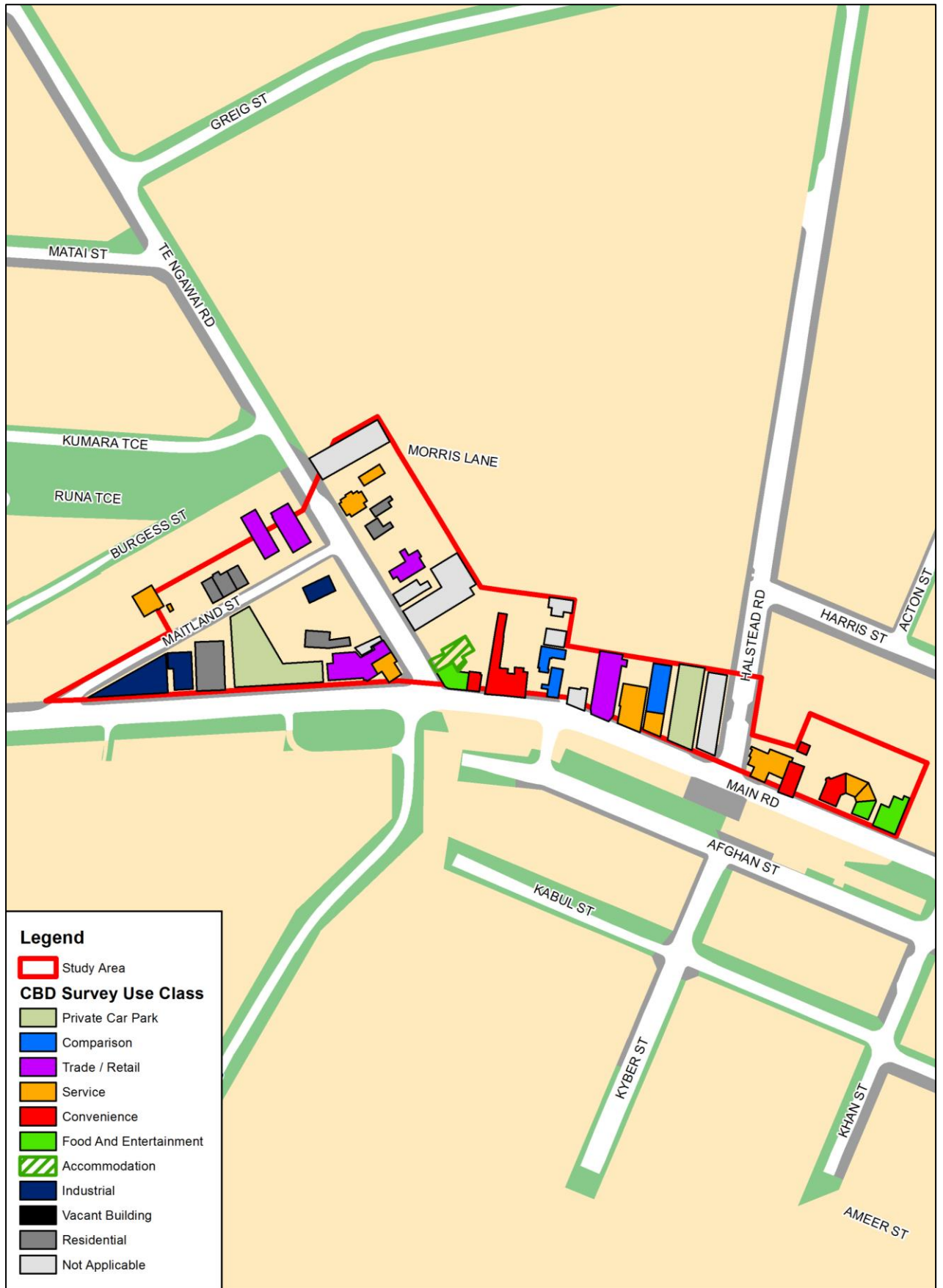


Figure 54 – Pleasant Point’s Commercial Zone Land Use Classification

(A) Findings

The largest number of premises in Pleasant Point's commercial zone is occupied by residential activities, 24%. The next largest activities comprise services and trade and retail, occupying 16% and 14% of land uses respectively. Uses not included in the categorisation including storage yards, workshops, club rooms and open space collectively occupy 12% of the land use. Industrial activities occupy 8%.

The mix of activities found in Pleasant Point is largely those required for supporting the rural environment and residential. There is only a small Four Square supermarket in the town, with comparison and convenience shopping mainly reliant on those services located in Timaru. Pleasant Point is the districts smallest town centre. The town operates as a satellite town to Timaru, with the level of services provided similar to a neighbourhood centre. the town has a strong relationship with Timaru, with residents commuting for work/school, so the town centre function is unique in comparison to other towns in the district.

There are no vacant buildings or sites within the town, which is a distinction no other town can hold. However, a lot of these buildings are not actually used for commercial activities. This is not necessarily a sign that more land needs to be zoned or that there is a demand for additional commercial land. It does however signal that the land use zoning in the town could be rationalised.

(B) Type of Retailer

Pleasant Point does not contain any national retailers other than those associated with rural trade and services. The town is operating as a rural support town and is largely reliant on Timaru for retail services.

11.2 ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Access to Pleasant Point is predominately car or pedestrian based. There are no public transport facilities servicing the town. There are private bus services that go through the town serving the schools etc. There is no official public car parking areas, other than the Council owned land adjacent to the railway line on the south side of SH8. There are a couple of areas which have been sealed and are utilised for parking, however there are no spaces marked and there is no metering in the town.

11.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

The Environmental Survey was conducted using the same method as the other towns. Four streets within the Commercial 1 Zone were rated. These areas are indicated in Figure 55. A table of the results is provided in Appendix 3 and discussed below.

