



Living Together Committee

Te Komiti noho tahi

Thursday, 21 August 2025
Tāite, 21 Hereturikōkā 2025

Totara Room, Whakatāne District Council
14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
Commencing at 9:00 am



Chief Executive: Steven Perdia | Publication Date: 15 August 2025

whakatane.govt.nz

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Live Streaming the Meeting - *Ka whakapāho mataora te hui*

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A Membership - *Mematanga*

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Mayor Dr Victor Luca
Councillor Wilson James - Chairperson
Deputy Mayor Lesley Immink
Councillor Gavin Dennis - Deputy Chairperson
Councillor Toni Boynton
Councillor Gavin Dennis
Councillor Andrew Iles
Councillor Julie Jukes
Councillor Tu O'Brien
Councillor John Pullar
Councillor Ngapera Rangiaho
Councillor Nándor Tánczos

B Delegations to the Living Together Committee - *Tuku Mahi ki te Komiti*

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1. To provide governance advice on community wellbeing, facilities, strategies, economic development, and associated policy and bylaws.
2. To promote and foster social cohesion, connection, and wellbeing.
3. To ensure facilities and programmes are provided that enhance and support community health and wellbeing.

Specific functions and delegations

- a. Develop, and monitor implementation of, Council's Community Development and other related Strategies.
- b. Approve Council submissions to central government, councils and other organisations including submissions to any plan changes or policy statements.
- c. Monitor the implementation of Te Toi Waka Whakareī – Council's Māori Relationship Strategy.
- d. Approve all new road names in accordance with the Road Naming and Property Addressing Policy.
- e. Progress the sale of properties as approved in the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan.
- f. Consideration of proposals to change the status or revoke the status of a reserve as defined in the Reserves Act 1977 (including the hearing of submissions).
- g. Receive minutes of Community Boards.
- h. Consider any recommendations from Community Boards and make a recommendation to the Council.
- i. Develop and review associated bylaws (Note: the Council cannot delegate to a Committee the "make" (adopt) a bylaw).
- j. Develop, review and approve strategies, policies and plans on matters related to the activities of this Committee (Note: the Council cannot delegate to a Committee the adoption of policies associated with the Long-term Plan).
- k. To foster and promote strengthening civic engagement.
- l. Receive minutes of the:
 - Whakatāne District Youth Council.
 - Community Funding Committee.
 - Four Community Boards.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Prayer - <i>Karakia</i>	8
2	Meeting Notices - <i>Ngā Pānui o te hui</i>	8
3	Apologies - <i>Te hunga kāore i tae</i>	8
4	Acknowledgements / Tributes - <i>Ngā mihimihi</i>	8
5	Conflicts of Interest - <i>Ngākau kōnatunatu</i>	9
6	Public Participation - <i>Wānanga Tūmatanui</i>	10
6.1	Public Forum - <i>Wānanga Tūmatanui</i>	10
6.2	Deputations - <i>Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake</i>	10
7	Confirmation of Minutes - <i>Te whakaaetanga o ngā meneti o te hui</i>	10
8	Community Board Recommendations and Minutes - <i>Ngā Tohutohu me ngā Meneti hui o te Poari Hapori</i>	11
8.1	Youth Council Minutes - 22 July 2025	12
8.2	Youth Council Minutes - 5 August 2025	15
9	Reports - <i>Ngā Pūrongo</i>	18
9.1	Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	18
9.1.1	Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	21
9.1.2	Appendix B - Cover letter - Submission - Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	27
9.2	Better off Funding Update Report August 2025	29
9.2.1	Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3	39
9.3	Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035	44
9.3.1	Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035	47
9.3.2	Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents	76

9.4 **Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report 133**

1 Prayer - *Karakia*

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2 Meeting Notices - *Ngā Pānui o te hui*

1. Live Streaming

The Whakatāne District Council livestreams Council and Standing Committee meetings held in Tōtara Room, within the Council building. The webcast will live stream directly to Council's YouTube channel in real time. The purpose of streaming meetings live is to encourage transparency of Council meetings.

Welcome to members of the public who have joined online and to those within the public gallery.

By remaining in the public gallery, it is understood your consent has been given if your presence is inadvertently broadcast. Please be aware the microphones in Totara Room are sensitive to noise, so please remain quiet throughout the meeting unless asked to speak.

2. Health and Safety

In case of an emergency, please follow the building wardens or make your way to the nearest exit. The meeting point is located at Peace Park on Boon Street.

Bathroom facilities are located opposite the Chambers Foyer entrance (the entrance off Margaret Mahy Court).

3. Other

3 Apologies - *Te hunga kāore i tae*

No apologies were recorded at the time of compiling the agenda.

4 Acknowledgements / Tributes - *Ngā mihimihi*

An opportunity for members to recognise achievements, to notify of events, or to pay tribute to an occasion of importance.

5 Conflicts of Interest - *Ngākau kōnatunatu*

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Members are reminded of the need to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected member and any private or other external interests they might have. Elected Members are also reminded to update their register of interests when changes occur.

The [register of interests](#) can be viewed on the Council website.

1. Financial Conflict

- Members present must declare any direct or indirect financial interest that they hold in any matter being discussed at the meeting, other than an interest that they hold in common with the public.
- Members cannot take part in the discussion, nor can they vote on any matter in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest, unless with an approved exception.
- Members with a financial interest should physically withdraw themselves from the table. If the meeting is public excluded, members should leave the room.

2. Non-Financial Conflict

- If a member considers that they have a non-financial conflict of interest in a matter they must not take part in the discussions about that matter or any subsequent vote.
- Members with a non-financial interest must leave the table when the matter is considered but are not required to leave the room.