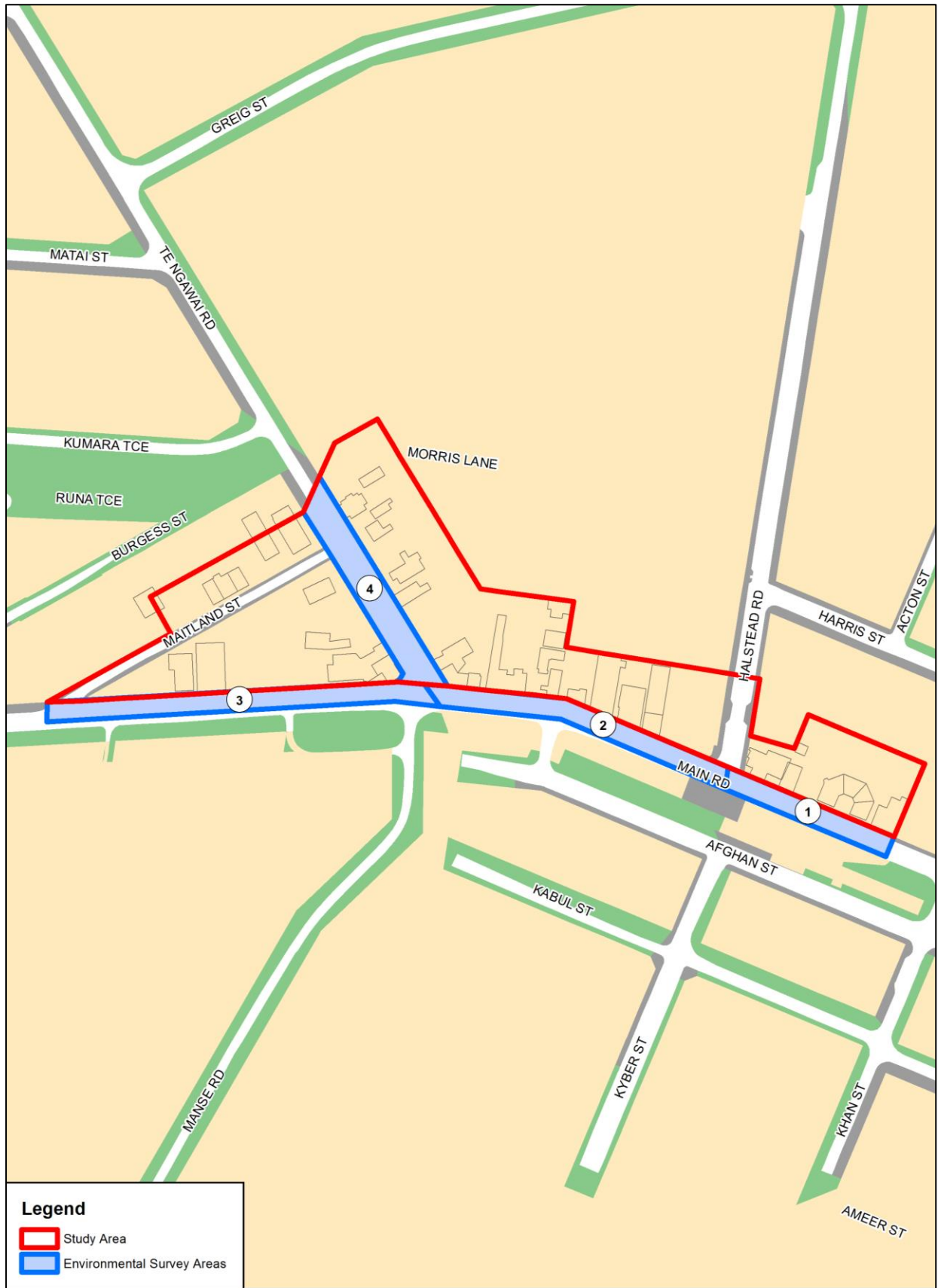


Figure 55 – Pleasant Point Environmental Survey Areas

11.3.1 Discussion

Main Road (Halstead Road to Te Ngawai Road)

This area of the Main Road rated highest in the Environmental Survey. There is a pedestrian crossing point recently constructed, providing a safe crossing point from the shops to the car park area to the south. There is a large area of open space located on the corner of Main Road / Halstead Road. There is an area of open space located on the south side of Main Road also, providing an information kiosk and public toilets. However, this is located in the Residential Zone. The availability of parking and the lack of congestion rated highly in this area, as did the provision of open space.



Figure 56 – Typical Streetscape and urban space, central Main Street

Main Road (east of Halstead Road)

Again, this area of the Main Road rated highly due to its convenience and availability of car parking. There is no formalised crossing point linking the car parking to the commercial area. There are large open space areas by the car parking. Shop fronts are in generally good condition.



Figure 57 – Open space and street furniture east of Halstead Road

Main Road (west of Te Ngawai)

This portion of the street contains larger commercial premises such as a petrol station and bus depot. There is not much other commercial activity towards this end of the town. There is only one footpath located on the northern side of the road and there are no pedestrian crossing points.



Figure 58 – Main Road, looking west of junction with Te Ngawai Road

Te Ngawai Road

This is the northern portion of the town centre, and has ranked lowest. There is a mix of commercial, industrial and residential activities approaching the intersection with Main Road, which creates a mixed character as opposed to a definitive commercial area. There are not many activities associated with town centre functions located here and therefore this street does not achieve a high environmental result.



Figure 59 – Looking up Te Ngawai Road from Main Road

Findings

Owing to the small size of Pleasant Point the town lacks a sense of cohesiveness. It is a rural support town, and on this level it offers a nice, 'pleasant' environment, although without a strong commercial vibe. There appears to be little demand for more services, and therefore the provision of more commercial zoned land would be difficult to justify. With this being said, the upgrading of street furniture and public facilities will be considered as part of the Town Centre Refresh Project.

11.4 PEDESTRIAN OPINION SURVEY

A pedestrian opinion survey was carried out during January 2015 to ascertain people's perceptions of Pleasant Point's town centre. A total of seven people completed the survey. This is a low number but reflects the quiet nature of Pleasant Point during the middle of the day on a weekday. It is acknowledged that this is not an adequate sample size. Nonetheless, we have reported on the findings.

The respondents came from a number of places, including Timaru, Geraldine, Cave and Pareroa, with the majority (four) being from Pleasant Point.

Three people were in town for convenience shopping, three for business/work and one was out for a walk. All but the person walking travelled to the town by car.

The key findings of the survey are addressed below under the following headings:

- Attractive aspects of Pleasant Point
- Unattractive aspects of Pleasant Point
- Suggested Improvements for Pleasant Point town centre

11.4.1 Attractive Aspects of Pleasant Point

The most attractive aspects of the town are considered to be its friendly atmosphere and people, its semi-rural environment, the shopping and the accessibility for parking next to the shops. The entrance to the town (from the east) was also mentioned as being beautiful. The railway passing through the town was also mentioned as being a good asset.

Friendly People

Semi-rural

Parking Beautiful entrance⁶

11.4.2 Unattractive Aspects of Pleasant Point

There were only three comments which were that the berms need to be tidied, there needs to be more planting and the buildings need to be tidied up. The solutions to these issues are quite achievable.

11.4.3 Suggested Improvements for Pleasant Point

Only four respondents answered this question, with two wanting greater retail offer (namely a bank) and two saying better maintenance of buildings is required.

Findings

The people using the Pleasant Point town centre generally seem quite happy with it. There were a couple of comments about the accessibility of the town for pedestrians, with mention of the requirement for pedestrian crossings and upgrade of lighting. Since the survey has occurred there has been a pedestrian crossing island installed along Main Road. It appears that people rate the level of service quite well for the size of the town, with the basic necessities available.

12.0 DISTRICT PLAN & COUNCIL BYLAWS

This section reviews the DP's provisions that relate to Pleasant Point to ascertain if it causes any issues for new development, or the operation of activities, in the town centre.

12.1 COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE

This zone is intended to be characterised by the presence of historic buildings and other features of cultural or historical importance. However, there are no heritage buildings or structures located within Pleasant Point's Commercial 1 Zone. The Pleasant Point Railway Station and signal box (part of the railway museum) which are listed as heritage items, are located to the south/east, within the Residential 1 Zone. The zoning of the town does therefore not make much sense.

12.1.1 Activities

Office, retail and business services and activities are permitted in this zone without the need for resource consent. The permitted uses in this zone do not give rise to many environmental effects, and therefore the mix of uses found, including residential activities, appear to sit quite well together. Additionally, it may be a reflection of the small size of the commercial zone and its proximity to the residential zone.

Resource consent is required for restaurants, licensed premises, service stations and industrial activities. When considering applications for such activities, regard to the Performance Standards for this zone is required. However, the Performance Standards for this zone are quite limited, and do not touch on building design or appearance. They are focused on limiting the effects of shadowing, overlooking, light and noise on adjoining residential activities. Whilst these are important and still required, it could be questioned if these standards are limiting commercial potential within the town?

As mentioned previously, the Point Lumber yard occupies a large area of residential zoned land to the north of the commercial area, accessed off Te Ngawai Road by Morris Lane. Given the location of this industrial activity, perhaps more permissive rules and performance standards could be created to allow for more flexibility in the uses in the commercial zone adjoining this area. In general, perhaps there is scope for the zone to be more permissive given the small size of the town.

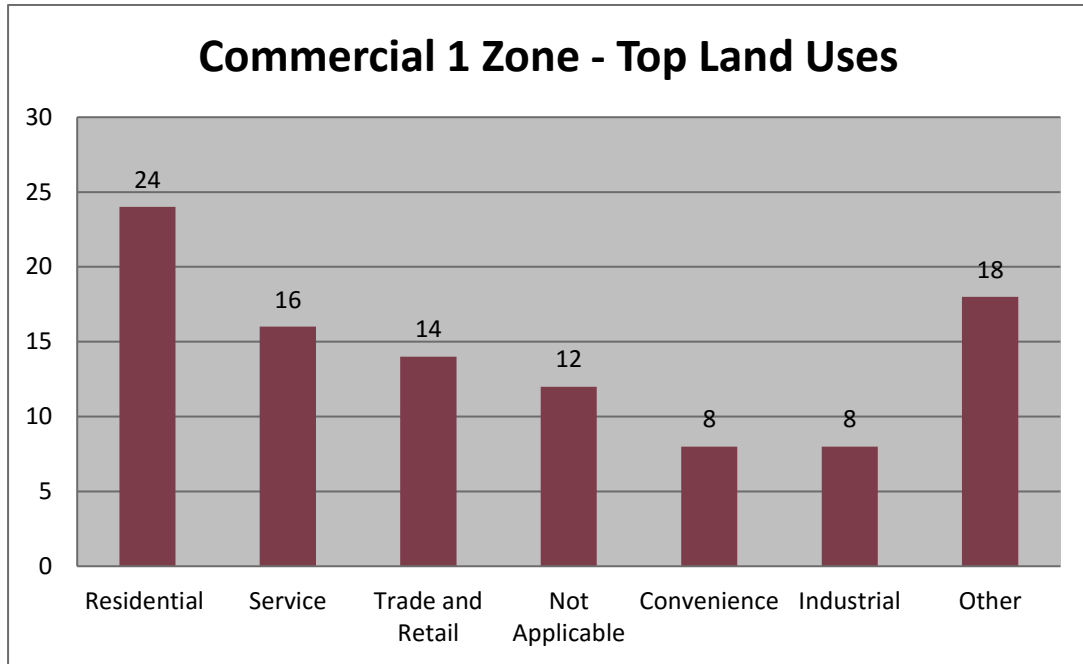


Figure 60: Top Town Centre Land Uses. These percentages are based on the typology of uses found at ground floor level.

12.2 COUNCIL BYLAWS

The relevant bylaws have been outlined in Part 2, Section 6.0 of this report. The only differences or relevance specifically to Pleasant Point are that there is no liquor ban area, and all roads in the Commercial 1 Zone have a posted speed limit of 50km/hr.

There are no other bylaws which are considered to restrict economic, social or public development in Pleasant Point.

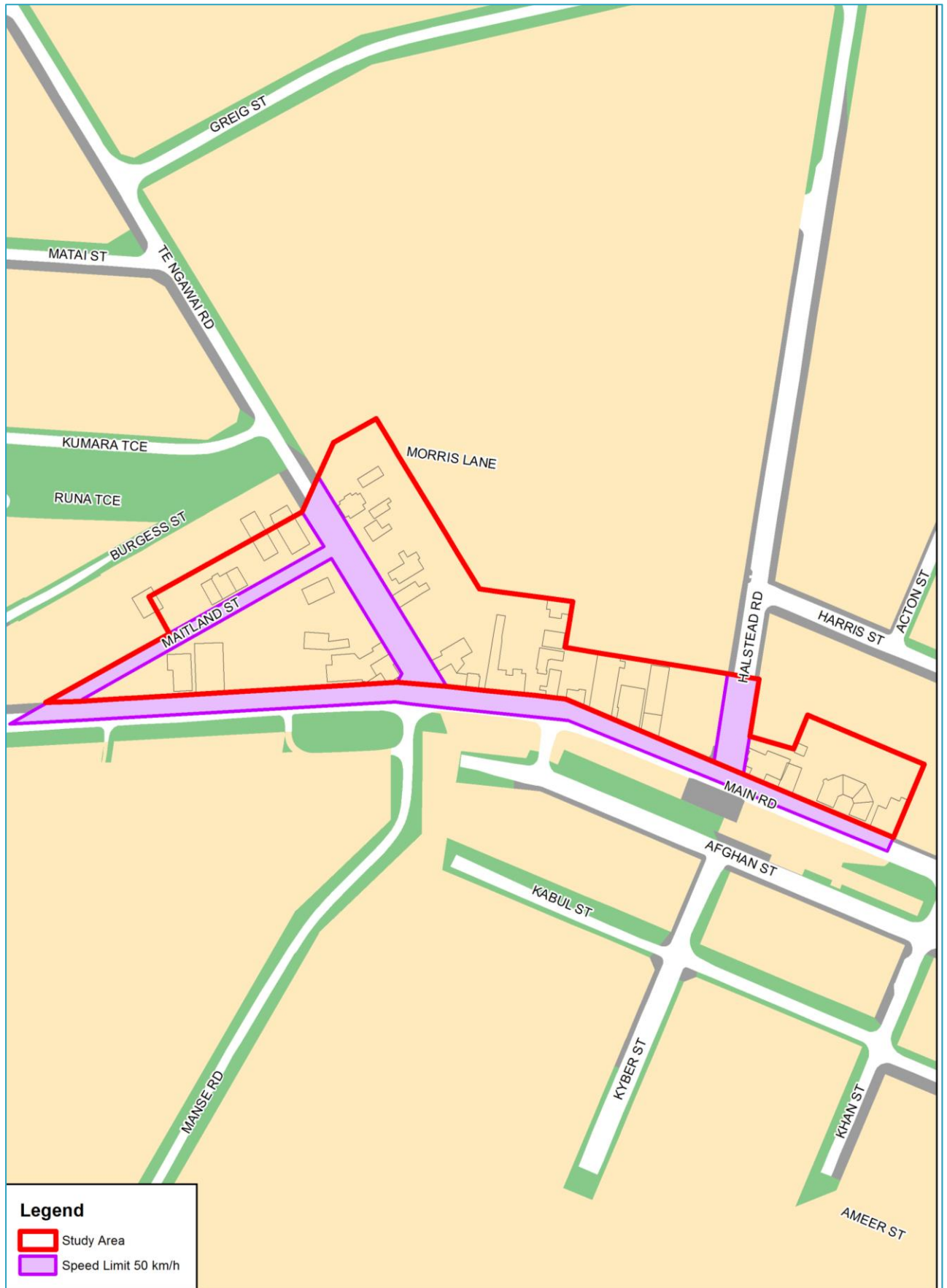


Figure 61: Temuka Traffic Speeds



Part 6

Issues and Opportunities

PART 6 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

13.0 ISSUES

The overall picture of the District's town centres is quite positive, with most people apparently quite happy to shop at their local town centre for their daily needs. The main issues with regard to the District's town centres were:

- High vacancy in some areas;
- Lack of activity in some areas;
- An aging building stock;
- Out of centre retail development;
- Retail expenditure leakage and under performance;
- Internet shopping;
- Perceived traffic congestion and lack of parking;
- Lack of coordination and cooperation amongst town centre businesses.

Each of these issues will be addressed in turn below.

13.1 HIGH VACANCY IN SOME AREAS

There is a range in the proportion of vacant buildings and land across the four towns in the district, ranging from 0% to 13%⁹. The higher level of this range is considered higher than desirable from a market and functionality perspective. A reduction in vacancy levels, especially in Timaru is desirable, so that vacant premises do not detract from the attractiveness and performance of the centre. However, the extent to which Council can address this problem is limited. One possible solution may be to reconsider the zoning of parts of the town centre to ensure the land is zoned appropriately and is not constraining its development options.

13.2 LACK OF ACTIVITY

⁹ Vacancy rates based on Land Use Survey Conducted by Timaru District Council in Jan/Feb 2015: Timaru 9%; Geraldine 4%; Temuka 13%; Pleasant Point 0%

Timaru town centre has a number of specific activity nodes or hubs which are dispersed around the town. For instance, there are two distinct food and entertainment hubs, one located at The Bay Hill area and the other around the Stafford Street/George Street intersection.

Very little night-time activity occurs in the large retail area between these two hubs. Stafford Street is therefore largely empty at night. This lack of activity in Timaru town centre at night-time creates a deserted atmosphere and feels unsafe.

The Terrace and Cains Terrace are underutilised areas of considerable potential when considering the extent of ground level areas dedicated to car parking in these two areas.

13.3 AGING BUILDING STOCK

The building stock in the District's town centres is relatively old. The following are some issues with older buildings:

- The cost of operating and maintaining older buildings is more expensive.
- The smaller building footprints of older buildings are often not compatible with modern retail requirements.
- There are many challenging regulations in relation to the redevelopment of older buildings. For instance, the Building Act requirements in relation to earthquake strengthening, accessibility and fire safety need to be met. Further, resource consent is often required by the District Plan for the development of listed heritage buildings. These requirements can be a deterrent to building owners maintaining and redeveloping their buildings.
- The changes proposed to the Building Act will mean that earthquake prone buildings will need to be strengthened to a certain degree. The proposed changes have created some uncertainty amongst building owners and may have stalled some developments, as owners wait to see what the new requirements will be.

- The poor structural integrity of some old buildings has been used as a reason to demolish buildings or not to maintain them. Historic fabric has been lost in the process.

13.4 OUT OF CENTRE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

A big threat to the viability of the town centre is the establishment and operation of out of centre developments. As mentioned throughout this report, there are already a number of out of centre large format retail areas and a number proposed, for example Showgrounds Hill and Harvey Norman on Evans Street, some 3km north of Timaru's town centre.

Additionally, there are large amounts of land zoned for Industrial Light use, which owing to the relatively relaxed schedule of permitted activities, allows for many commercial activities to occur.

Commercial developments in these areas have the potential to significantly undermine the retail core of the town centres, and will detract from the centrally based Commercial 1 Zone(s) of our town centres. Specifically, the Commercial 1C Zone within Timaru town centre was created to cater for large-scale retailing, and offers a centrally based area that can provide for these uses and activities in a sustainable and usable manner.

Careful attention needs to be paid to the permitted activities allowed in out of centre zones to ensure that the town centres core commercial operations. Furthermore, other incentives discussed within this report could be introduced to channel development and activities into the central areas.

13.5 RETAIL LEAKAGE AND UNDER PERFORMANCE

- The TRMA identifies that there is 20% leakage in retail expenditure out of the District overall. This equates to approximately \$112 million annually.
- Retail expenditure leakage in clothing, footwear and personal accessories, food and beverage and furniture sectors is far worst at 40-46%. This indicates that residents are not completely satisfied with the existing local offer within these particular sectors.

- Although there is sufficient provision of retail floorspace, the quality of the supply is not meeting the requirements of the district, with Christchurch having a broader offer and range available.
- Currently 86% of the retail stores in the district are smaller, speciality/boutique stores (below 500sq.m GFA). However, these stores represent only 38% of the total retail floor area. The quality of these 'lower order stores' is also an issue, as lower quality centres experience leakage. It is important to ensure the town centres, specifically Timaru, attracts higher order/nationally branded retailers to retain its ongoing health.
- Christchurch will be developing new retail and town centre environments over the next ten years as part of the earthquake recovery process. Modern environments with high levels of amenity will be created. This will be attractive to Timaru shoppers and will increase the competition for Timaru retailers, making improvements to the town centres more important.

13.6 INTERNET SHOPPING

- There are changing retail trends and shopping formats in response to internet shopping, demographics and centre specific requirements. For example, Timaru has an aging population, who may still want to physically visit a store; while in Christchurch there is a younger population which may be more inclined to shop on-line.
- In larger cities there is a move towards decreased floorspace demand and layouts due to internet shopping, with a move away from large shop formats. Whether this trend will filter through to Timaru is yet to be seen.

13.7 PERCEIVED TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND LACK OF PARKING

- Traffic and congestion along Stafford Street is considered an issue by 20% of people surveyed.
- Heavy vehicle traffic is considered an issue along Talbot Street, Geraldine by some people surveyed.

- There is a perceived lack of parking in Temuka and Geraldine.

13.8 LACK OF COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

There is currently no specific body or organisation coordinating the management and leadership of the town centres in the district. As a consequence, there is a lack of leadership and management of town centre matters. Businesses are all operating independently, focused on their own objectives without considering the overall picture and how a coordinated approach could benefit all. This is evident with different closing hours and days of operation, in particular during holiday periods. Opportunities also exist for landowners to work together, whether for example it is for resolving a joint ROW issue, amalgamating their land and doing a joint development, sharing staff or storage areas, or strengthening earthquake prone buildings.

13.9 IMPACT OF PORT OF TAURANGA'S INTEREST IN PRIMEPORT & THE BAY HILL AREA

In 2013 Timaru District Council, which owned PrimePort through its investment arm, Timaru District Holdings Ltd sold the container shipping side of the operation to the Port of Tauranga. Port of Tauranga bought a 50 per cent shareholding. In August 2015, PrimePort announced, '*...that operational profits rose 90.6 per cent to \$3,991,000 for the year ended June 30, up from \$2,093,000 in 2014.*' (The Timaru Herald, 28 August 2015)

We have already seen a major increase in both container and logging activities. The physical separation of The Bay Hill area by Sefton Street East and the associated Port Loop Road will become much more exaggerated by this increase in traffic.