6 Public Participation - *Wānanga Tūmatanui*

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6.1 Public Forum - *Wānanga Tūmatanui*

The Council has set aside time for members of the public to speak in the public forum at the commencement of each meeting. Each speaker during the forum may speak for five minutes. Permission of the Chairperson is required for any person wishing to speak during the public forum.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by a speaker.

6.2 Deputations - *Ngā Whakapuaki Whaitake*

A deputation enables a person, group or organisation to make a presentation to Community Board on a matter or matters covered by their terms of reference. Deputations should be approved by the Chairperson, or an official with delegated authority, five working days before the meeting. Deputations may be heard at the commencement of the meeting or at the time that the relevant agenda item is being considered. No more than two speakers can speak on behalf of an organisation's deputation. Speakers can speak for up to 5 minutes, or with the permission of the Chairperson, a longer timeframe may be allocated.

With the permission of the Chairperson, Elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by the deputation.

7 Confirmation of Minutes - *Te whakaaetanga o ngā meneti o te hui*

The minutes from the Living Together meeting held 19 June 2025 can be viewed via the Council website. Click on the link below in order to view the 'unconfirmed minutes'.

- [Unconfirmed Living Together Committee Minutes - 19 June 2025](#)

8 Community Board Recommendations and Minutes - *Ngā Tohutohu me ngā Meneti hui o te Poari Hapori*

8 Community Board Recommendations and Minutes - *Ngā Tohutohu me ngā Meneti hui o te Poari Hapori*

The minutes from the Whakatāne District Council Community Board meetings can be viewed via the Council website.

Click on the appropriate link below in order to view the 'unconfirmed minutes'.

Recommendation

THAT the minutes from the following Whakatane District Council Community Board Meetings be received:

- Tāneatua Community Board [26 May 2025](#)
- Rangitāiki Community Board [28 May 2025](#)
- Rangitāiki Community Board [16 July 2025](#)
- Murupara Community Board [23 June 2025](#)
- Whakatāne-Ōhope Community Board [23 June 2025](#)
- Youth Council Minutes
 - i. 22 July 2025
 - ii. 5 August 2025

8.1 Youth Council Minutes - 22 July 2025

8.1 Youth Council Minutes - 22 July 2025

8.1 Youth Council Minutes - 22 July 2025(Cont.)



Whakatāne District Youth Council Meeting Minutes

22 July 2025, 4:00pm

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Jiko Bryant, Hannah White, Nate Parsons, Corey Haycock, Annabel Caudwell, Erin Walker, Jack Karetai-Barrett, Harry Martin, Martina Lowry, Shanika Juan, Rene Koolen, Syanna Gedson-Hill, Meriana-Leigh Taia, Esther Ferguson

Council Staff:

Jemma Rudkin, Linda De Klerk, Kim Fort

Apologies:

Nico Bruce, Waiwhakaata Hunia, Molly Thompson-Brine, Akemi Tutua

Agenda Items Covered:

- Opening Karakia and Kai
- Workshop with Linda De Klerk and Kim Fort on Event Planning
 - Key Takeaways:
 - It takes a lot of time to plan an event
 - A lot of different things go into planning events e.g. the stakeholder analysis
- Decided to start planning again for a Scavenger Hunt Event in the next school holidays
- Brainstormed Stakeholder Analysis and 'What we want and what we don't want' lists following the workshop for the Scavenger Hunt event.
- Drafted a Youth Council Event Planning Checklist

Other Updates:

-

8.1 Youth Council Minutes - 22 July 2025(Cont.)



- Congratulations to Jack Karetai-Barrett for completing his cycle ride to Wellington over the school holidays raising awareness for the Māori Wards referendum.
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion policy launch 6th September. At least a couple of Youth Council members to attend.
- Closing Karakia
- Meeting ended 5:40pm

8.2 Youth Council Minutes - 5 August 2025

8.2 Youth Council Minutes - 5 August 2025

8.2 Youth Council Minutes - 5 August 2025(Cont.)



Whakatāne District Youth Council Meeting Minutes

5 August 2025, 4:00pm

Present:

Youth Council Members:

Jiko Bryant, Hannah White, Nate Parsons, Corey Haycock, Jack Karetai-Barrett, Martina Lowry, Shanika Juan, Rene Koolen, Meriana-Leigh Taia, Esther Ferguson, Nico Bruce, Mannat Kaur

Council Staff:

Jemma Rudkin, Linda De Klerk

Apologies:

Molly Thompson-Brine, Akemi Tutua, Annabel Caudwell

Agenda Items Covered:

- Opening Karakia and Kai
- Workshop with Linda De Klerk on Event Planning
 - Key Takeaways:
 - Understanding the commitment it takes to run an event
 - How much it costs to run events
- Decided to begin scoping if running the scavenger hunt is feasible
- Brainstormed tasks to decide if everyone is willing to commit

Other Updates:

- Mural update: The final design is done. Have checked with Hak the owner of the bakehouse and he is happy to go ahead. Youth Council is happy to fund.
- Made TikTok to promote mural

8.2 Youth Council Minutes - 5 August 2025(Cont.)



- Closing Karakia
- Meeting ended 5:30pm

9 Reports - *Ngā Pūrongo*

9 Reports - *Ngā Pūrongo*

9.1 Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill



To: **Living Together Committee**

Date: **Thursday, 21 August 2025**

Author: **H Keravel / Senior Strategic Policy Analyst**

Authoriser: **L Woolsey / General Manager Strategy and Growth**

Reference: **A2943664**

1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for a submission from the Whakatāne District Council to the Governance and administration Committee on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Living Together Committee **receives** the Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill report; and
2. THAT the Living Together Committee **approve** the submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill as attached in Appendix A, for submission to the Governance and Administration Committee; and
3. THAT Living Together Committee **delegated authority** to the Mayor and Chief Executive to approve the Council's submission, subject to further changes.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

This bill is part of the Coalition Government's reforms to local government announced in August 2024 which focus on reduced local government spending and delivery of core services.