The implications are clearly evident as The Bay Hill area becomes alienated from the main Stafford Street retail precinct. The pedestrian crossing of Sefton Street East will be an increasingly unpleasant activity as the build-up of heavy vehicular traffic to and from the port, combined with the short inter-visibility distances between Sefton Street East and Stafford Street, will cause much more prolonged heavy vehicle 'stacking' at the respective Sefton Street East/Stafford Street and Theodosia/Sefton Street intersections.

Any redevelopment of The Bay Hill area which contemplates residential components (i.e. commercial accommodation and/or residential accommodation) may be compromised by

the impacts of the Sefton Street East/Port Loop Road corridor; notwithstanding that electric heavy vehicles will make for much superior acoustic and pollution free conditions even if the actual pedestrian crossing of Sefton Street East becomes more arduous.

Without the utilisation of an alternative primary port connection route, The Bay Hill area and associated Piazza will struggle to be seen as part of the Stafford Street retail precinct, and even more so if Stafford Street was to be pedestrianised from Canon Street to Strathallan Street.

Matters that should be considered in relation to this matter are.

- The separation of the Bay Hill from Stafford Street implies that The Bay Hill area needs to be developed as a separate and self-contained area which largely turns its back to Sefton Street.
- As a significant shareholder of PrimePort, TDC through its holding company Timaru District Holdings Ltd could expedite the upgrade of the existing and/or the creation of the proposed alternative transport corridors at North Street¹⁰ and Heaton Street.
- Investigation of alternative transport corridors, such as increasing KiwiRail transporting activities of containers and logs, particularly from the Port of Tauranga's inland port at Rolleston, thereby reducing the number of heavy vehicle movements on Sefton and Theodosia Streets.
- Developing a long term objective to find an alternative access to the port which neither takes it through a prime strategic Timaru location nor reinforces the alienation of The Bay Hill precinct from the town's principal retail core.

¹⁰ Designation No. 198 – Road Extension

14.0 OPPORTUNITIES

14.1 OPPORTUNITIES

The main opportunities with regard to the District's town centres are:

	Opportunities	Timaru	Temuka	Geraldine	Pleasant Point
1.	Establishing a town centre management group	✓	✓	✓	
2.	Encouraging the use of vacant buildings	✓	✓	✓	
3.	Capitalising on the unique quality of our built heritage	✓			
4.	Capturing the leakage in retail expenditure and consolidating retail activities to a core area	✓			
5.	Encouraging residential development	✓			
6.	Enhancing amenity values	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	Improving accessibility	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.	Promoting clustering of similar activities	✓			
9.	Changing car culture with the development of driverless and electric cars	✓			
10.	PrimePort's Primacy and influence on The Bay Hill Area	✓			
11.	Review the provisions of the District Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
12.	Review the provisions of Council Bylaws	✓	✓	✓	✓
13.	Development of key sites	✓			
14.	Major people attracting activities	✓			
15.	Making the most of views	✓			

Each of these opportunities will be addressed in turn below.

14.1.1 Town Centre Management Group

A Town Centre Management Group (TCMG) is a coordinated and proactive initiative designed to ensure that town centres are managed in a way that makes them desirable and attractive places. Greater co-ordination of town centre matters through such a group is imperative to ensure a collective and committed group takes responsibility for the management of the town centre. An effective TCMG has the potential to significantly improve the vitality and viability of our town centres, maintaining their primacy as the economic, social and cultural heart of the community.

It is the experience of other town centres and retail areas that there are significant potential benefits and synergies from working together. With this in mind, some potential options for collaboration through a TCMG are as follows:

- Joint marketing of:
 - the town centre as a destination,
 - products and services available in the town centre;
 - advertising.
- Joint internet site;
- Joint Wi-Fi service for businesses;
- Land swaps;
- Joint property development (site amalgamation);
- Joint storage solutions;
- Joint staffing solutions;
- Shared car parking;
- Common opening hours;
- Promotional events to encourage people into the town centre;
- Clustering of similar businesses;
- Joint advocacy (e.g. working together to support or oppose a particular cause);
- Joint approach to resolving ROW, easement or party wall issues;
- Joint assessment of earthquake prone buildings and subsequent upgrading.

Issues identified through the study that could be addressed by a TCMG include:

- The need for more visitor attractions and their promotion;
- Coordinated shopping hours and/or longer opening hours at the weekends;
- Managing the effects of anti-social behaviour;

- Attracting higher quality retailers on the main streets of our District's town centre;
- Maintenance and improvement of open space, landscaping and plantings;
- The maintenance of the buildings in our town centres;
- The need to limit vacancy rates;
- Council actively encouraging site assembly in the town centre to attract big box retail to specific Com1B and Com1C Zones and larger comparison stores in the main retail area.

The concept of a TCMG is nothing new to New Zealand, where they tend to be called Business Improvement District's (BID). The Auckland region has approximately 46 BID Partnership Programmes (BIDPP). Under this programme, the following occurs:

- Businesses vote collectively to invest in improvements to enhance their local business environment;
- Council collects a targeted rate and works with the businesses to implement improvements;
- BID groups directly support the economic growth of town centres and business precincts.
- 100 per cent of the targeted rate collected is returned to the business group.

Auckland Council's BID policy covers the establishment of new BID areas, exploring proposed BID boundary expansions, and the delivery of targeted business development projects. It is based on a partnership model, as all parties agree that this approach offers the best chance of achieving positive business and economic outcomes at both a regional and local level.

Wellington City Council also has a BID policy in place and a fund that supports BIDs. The rationale for the fund is that BIDs make a positive contribution to achieving Council's strategic outcomes in their LTP, which includes providing vibrant centres, business creation and development, and increased employment.

There are obviously many ways in which the establishment of these organisations can be managed. It seems clear that there is an opportunity to establish similar organisation(s) in our District. It is crucial that such a group is well led and that direct communication is provided with major organisations that affect the town centre. Council should closely consider their involvement in a group and in particular taking a lead role, at least initially and until successfully established.

Membership of the group should also be closely considered. Town centre businesses and landowners have the most to gain and lose in town centre matters and therefore are the most important element of the group. However, it is important that other groups with interests in the town centre are involved. Involving other groups and people will provide an outsiders perspective, which is crucial if the town centre is going to meet the community's expectation and address community issues. It will also ensure that major stakeholders that can bring about change, have access to the shared vision of the group, along with the issues and opportunities that the group will identify.

Achieving this highly desirable outcome will demand a discipline and commitment by a range of parties such as Council, the Chamber of Commerce, landowners, retailers, tourism operators, police, transport operators, PrimePort, ADBT, NZTA etc.

It is suggested that some form of Steering Committee be established in order to draft up a suitable operational framework with specific itemisation of likely outcomes and expectations.