The expressed aim of the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill is to help alleviate pressure on council rates, by amending the purpose and role of local government so that councils focus on specific core services and "spending on the basics". These amendments, and other proposed changes, are intended to address the Government's concern about a lack of financial discipline by the local government sector.

The primary policy objective of the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill (the **Bill**) is to reduce pressure on council rates by

1. Refocusing the statutory purpose of local government;
2. Prioritising core services in Council spending;
3. Better measurement and publicising of council performance;

9.1 Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

4. Strengthening council transparency and accountability rules, to improve the relationship between councils and their communities;
5. Reducing some regulatory requirements applying to councils.

The bill passed its first reading in Parliament on 17 July. The Governance and administration Committee is calling for submissions on the Regulatory Standards Bill. Submissions close at 11:59pm on 27 August 2025.

3.1. Taituarā position on the legislation amendment bill

The Taituara final position on the legislation amendment bill was not released at the time this report was being drafted.

For information, Taituara draft submission position is:

1. Against the clause amending the Purpose of local government
2. Against the section inserting Core services

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

The draft submission is attached to this report for Council final review and approval. Finalisation of the submission could accommodate any further changes as required. Due to the tight timeframes, delegation is sought for the Mayor and Chief Executive to finalise the submission if agreed by the Committee. Submissions close 27 August 2025.

One of the key aspects of the bill is to remove reference in the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) to the “four well-beings”- social, economic, environmental and cultural - which were reintroduced by Labour in 2019. The Bill reinstates the purpose statement that existed during the last National government, to focus on the cost-effective provision of good-quality local infrastructure and public services and performance of regulatory functions.

Alongside this, the bill defines the Core Services to be considered by the local authority. The following services are the core services of a local authority as outlined in the Bill: network infrastructure, public transport services, waste management, civil defence emergency management, libraries, museums, reserves, and other recreational facilities.

99.96% of Whakatāne district’s capital expenditure and 51.35% of operating expenditure is spent on core services as defined by the bill. (Source annual report 23/24).

The proposed submission from WDC includes the following recommendations:

- To address the lack of appropriate funding tools for local government to alleviate pressure on councils and on rates.
- To further define or remove terms like “good quality” and “cost effective” to avoid further risks for Councils.
- To amend the core service list to include the full extent of other functions required under government legislation and by communities.
- To ensure performance measures and benchmarks reflect different council contexts (e.g. population trends and geography).

9.1 Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

- To consider Audit impacts of increasing the scope of reporting requirements.
- To proceed with the proposed amendment to extend the allowable reappointment term for Chief Executives from two to five years.

5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa*

There are three options described below:

5.1. Option 1 - Approve the attached submission to the Governance and administration Committee subject to minor changes approved by delegated authority - Recommended option

Advantages	Disadvantage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides opportunity for Council to engage in the legislative process regarding the bill:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• that narrows the purpose of local government, shifting focus away from broader community well-being toward core services• that includes changes to governance and performance reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No disadvantage has been identified

5.2. Option 2 Approve an amended submission following further full Council discussion and/or feedback

Advantage	Disadvantage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides opportunity to add further input from Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires additional meeting to be scheduled in an already tight timeframe to finalise and approve the submission

5.3. Option 3 Do not make a submission to the Governance and administration Committee.

Advantage	Disadvantage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No advantage has been identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missed opportunity to advocate for the change to the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill.

6. Significance and Engagement Assessment - Aromatawai Pāhekoheko

6.1. Assessment of Significance

The decisions and matters of this report are assessed to be of low significance, in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

Engagement on this matter is not being undertaken in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. This states that the Council will not consult when the matter is not of a nature or significance that requires public engagement (low significance).

Members of the public have the opportunity to submit their views directly on the New Zealand Parliament website.

7. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro*

7.1. Strategic Alignment

No inconsistencies with any of the Council's policies or plans have been identified in relation to this report.

7.2. Legal

There are no legal considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

7.3. Financial/Budget Considerations

There is no budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

7.4. Climate Change Assessment

There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report.

7.5. Risks

There are no significant or notable risks associated with the matters of this report.

8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

If approved, staff will send the submission by 27 August 2025, to meet the submission deadline.

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill
- Appendix B - Cover letter - Submission - Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

1. **Change to the purpose of local government does not address the underlying issue of underinvestment in infrastructure, increase in costs, and a broken funding system – all of which have led to high rate increases.**

1.1 Funding limitations

Local government has been under significant funding pressure for several years. Councils face growing community and government expectations with many additional activities being allocated to local government by central government over the past few decades, often without the provision of additional funding. This along with the impacts of growth, tourism, and significant infrastructure failures all add to local government funding pressures.

The current funding and financing approach is not sustainable for local government. Numerous funding reviews highlight the problems and recommend changes to the system to ensure that councils can sustainably fund their activities (e.g. [Future for Local Government Review - dia.govt.nz](#), [Local Government Funding and Financing.pdf](#)).

When considering local government's roles and functions, choices must be made about what activities should be delivered nationally, regionally, and locally, as well as what can be shared across different councils. While rating could continue to be the primary revenue tool for councils, councils should also be enabled to use a wider range of revenue tools.

1.2 Clarity around quality and cost effectiveness

The definition of the purpose of local government refers to “...good-quality local infrastructure, local public services and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is cost-effective for households and businesses...”. The terms ‘good quality’ and ‘cost effective’ can be broadly interpreted and are vague in meaning, potentially leading to risks and increased compliance costs for councils. Anyone opposed to a council decision could do so on the grounds that it is not the most cost-effective option. Local authorities are risk-averse by nature and documenting the above judgements to withstand challenge could add to compliance costs.

Recommendation:

- To address the lack of appropriate funding tools for local government to alleviate pressure on councils and on rates.
- To further define or remove the terms “good quality” and “cost effective” to avoid further risks for Councils.

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

2. The list of core services is already prioritised by Council and should be extended to include other legislatively required activities

The following services are the core services of a local authority as outlined in the Bill - network infrastructure, public transport services, waste management, civil defence emergency management, libraries, museums, reserves, and other recreational facilities.

2.1 Whakatāne District Council's capital expenditure (CAPEX) and operational expenditure (OPEX)

99.96% of Whakatāne District Council's CAPEX and 51.35% of OPEX is spent on core services as defined by the Bill (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1 – Whakatāne District Council CAPEX spend per core services (Annual Report 2023/24)

Activity	Capital Expenditure (%)
Roading	54.10%
Sewage	9.20%
Water	12.20%
Stormwater	8.00%
Library	0.48%
Museum	0.38%
Reserves	5.54%
Recreational Facilities	10.04%
Total	99.96%

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

Table 2 – Whakatāne District Council OPEX Spent per core services (Annual Report 2023/24)

Activity	Operating Expenditure (%)
Roading	13.6%
Sewage	5.32%
Water	7.15%
Stormwater	6.77%
Waste	8.4%
Library	3.26%
Museum	1.58%
Reserves	1.04%
Recreational Facilities	4.25%
Total	51.35%

Note: The large proportion of OPEX missing from Table 2 is described in section below

2.2 Other critical activities not listed as core services

Core services can mean different things for different Councils. The list is not defined satisfactorily in the Bill, it should be further expanded to better describe the other functions of Councils, most of which are required under governments legislation and funded through opex.

Some activities included in the Whakatāne District Council Long Term plan 24/34 which are not considered core services in this Bill include cemeteries, public toilets, community safety, animal control, road safety, building consenting, monitoring and certifying food premises, liquor licensing and gambling premises monitoring, resource consenting and enforcement, annual planning, annual reports, long term plan processes, audits, by-laws review and enforcement, local policies, noise control and health and safety compliance.

Recommendation:

- Amend the core service list to include the full extent of other functions required under government legislation and by communities.

3 Measuring and publicising council performance

3.1 Diversity of Councils

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

The Bill aims to improve council performance and accountability by increasing the scope of reporting requirements, including the potential benchmarking of council activities. The intention is to give the public access to information about their council's performance, and enable comparison between councils, to encourage more effective performance and accountability to communities.

Councils in New Zealand provide much of the same activities but also are very different in nature. Every council in New Zealand operates within its own unique context; shaped by geography, infrastructure demands, and population trends. It is important that any comparison acknowledges these differences.

Any comparison needs to consider various factors. Factors may include if councils contract out services against those that retain inhouse delivery; districts that have large rural areas with dispersed populations and services against those that are more condensed; costs of procurement as you get more remote; the impact of time bound events such as emergency events on data.

A local authority's primary accountability is to its community. The contract implicit in the accountability process relies on a trade-off between community needs and preferences and community ability and willingness to pay.

3.2 Impact on Audit

Clauses 21 and 22 propose to extend existing powers for the Secretary of Local Government to set mandatory measures of non-financial performance.

Widening the powers to set mandatory measures may increase transparency across Council but is likely to add further audit costs and put additional pressure to deliver accountability documents on time.

9.1.1 Appendix A - Submission on the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

Recommendation:

- To ensure performance measures and benchmarks reflect different council contexts (e.g. population trends and geography)
- To consider Audit impacts of increasing the scope of reporting requirements

5. Reducing regulatory requirements applying to councils

5.1 Appointment of Chief Executive of Council

Clause 25(14) amends one of the provisions relating to the appointment of Chief Executives of councils. The council cannot reappoint a Chief Executive without advertising, though it may decide on a one-off extension to a contract for up to two years. The Bill would increase the extension to up to five years.

Council supports the proposed amendment to extend the allowable reappointment term for Chief Executives from two to five years without requiring public advertising as this change is seen as a practical step that strengthens the ability of councils to retain competent leadership and provides continuity and potential cost savings.

Recommendations:

- Support the proposed amendment to extend the allowable reappointment term for Chief Executives from two to five years

9.1.2 Appendix B - Cover letter - Submission - Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

9.1.2 Appendix B - Cover letter - Submission - Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

9.1.2 Appendix B - Cover letter - Submission - Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill(Cont.)

26 August 2025

Governance and administration Justice Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington
[Via email: ju@parliament.govt.nz]



Tēnā koe,

Whakatāne District Council submission to the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

The Whakatāne District Council (WDC) wishes to make the submission points detailed in the attached submission. We believe that Central and Local Government should continue to work closely and collaboratively to leverage and share our respective strengths and maximise the impact we have for our communities

For enquiries related to the submission please contact Harvey Keravel, Senior Strategic Policy Analyst at Whakatāne District Council - p.07 306 0231 or harvey.keravel@whakatane.govt.nz

Nāku noa nā

Dr Victor Luca
Mayor - Koromatua

9.2 Better off Funding Update Report August 2025(Cont.)

9.2 Better off Funding Update Report August 2025



To: **Living Together Committee**

Date: **Thursday, 21 August 2025**

Author: **S Thompson-Klima / Project Coordinator**

Authoriser: **L Woolsey / GM Strategy and Growth**

Reference: **A2943806**

1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

The purpose of this paper is to provide Elected Members with an update on the progress of Council's Better Off Funding (BoF) projects and seek approval for minor alterations to delivery of the programme, pending approval from the DIA.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Living Together Committee **receives** the Better Off Funding Programme Update report August 2025; and
2. THAT the Living Together Committee **approve** to re-scope the Active Whakatāne project pause section 2 and complete section 3 of the Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway within in the current financial year, with the remaining funds to support completion of the alternate Emergency Operations Centre at Waiewe Street Whakatāne (pending DIA approval).