14.1.2 Encouraging the Use of Vacant Buildings

There is an opportunity to make vacant buildings or spaces within existing buildings (surplus to requirements) temporarily available to local start-up businesses, artists, charities and community groups. The reuse of vacant buildings will help to restore the appeal of under-utilised parts of the town's (e.g. south Stafford Street), attracting more people to an area, increasing its vibrancy and viability. If more people are attracted to an area commercial viability will hopefully increase to a level where long-term tenants will establish. This idea has been used successfully overseas (in tandem with other interventions) to rejuvenate struggling town centres. In Timaru, a pop-up shop has opened on Cannon Street. This shop is showcasing local designers and artists. It is initially intended to open for three months, but depending on sales over this period, the occupier has advised that they may occupy the premises for longer.



Figure 62 – Pop-Up Shop, Timaru

This approach would also encourage a stronger local economy by giving start-up businesses an opportunity to establish successfully. Council’s website or the GoGeraldine website for example could be used to display vacant buildings and put landowners and start up business people in touch.

14.1.3 Capitalising on the Unique Quality of Our Built Heritage

There is an opportunity to capitalise on the unique quality of Timaru’s built heritage. Presently, Timaru’s built heritage resource is underutilised, particularly when compared to towns like Oamaru and Dunedin that have enhanced their built heritage stock and successfully used it to attract a considerable number of visitors and investors to the town. If the built heritage of Timaru and Temuka’s town centres was enhanced and promoted properly, it would be a major asset to each of these towns. It is already a major asset that we are overlooking!

With the increase in on-line shopping, town centres need to do everything they can to encourage people to shop in the town centre. Creating an authentic town centre environment through the retention and enhancement of historic built form will assist with creating an environment that people want to visit.

It is acknowledged that the benefits and costs of heritage ownership are not shared equally. Usually the owner pays for the costs, while the users and public benefit from its retention. Therefore effective incentives could be considered to balance out the private versus public benefits. Some incentives for promoting the preservation of heritage buildings and areas include:

- Revisiting DP rules to help assist the redevelopment and reuse of historic buildings. For instance, concessions on car parking requirements could be made in return for retention and enhancement of historic fabric. These, among other things could be realised by:
 - Waivers of some zone provisions;
 - Specified permitted uses;
 - Waivers of financial contributions;
 - Consent fee waivers.

- Building owners could be provided with information about the historic significance of their building and ways to retain and enhance it. There are many guidelines available such as Heritage New Zealand Incentives for Historic Heritage Toolkit.

- The existing Built Heritage Protection Fund could be increased in value and promoted more. At the moment most landowners are not aware of it. The maximum grant (\$5,000) and size of the fund (\$20,000 per annum) is too small to make a significant difference. Is there a community willingness to pay for the upkeep of some heritage buildings? For example, Council could pay towards the cost of retaining the façade of a heritage building that has otherwise been deemed to be structurally unsound.

- Provide information about the town centre's historic significance and about individual buildings to increase awareness. There are many ways this could be done, e.g. plaques on walls, information boards, or in art displays like the pavement ribbon that runs around Queenstown shorefront that tells people about the history of the area. This is perhaps something that could be incorporated or at least instigated within the CBD Refresh Project.

- Council could identify some key historic buildings within the town centre and approach the building owners to ascertain what their intentions are for the building. Council could then offer grants for repair and incentivise the use of the building for the owner.

14.1.4 Retail Opportunities

The following is a summary of opportunities that exist for retailing in the town centres. It is acknowledged that most of these opportunities are directed at Timaru town centre, as it is the main retail centre of the district.

- The zoning at the south end of Stafford Street should be reconsidered. It is currently underutilised and has high vacancy rates. Changing the zoning to allow different uses may encourage more viable development there.
- Consolidation of the Commercial 1A Zone to the central area of Stafford Street (from Sefton Street East in the north to George Street in the south) could help improve the core retail activities and create a 'hub' of retailing in the town centre. This could be achieved through the DP Review.
- Consistent opening hours between all retail establishments.
- A Town Centre Management Group could identify and attract 'preferred' occupiers within the core of the town centre areas. This could help ensure service/business based activities or 'other shops' do not dominate the prime town centre retail spaces.
- The Timaru district's retail expenditure in 'food' (predominately supermarket trade) and 'food and beverages' is estimated to grow by 26% and 29% respectively over the next 18 years¹¹. This represents a huge opportunity for these sections of the market.
- There is an opportunity in the areas of fashion, food and beverages and furniture retailing, where approximately 40-46% of catchment spending in this category is

¹¹ Timaru Retail Market Assessment, Table 2: Timaru Retail Expenditure Forecasts

presently leaked outside of the district¹². There is an opportunity for these retail sectors to improve, retain the leaked expenditure and increase sales. Not only will improving the quality of these retail sectors help retain local generated spend, it will also help attract visitors from outside the district.

- There is predicted to be a shortfall in the supply of speciality retail shops by 2018, growing to shortfall of 10,000m² by 2033. This presents a clear opportunity for small scale speciality shops.
- The move towards internet shopping and diverse ways of shopping may lead to smaller on-the-ground stores. This makes the existing buildings in the town centres ideal for the contemporary shopper. If this were to occur, there should be less demand for large out-of-centre retail areas.
- The perceived lack of dining and drinking establishments in Timaru town centre should be investigated to see whether there is an undersupply, or whether it is the opening times and operations of existing establishment which are not meeting people's needs. This could be investigated by the Town Centre Management Group or Business Improvement District.
- The local produce and farmers markets could be advertised, promoted and expanded to encourage visitors into the town centres and also to make them more attractive to locals.

14.1.5 Encouraging Residential & Visitor Accommodation Development

It is suspected that the buildings in the district's town centre are not being used to their full potential. Many buildings appear to only be used at ground floor level. Upper floors are often underutilised or vacant. This presents an opportunity to encourage other uses in upper floors, such as office, residential or visitor accommodation. Ideally, retail would occupy ground level with either office, residential or visitor accommodation above. While it is common to have office uses in the town centre, it is not common in our District to have

¹² Timaru Retail Market Assessment, Section 7.1, page 29

residential. Although historically there have been a number of hotels in the town centre providing visitor accommodation, most of these hotel have since closed.

The accommodation of more residential and visitor accommodation uses (although not at ground floor level) would significantly increase the vibrancy of the centres, particularly after normal business hours. It would also increase the safety of the town centres, discouraging anti-social behaviour. From a commercial perspective residential and visitor accommodation uses would diversify the tenancy of the building and provide better returns for the landowner. The viability of small visitor accommodation has significant improved with the advent of website and apps such as Airbnb¹³. Small buildings can be converted at relatively low cost and risk to accommodate rooms for visitors. Statistics NZ Commercial Accommodation Monitor 2015 confirms that visitor accommodation nights in Timaru are steadily rising (up 8.6% from 2014) presenting opportunities for that sector.

It is acknowledged that town centre living does not suit all. However, it does suit particular groups such as younger people without kids (including students), couples without children and people that do not have or want the use of a vehicle. There are many benefits of living in the town centre including direct access to shops, hospitality, services, limited need for a vehicle, proximity to work, no garden maintenance etc. The provision of more apartments in the town centres would address the shortfall in smaller residential properties that is currently in demand from Timaru's aging population that are looking to down size.