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

The Better Off Funding (BoF) Programme has been active since the funding agreement with the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) was signed in January 2023. The programme comprises of seven projects, all of which are to be completed by June 2027.

The individual project managers have completed project-level reports, which have been reviewed and approved by the respective project sponsors. Details of these projects are now summarised in this report.

The table below provides an overview of the key information for each project within the Better Off Funding (BoF) Programme:

9.2 Better off Funding Update Report August 2025(Cont.)

Project Name	Status	Total Funding	Funding Remaining (30 Jun 25)	Completion Date
Collective Iwi Policy Hub	On Track	\$1,000,000	\$266,986	31 December 2025
Natural Hazard Resilience	On Track	\$1,360,000	\$330,047	30 June 2026
Hono Hapori – Community Outreach for Council Services	Completed	\$500,000	\$76,082	31 December 2024
CCTV Upgrade	Completed (BAU)	\$1,000,000	\$26,496	30 June 2027
Accelerating EBOP Spatial Plan Project	Completed	\$200,000	\$0	30 September 2023
Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe to Thornton project	At Risk	\$900,000	\$367,757	30 June 2026
Southern District Towns Regeneration - Murupara and Minginui	At Risk	\$700,000	\$493,874	30 June 2026
Total		\$5,660,00	\$1,561,242	30 June 2027

4. Discussion – Kōrerorero

This section provides a summary of the BoF projects progress as well as additional programme level commentary to provide Elected Members with a sense of the overall status of the programme.

4.1. Programme Manager Summary

The overall programme of works is progressing steadily, with meaningful progress achieved across multiple projects. In this reporting period, three projects are complete (*Spatial Plan, Hono Hapori, CCTV*) and four projects are nearing completion (*Active Whakatāne, Southern Districts, Natural Hazard Resilience, Iwi Policy Hub*).

Key advancements since the last update to this committee include the near-finalisation of the Minginui and Murupara Master Plans under Southern Districts, the successful deployment of 95% of emergency resource caches as part of the Natural Hazard Resilience workstream, and the finalisation of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Spatial Plan under the Iwi Policy Hub.

As of June 2025, total expenditure across the Better Off Funding programme has reached \$4.1 million, leaving \$1.6 million in remaining funds. It is anticipated that the majority of the remaining budget will be allocated during 2025/26 to support the final delivery phases of the overall BoF programme.

9.2 Better off Funding Update Report August 2025(Cont.)

Additionally, there are recommendations to reallocate some of the BoF funding between the Active Whakatāne and Natural Hazard Resilience projects to better meet programme objectives; these proposals are explored in greater detail in the Options Analysis.

The overall programme remains on track, with a continued focus on delivery, managing cost pressures, and ensuring effective use of the remaining Better Off funding.

4.2. Project Level Summary

The table below provides a high-level dashboard outlining each project's status, as per project reporting received in June 2025.

4.2.1. Project Dashboard Notes

Risk category ratings

The highest of all risk category ratings from the project report is used as the project's overall risk status. A project may have three risk categories rated Green, and one at Amber – the overall status will be Amber.

- A **DARK GREEN** rating means the project is COMPLETED and there is no current risk
- A **LIGHT GREEN** rating means there is no current risk to delivering the project within the parameters agreed in the project plan
- An **AMBER** rating means there is some risk, or potential risk, to the delivery of the project in line with the parameters agreed in its project plan. There is a viable plan to manage the risk.
- A **RED** rating means there is significant risk to the delivery of the project in line with the parameters agreed in the project plan, and escalation is required.

Project phasing timeline

Project phases for this programme are as follows:

- **Concept:** Seeking approval in principle or securing a funding stream for an idea
- **Initiation:** Project planning, assembling project team and setting the foundations for successful delivery
- **Development:** Developing the proposed way forward and ensuring relevant stakeholders are on board
- **Delivery:** Executing the proposed way forward
- **Closure:** Handing over to BAU, closing out all financial obligations, documenting lessons learnt and successes achieved.



Key:

Green: Complete

Pattern: Underway

White: Not Started

Project & Risk Rating	Project Details	Funding Details	High Level Commentary
Collective Iwi Policy Hub	Sponsor Hone Patrick Project Manager Donna Cowdery Completion date 31 December 2025	Funding \$1,000,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$733,014 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$266,986	<p>Since January 2025, the Iwi Policy Hub has delivered several key achievements, including successful collaboration on Local Waters Done Well consultation, by ensuring iwi perspectives are reflected in Council outputs.</p> <p>The Eastern Bay of Plenty (EBOP) Spatial Plan has been finalised, with next steps laid out to iwi and hapū i.e. Local Growth Strategy. Significant progress has also been made in supporting the development of an iwi-specific Spatial Plan and reviewing core planning documents such as the LTP, District Plan, and funding policies.</p> <p>Preparatory work for engagement alongside Council on the Local Growth Strategy is well underway, and support has been consistently provided to iwi and hapū to build their understanding of council processes. Programme impact has been actively evaluated, with updates submitted to the TAoTAP Governance Group.</p> <p>Looking ahead, the focus will be on further iwi and hapū engagement around the Local Growth Strategy and strengthening opportunities for partnership and development support.</p> <p>Better Off funding is expected to be fully expended by December 2025. Further funding from Council will not be sought or allocated after the BoF is exhausted, with the programme instead shifting to a revised funding model in which the Iwi Policy Hub support iwi and hapū in sourcing funding to continue the work. This continuation would not have been possible without the BoF and Council's support of the initiative.</p>
	<pre> graph LR Concept[Concept] --> Initiation[Initiation] Initiation --> Development[Development] Development --> Delivery[Delivery] Delivery --> Closure[Closure] </pre>		
Natural Hazard Resilience	Sponsor Leny Woolsey Project Manager Paul Check Justin Douglas	Funding \$1,360,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$1,029,953	<p>Emergency resource deployment is nearly complete, with caches distributed across communities, multi kai cookers delivered to CERTeams, and a mobile generator ready for relocation to the new alternate Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Emergency supply containers are staged for final placement, and the EOC build is entering the construction phase.</p>

Project & Risk Rating	Project Details	Funding Details	High Level Commentary
	Completion date 30 June 2026	Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$330,047	<p>Next steps include live testing and training with Starlink units, finalising container placement (pending iwi negotiations), and commissioning a new communications trailer. Construction of the Waiewe Street Alternate EOC is imminent, though weather and ground conditions may affect timelines, and there is an unexpected shortfall to complete the build. Remaining BoF funding from Active Whakatāne (\$85,200) and Hono Hapori (\$76,000) are expected to support completion of the Natural Hazards project.</p> <p>Continued collaboration with community teams, marae, iwi, and hapū will support training and public engagement.</p>
			
Hono Hapori – Community Outreach	Sponsor Alexandra Pickles Project Manager Alexandra Pickles Completion date 31 December 2024	Funding \$500,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$423,318 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$76,082	<p>The service design, established business owner and resources put in place for this new service are complete. The project has now closed and the Hono Hapori service is now incorporated into 'business-as-usual' functions. While the project is formally completed, data and feedback from communities and staff will be gathered to inform improvements with a continuous improvement approach.</p> <p>It is proposed that remaining budget will be reallocated to other BoF projects to enable the whole programme to remain on track.</p>
			
CCTV Upgrade	Sponsor Steven Perdia Project Manager	Funding \$1,000,000	<p>Confirmation of funding for ongoing monitoring and maintenance (Armitage) is needed once the BoF funds are exhausted (currently expected December 2026). This will be factored into annual plan budgets for the 26/27 financial year. Vandalism and attrition of</p>

Project & Risk Rating	Project Details	Funding Details	High Level Commentary
	Paul Check Completion date 30 June 2027	Spend (30 Jun 25) \$973,504 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$26,496	the cameras are increasing the costs of the project. While minimal delivery activity remains, financial monitoring and reporting will continue until the funds are depleted.
Accelerating EBOP Spatial Plan Project	Sponsor David Bewley Project Manager Nicholas Woodley Completion date 30 September 2023	Funding \$200,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$200,000 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$0	Better off funding “Acceleration” portion of this project is complete and the Spatial Plan was adopted in July 2025.
Active Whakatāne– Edgecumbe to Thornton Awa trail	Sponsor Leny Woolsey Project Manager Tim Allerby Completion date Section 3 - 30 June 2026	Funding \$900,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$532,243 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$367,757	<p>The Edgecumbe to Thornton trail project has made solid progress, with access and fencing changes for Section 4 confirmed in collaboration with the Regional Council and grazing license holders. In Section 1, mobility access improvements are under discussion with the Rangitāiki Community Board, while a more cost-effective road crossing is being considered at Thornton Bridge due to the high cost of an underpass and potential speed reductions in the area.</p> <p>Section 3 is scheduled for completion in June 2026, contingent on securing an easement agreement over private land. The 2025/26 LTP (\$325,000) and remaining Better off</p>

Project & Risk Rating	Project Details	Funding Details	High Level Commentary
	Section 2 – TBD		<p>funding (\$367,757) will cover the cost of this section. No significant barriers are anticipated, provided contractors are available during the October–March construction season.</p> <p>Section 2 is now on hold indefinitely, as construction cannot begin until at least 2027 due to extended timeframes in the Regional Council’s stopbank upgrade program.</p>
Southern District Towns Regeneration	Sponsor Leny Woolsey Project Manager Sarah Evans Completion date 30 June 2025	Funding \$700,000 Spend (30 Jun 25) \$206,126 Budget Remaining (30 Jun 25) \$493,874	<p>Delays have occurred due to extensive community and iwi consultation; however, The Master Plans for Minginui and Murupara are in the final draft stage, with approvals from Ngāti Whare and Ngāti Manawa expected in August 2025. The plans will be completed following these approvals, and the Council will advise on high-level costings and implementation processes.</p> <p>The available funding for Murupara Activation (\$250,000) is planned to be allocated to the recreation components of the proposed water treatment plant and associated pipeline (bridge). Currently, this includes funding for a jumping platform, pedestrian bridge, and picnic area (seating and barbecue).</p> <p>Initial public engagement is complete, with one final round of engagement scheduled for August 2025 to finalize the plans. The next steps include determining the costs for completing the Master Plans and implementing outdoor projects.</p>

5. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa*

5.1. **Option 1 (recommended option): *Pause section 2 and complete section 3 of the Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway only in the current financial year. Divert remaining funds to completing alternate EOC Waiewe St. –***

Due to the dependencies on stopbank upgrades to be delivered by BOPRC by June 2027, it is recommended to pause section two but proceed with completion of section three of the *Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe-Thornton* cycleway within the 25/26 financial year. This option also includes the completion of sections one and four access improvements which are currently under discussion with the local community.

Additionally, it is recommended that the remaining BoF funding from both *Hono Hapori*, and *Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe-Thornton* be re-allocated to complete the alternate EOC site on Waiewe Street. This would close the *Natural Hazards* project before the end of the year.