In Timaru town centre, there are significant opportunities around the Bay Hill, The Terrace and Cains Terrace for high end apartments and other uses that make better use of these views overlooking Caroline Bay, the mountains and the Port. Some of the existing residential and commercial land uses may become available for redevelopment in the short to medium term. These sites would be ideal for inner-city living, pending there be changes to the current prohibitive car parking requirements of the DP.

- It is acknowledged that the DP's current requirements for car parking spaces for household units apply in the town centre and can be a constraint to residential

¹³ Note: The use of Airbnb was suggested by Ian Butcher, Architect

development. This could be reviewed to reflect the needs of people in central areas, and to encourage more mixed-use development.

- Careful calibrating of development control conditions ensuring that the resultant development is indeed specifically residential in nature whether commercial (hotels, motels) or private residence. Further review of the zoning and bylaw regulations would be required whereby Council moves to attract mainly residential in these areas rather than commercial which currently dominates the western sides.
- Look to ensure that there is a diversity of land uses within the town centre with an increasing set of incentivised parameters or controls which stimulate residential, visitor accommodation and office development within the heart of the centre.

14.1.6 Enhancing Amenity Values

The amenity of the District's town centres is generally good. However, it can and should be improved. Enhancing the amenity of the town centres will provide them with a significant advantage over out-of-centre development and will also encourage people to live, work and visit them. To enhance the amenity of the town centres streets and public open spaces, the following could be explored:

- One of the easiest and most effective methods is the maintenance and enhancement of street trees, planter boxes, seating and landscaping, as this is appealing to the public, and has low relative costs.
- The pedestrianisation of a portion of Stafford Street to create an area of public open space and take traffic out of the environment. This would provide a central meeting place for people, encourage footfall to the area and increase the attractiveness of the town centre overall. This could occur for example along the precinct between Cannon Street and Church/Strathallan Street. This could be a matter for the TCMG to decide upon.
- In Timaru, as part of the CBD Refresh Project there is an opportunity to upgrade the existing public spaces at Strathallan Corner and The Piazza. The upgrade of the Strathallan Corner could create a focal point or hub in the town centre if planned correctly. Promote the location of suitable traders/buskers at The Piazza. The

Piazza has public seating and tables which are currently underutilised. There are panoramic views of the bay and it's close to the town centre. There are a number of food and entertainment premises along the Bay Hill which would benefit from an increase in activity in this area.

- In Geraldine, visible links between the town centre and the river walkway and open spaces could be enhanced.
- More street art could be provided, recognising local artists. For example, Geraldine has a range of artisans and Temuka is renowned for its pottery.
- A display area for the Aigantighe Art Gallery and South Canterbury Museum could be accommodated in the town centre.
- There is an opportunity to amend the speed limits, by reducing them within the main town centre areas. This could help create a more pedestrian friendly environment, without affecting traffic circulation. More traffic calming or designs to slow traffic could be introduced. This is particularly relevant to Geraldine town centre.
- Promote opportunities for street dining areas outside food and entertainment venues. This would create opportunities to expand a business's floor area, whilst also creating vibrant on-street activity. Potentially, street dining areas could be located in areas of public open space, e.g. the Piazza, and other main streets within the District's towns.
- Promote community events that will attract people to the town centre. Something to stimulate the kids, so that it gives parents the opportunity to linger and chat. For instance, the Christmas Parade attracts lots of people to the town centre. Events before or after to encourage them to stay, spend money, and socialise would greatly enhance this event.
- Provide a free wi-fi facility within a certain area of the town centre, meaning people can enjoy complimentary access all day. Provide a simple registration process, and

an automated connection system meaning any wi-fi enabled device is automatically re-connected to the network when in range.

Once logged-on users are could be directed to a special landing page where they could find Timaru's shops, restaurants, bars, public amenities, tourist attractions, local entertainment and events.

Further, local businesses could be encouraged to use the public wi-fi service to help promote special offers which could be advertised for free on the landing page. These could be viewable by all wi-fi users, allowing businesses to engage with their customers and promote economic activity in the town centre.

To increase awareness of the service, new 'Wi-Fi Zone' signage could be installed around the town centre, and the Town Centre Management Group could engage with local shops and service providers to help promote the scheme.

14.1.7 Improving the Convenience of the Town Centres

Geraldine's main street was identified as having traffic problems, with higher than appropriate traffic speeds. A third of people surveyed in Timaru commented on the lack of parking in the town centre; whilst others commented on the negative impact of traffic in the town centre. However, if more parking is provided it has the potential to be detrimental to the attractiveness of the town centre. Other than providing more parking there is the potential to:

- Provide better/clearer signage of where public parking and places of interest are located;
- Promote bus use;
- Encourage walking and cycling;
- Reduce traffic speeds (Geraldine);
- Pedestrianize certain areas.

Before any areas were pedestrianized, a detailed traffic analysis would need to be conducted along with consultation programme. Cycling could be promoted by the provision of suitable cycle stands at prominent locations. The bicycle stands used by Wellington City

Council provide multifunctional uses: as a bike stand, a piece of attractive street furniture, and can be fitted with advertising in the back wheel, providing an income for Council.

The provision of directional signage to places of attraction and from public car parking areas to the town centre (Stafford Street) will help people find their way around the town centre and make it more useable.

14.1.8 Promoting Clustering of Similar Activities

While a mixture of uses in town centres promotes diversity and is supported, the clustering of similar activities in the close vicinity of each other has benefits. Benefits of clustering include helping similar businesses attract customers, (giving them collective pulling power) and helping hospitality activities (bars, restaurants and cafes) create a vibrant atmosphere and a destination where people want to be and be seen. In Timaru, bars and restaurants are so spread out that they do benefit from any synergies between them. While it would not be good idea to regulate for clustering, it can be promoted by a town centre management group where appropriate and facilitated by the Council by creating attractive environments suitable for certain activities.

The Timaru town centre is the largest cluster of retail activity in the District. Out of centre retail development can potential draw trade away from the town centre. To avoid this situation, the town centre management group can promote town centre or edge of centre options to retailers wanting to move to Timaru. They can potentially liaise with land owners and assemble land parcel which would be attractive to large format retailers. Similarly, Timaru District Council could make strategic land acquisitions or sales to facilitate this.

14.1.9 Driverless and Electric-Powered Vehicles

There is no longer any debate about the inevitability of autonomous or driverless vehicles. There is wide industry recognition that driverless cars will be commercially available within five years (possibly earlier), and that they will certainly be commonplace within ten years. In other words, this new phenomenon in transport will be well and truly upon us within the life of the proposed new District Plan. That being the case, this discussion and the implications thereof must be had now and not in ten years time.

Driverless trucks are already operating in the large open cut quarries of Australia (Rio Tinto) and have been tested on Germany's autobahns. Google has teamed up with Ford and are

gearing up to have driverless sedans available in 2020 or earlier. As it transpires, all automotive manufacturers expect to have commercially available vehicles by 2020 at the latest and is now a matter receiving the closest attention by a number of Councils throughout NZ as well as the NZTA.