Considerations
<p>Section three is scheduled for completion by the end of the 25/26 financial year, contingent on securing an easement agreement over private land. The 2025/26 Long-Term Plan allocates \$325,000 towards cycleways. No significant barriers are anticipated, provided contractors are available during the October–March construction season. Remaining BoF funding from <i>Active Whakatāne</i> (\$85,200) and <i>Hono Hapori</i> (\$76,000) will support completion of the <i>Natural Hazards</i> project.</p> <p>Section two along the river could then proceed following BOPRC stopbank upgrades using existing LTP funds. BOPRC plans a staged approach to the stopbank upgrades in section two, with works potentially starting in Autumn 2026 and completion expected by June 2027. Dovetailing in on BOPRC work could create considerable savings however this can't be considered until their design is complete (expected in September 2026) and shared with us. In the meantime, section two will follow the existing road route and connections, including signage, will be provided to allow a continuous cycleway from Edgecumbe to Thornton.</p>

5.1.1. **Option 2: Complete ALL Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway & Alternate EOC Waiewe St. Site and seek additional funding**

Complete sections two and three of the *Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe–Thornton* project, alongside access improvements for sections one and four, as originally intended. Current indications are that the remaining BoF funding combined with the 25/26 and 26/27 LTP funding would be sufficient to complete both sections 2 and 3, however delays due to uncertainty around the BOPRC stop-bank programme and engagements with landowners and other interested parties could cause section two costs to escalate over time.

Additional funding would need to be sourced for *Natural Hazards* in the short-term to ensure both initiatives can be completed as planned.

Considerations
<p>There is a funding shortfall for <i>Natural Hazards</i> project that cannot be covered by existing BoF allocations. Even with re-allocating the available <i>Hono Hapori</i> funding, this would still leave <i>Natural Hazards</i> at a deficit of \$76,506. Additional funding would need to be sourced for <i>Natural Hazards</i>.</p> <p>In this option, <i>Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe–Thornton</i> is projected to be completed under budget by 2028.</p>

5.2. Option 3: Immediately cease further works beyond minor access improvements to the Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway and redirect all uncommitted funding to other activities

Under this option, Council could choose to immediately pause any further activities on sections two and three of *Active Whakatāne – Edgecumbe–Thornton*. Access improvements for Sections one and four will continue as planned. LTP funding, originally intended to support the Rangitaiki cycleways would be redirected to different activities.

To ensure adequate funding for the completion of the *Natural Hazards* project, it is recommended that a portion of the remaining BoF allocation from the Edgecumbe–Thornton project be redirected to the alternate EOC site on Waiewe St which is currently over budget. Additionally, the other portion could be allocated to support Three Waters projects.

Considerations
<p>Redirecting focus from the Edgecumbe–Thornton cycleway to other activities presents a significant reputational risk for Council. The Edgecumbe community could perceive this shift as a deprioritisation of smaller towns in favour of Whakatāne, reinforcing concerns about unequal investment. This perception is particularly sensitive given that the Edgecumbe–Thornton project was initiated first as one of the few opportunities to support economic revitalisation in Edgecumbe.</p>

6. Significance and Engagement Assessment - Aromatawai Pāhekoheko

6.1. Assessment of Significance

Due to the localised impacts and external source of funds, the decisions and matters of this report are assessed to be of low significance, in accordance with the Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.

6.2. Engagement and Community Views

While engagement has and continues to take place for some of the individual projects within the portfolio, engagement on this update report as a whole is not being undertaken in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. This states that the Council will not consult when the matter is not of a nature or significance that requires public engagement (low significance).

7. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro*

7.1. Strategic Alignment

No inconsistencies with any of the Council's policies or plans have been identified in relation to this report.

7.2. Financial/Budget Considerations

Budget implications associated with the options analysis are as follows:

Option 1 – NO BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: BoF projects are complete within existing budgets including LTP cycleway contribution and delivered within 25/26 financial year. Active Whakatane is rescope to sections 1,3 and 4 only. No additional funding is required. If BOPRC stop bank programme permits later development of section 2, additional funding can be sought at that time.

Option 2 – ADDITIONAL \$76k REQUIRED in 25/26: Active Whakatane (sections 1,3,4) is complete in FY25/26 within existing budgets including LTP cycleway contribution. Natural Hazards requires additional funding of approx \$76,000 in FY25/26.

Option 3 – NO BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: Natural Hazards project is complete within 25/26 financial year. Remaining LTP and BoF funds from discontinued Active Whakatane can be diverted to Three Waters or other activities.

See Appendix A for further detail.

7.3. Climate Change Assessment

There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report.

7.4. Risks

Risk	Description and/or Mitigation
Option 1: If the agreement over private land use for Section 3 is delayed, construction could be postponed beyond the 2025/26 season requiring a capex carry forward into 26/27 year	Engage early with landowners and legal advisors to secure the easement before the October–March construction window
Option 2: If all sections of Active Whakatane are completed, then the Natural Hazards project will face a shortfall of approximately \$76,506	Identify and pursue supplementary funding sources to cover the Natural Hazards deficit and ensure full delivery

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3

Risk	Description and/or Mitigation
Option 3: If Sections 2 and 3 are immediately paused and funding is redirected, then the Edgecumbe community may perceive this as a deprioritisation of their needs.	Develop a clear communication strategy that explains the rationale and benefits of the reallocation, including support for the Natural Hazards and Three Waters initiatives
Option 3: If the shift in investment is not transparently managed, then Council may face reputational damage and reduced trust.	Engage proactively with Edgecumbe stakeholders and ensure messaging reflects equitable investment across communities

8. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix A – Detailed financials for options 1-3

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3(Cont.)