It has been suggested that by 2030, all mainstream cars, buses and other heavy vehicles will be electric and as they give off no emissions, the quality of the urban environment will be greatly enhanced. Light rail or trams are electrified modes of transport but what is new is the wireless charging of electric buses at bus stops. This already occurs in parts of Europe so we can expect similar outcomes in NZ.

Flexible, clean public transport makes car ownership much less important. Under such highly flexible and 'personal choice' transport conditions, the reasons for owning a car become much less compelling as 'mobility on demand at a fair price' opens up different priorities and choices as to where one works, lives and pursues extracurricular activities.

The implications for all cities are potentially considerable and Timaru's town centre in particular, will be no different from anywhere else. As this is future technology, there is some guessing work involved in realising how this will impact our environment. Some of the anticipated opportunities are listed as follows:

- Car ownership may become much less important as 'pooling' and an ability to 'dial up' a car to collect and deliver a person(s) from home to the office, town, social function, etc., will lessen the need for car parking as the car drops one off and then proceeds to go on and collect the next person. This could be seen as an extension to the already operating and flexible Uber transportation concept.
- The need for large public car parking areas and buildings may be significantly reduced thus freeing up land and space for much more intensive and appropriate uses in the town centres such as hotels, residential buildings, entertainment venues, open space, etc.
- A potential by-product could be that large or big box retailing may be able to contemplate being closer to and/or even within traditional town centres rather

seeking 'out of town' locations. For example, in Timaru, they could be directed towards the existing Commercial 1C Zone.

- Increasingly strict drink driving regulations discourages patronage of night-time recreational and entertainment premises. However, the advance of driverless vehicles will encourage a much more relaxed approach to entertainment which should benefit hoteliers, restaurants, private and public functions centres.
- In turn, this could facilitate much greater and more effective use of space in the town centre and roads where it is expected that driverless vehicles, equipped with what is called 'adaptive cruise control', will be able to make much better use of the roads and street space (a 40% improvement in usage of the road pavement is anticipated) which implies that road widening and enhancements may become, if not unnecessary, much less significant, thus freeing up public expenditure for other higher priority investments. The budget towards roading upgrades is currently the singular biggest expenditure of Council.
- Residential car parking requirements, particularly in town centre locations, may no longer have the same primacy in the minds of investors and residents thus freeing up the potential flexibility and use of land in higher density urban environments.
- The implications for both town and suburban centres are immense suggesting that these exciting, rapid and permanent changes, which are only around the corner, should be given full deliberation and form part of the current District Plan Review discussions.
- Importantly, these realities will impact directly upon the regulatory framework within which the DPR will be couched and of course will be vital ingredients in any town centre revitalisation planning.

14.1.10 District Plan Review

A review of the District Plan's zone rules for the commercial areas revealed that there is a need to amend some of them. The following is an example of some of the provisions that need to change:

- The requirement for Controlled Activity resource consent for restaurants or licensed premises with control limited to the effects associated with 'noise and cleansing of the locality' should be removed, and these should be permitted activities, subject to complying with Performance Standards.
- Review of the Rules and Performance Standards for the Commercial 1 Zones, for example:
 - Building heights – add a minimum height for buildings and review the maximum heights in particular areas or specific streets; perhaps heights could be increased on the south side of Stafford Street and the Bay Hill to capitalise on views and amenities.
 - Setbacks – the performance standard requiring a minimum setback of 3m on any boundary which adjoins a residential zone is not applicable in the Commercial 1A and 1B Zones.
 - Remove day-care centres and brothels as a permitted activity from Commercial 1A Zone, perhaps only suitable in Com1B and Com1C; review appropriateness within Temuka, Geraldine and Pleasant Point Com1 Zones.
- Comprehensive review of the Commercial 1C Zone.
- Comprehensive review of the Commercial 1 Zone (Pleasant Point) to make it more permissive and relatable to existing uses.
- Review of the Commercial 1 Zone boundaries of Geraldine, as it currently does not incorporate the river and associated areas of open space into its town centre. Links to the river could be provided. Additionally, the area to the north could be removed, and area to the south included, as explained in Section 4.0.
- The heritage buildings located to the south of Geraldine Commercial 1 Zone should be incorporated into the zone.
- Planning Maps – A consolidation of commercial zones in Timaru and Temuka; and a review of the different Commercial 1A, 1B and 1C Zones in Timaru.

- Investigate the creation of ‘character zones or areas’ to provide protection for certain streetscapes.
- Develop a suite of development guidelines and assessment criteria for the Commercial 1 Zones in relation to active street frontages and design outcomes for the entire building, including guidance on appropriate design, materials and colours, redevelopment options for buildings in the town centres. This could be achieved through the creation of an Urban Design Panel, who could provide an independent design review of significant projects. The Urban Design Panel could comment on development proposals within the aforementioned character zones. The need for an Urban Design Panel should therefore be considered.
- Review the controls in relation to signage with the aim of reducing advertising clutter and visual disparity.
- Review the car parking requirements and the cash-in-lieu financial contributions for having no/little on-site car parking in the town centres for specific uses.

14.1.11 Council Bylaws

Some of the Council’s Bylaws could be reviewed to allow the following:

- Reduction in the traffic speeds along Talbot Street (SH79), perhaps to 30km within the Commercial 1 Zone. This needs to be done in conjunction with the NZ Transport Agency.
- Review the provisions for outdoor dining areas to make more amenable in suitable locations.
- Investigate the opportunities to be realised if part of the town centre was pedestrianised.

14.1.12 Development of Key Sites

The development of key sites in Timaru has the potential to significantly improve the amenity, viability and vitality of the town centre. The Hydro Grand (and the adjoining site to the west), and the Dominion Hotel, for example are key sites, that have the potential to significantly improve the amenity, viability and vitality of the Bay Hill area and the town centre in general. These sites occupy strategic locations between Caroline Bay and Stafford Street and enjoy impressive views over Caroline Bay, the Southern Alps and the Port. These sites lend themselves well to a mixture of uses including hospitality, residential, visitor accommodation and office activities, which would attract people to the area. It should be noted that this statement should not be considered to support the demolition of these buildings, two of which are protected buildings under the DP and requires resource consent to demolish. Any application to demolish these buildings has to go through a statutory process. The merits of developing these sites have to be considered against the statutory provisions that support the protection of historic heritage.

14.1.13 Major People Attracting Activities

Where possible, activities that attract large numbers of people should be located in or around the town centre. This would include a range of activities, but particularly any major: retail; visitor accommodation; conference facilities; hospitality; tourism; or office; activities. Incorporating art gallery and museum display areas would benefit the town centre. The DP review should closely consider not allowing these activities outside of the town centre.

14.1.14 Making the Most of Views

Parts of the Timaru town centre are elevated overlooking Caroline Bay and the Port, enabling expansive views to the ocean and distant views to the hills. There are opportunities around the Bay Hill and The Terrace to make better use of these views. Residential, visitor accommodation, hospitality and office activities can avail of the views from these areas. Not only would views add significant value to these activities, they also provide a significant amenity to inhabitants and provide a sense of place.