Appendix 1

Option 1 Pause section 2 and complete section 3 of the Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway only in the current financial year. Divert remaining funds to completing alternate EOC Waiewe St. – Recommended option

EDGE CUMBE – THORNTON BUDGET FY25/26			
Financial Year	Location	Works	Approximate cost
2025/26	Edgecumbe to Thornton Stage 3, Section 3	Total Cost Section 3	\$587,800
	Sections 1 and 4	Access improvements	\$20,000
	TOTAL Cost		\$607,800
	Budget	LTP Capex	\$270,000
		LTP Planning	\$55,000
		External funding (BOF)	\$368,000
	TOTAL Budget		\$693,000
	Remainder	LTP	\$0
	Remainder	External funding (BOF)	\$85,200

FINANCIAL IMPACTS - BUDGET FY25/26	
Edgecumbe-Thornton	
TOTAL Budget for remaining stages	\$693,000
Remaining BoF Funding	\$368,000
LTP Funding	\$325,000
TOTAL Cost	\$607,800
REMAINDER – diverted to Natural Hazards	\$85,200
Natural Hazards	
TOTAL Budget	\$451,165
Additional Funds (from Edg-Thorn)	\$85,200
Additional Funds (from Hono Hapori)	\$57,306
Natural Hazard BoF Funds	\$289,883
TOTAL Cost	\$442,389
Remainder	\$0

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3(Cont.)

Option 2: Complete ALL Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleways & Alternate EOC Waiewe St. Site and seek additional funding

EDGECUMBE – THORNTON BUDGET FY25/26 – 27/28			
Financial Year	Location	Works	Approximate cost
2025/26	Edgecumbe to Thornton Stage 3, Section 3 Sections 1 and 4	Total Cost Section 3	\$587,800
		Access improvements	\$20,000
		TOTAL Cost	\$607,800
	Budget	LTP Capex	\$270,000
		LTP Planning	\$55,000
		External funding (BOF)	\$368,000
	TOTAL Budget		\$693,000
		Remainder	\$85,200
	Remainder	External funding (BOF)	\$0
Financial Year	Location	Works	Approximate cost
2026/27 Option 2 (BOPRC dependant – likely to shift to 27/28)	Edgecumbe to Thornton Stage 3, Section 2 (subject to change)	Total cost section 2	\$455,800
		TOTAL Cost	\$455,800
	Budget	LTP Capex	\$360,337
		LTP Planning	\$56,128
		External funding	\$0
	TOTAL Budget		\$416,465
		Remainder	LTP (bring forward from 27/28)
	Remainder	External funding	\$0

FINANCIAL IMPACTS - BUDGET	
Edgecumbe-Thornton FY 25/26-27/28	
TOTAL Budget for remaining works	\$1,355,530
Edg.-Thorn BoF Funding 25/26	\$368,000
LTP Funding 25/26	\$325,000
LTP Funding 26/27	\$331,265
LTP Funding 27/28	\$331,265

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3(Cont.)

TOTAL Cost	\$1,063,600
Remainder for establishment of other Cycleway projects	\$291,930
Natural Hazards FY 25/26	
TOTAL Budget	\$365,883
Natural Hazard BoF Funds 25/26	\$289,883
Hono Hapori BoF Funds 25/26	\$76,000
TOTAL Cost	\$442,389
SHORTFALL	\$76,506

Option 3: Immediately cease further works beyond minor access improvements to the Edgecumbe to Thornton Cycleway and redirect all uncommitted funding to other activities

WHAKATĀNE-AWAKERI BUDGET FY25/26			
Financial Year	Location	Works	Approximate cost
2025/26	Whakatāne to Awakeri Stage 1, Section 1	Total cost section 1	\$302,500
	TOTAL Cost		\$302,500
	Budget	LTP Capex	\$270,000
		LTP Planning	\$55,000
		External funding	\$0
	TOTAL Budget		\$325,000
	Remainder	LTP	\$22,500

FINANCIAL IMPACTS - BUDGET FY25/26	
Edgecumbe-Thornton	
TOTAL Budget	\$20,000
BoF Funding	\$20,000
TOTAL Cost	\$20,000 (sect. 1&4)
REMAINDER	\$0
Other Activities	
TOTAL Budget (LTP funds from Cycleways)	\$325,000
TOTAL Cost	\$302,500

9.2.1 Appendix A - Detailed financials for options 1-3(Cont.)

Remainder for other Cyclway projects	\$22,500
Natural Hazards	
TOTAL Budget	\$465,965
Additional Funds (from Edg-Thorn)	\$100,000(approx. from Edg-Thorn)
Additional Funds (from Hono Hapori)	\$76,082
Natural Hazard BoF Funds	\$289,883
TOTAL Cost	\$442,389
Remainder – diverted to 3 Waters	\$23,576
3 Waters	
TOTAL Additional Funding	\$223,576 (approx. from Edg-Thorn)

9.3 Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035

9.3 Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035



To: **Living Together Committee**
Date: **Thursday, 21 August 2025**
Author: **G Moore-Jones / Reserves Advisor**
Authoriser: **A Pickles / GM Community Experience**
Reference: **A2942088**

1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

The purpose of this report is to provide the Living Together Committee with the final Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035, in response to directions received from full Council Briefing on 28 May 2025.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

1. THAT the Living Together Committee **receive** the Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035; and
2. THAT the Living Together Committee **adopt** the Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

Demands on open space continue to evolve from users of the land for sporting, community, and cultural events, as well as requests from the private and public sector to meet other needs, including housing supply. Historically, strategic planning for open spaces has occurred on an ad-hoc basis.

To address issues arising from this approach and changing demands, Council commenced the process of developing a Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy (previously called Open Spaces Strategy) to consider the open space requirements for current and future communities, and to ensure effective decision making on the management, development, acquisition, and divestment of open space.

Comprehensive engagement was carried out through the Ma Koutou, Ma Tatau – Our People, Our Places engagement programme in 2023/24, which has informed the development of this Strategy alongside other formal and informal consultation opportunities highlighted in Section 5.

4. Discussion – *Kōrerorero*

This section provides a summary of the Strategy and outlines the principles and key focus areas to ensure the Council has a clear path between the current state of open space provision and the future view of provision.

It is important to note the Strategy is limited to 'Council managed' open space assets.

9.3 Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

4.1. Purpose of the strategy

This strategy sets out a clear direction to ensure Whakatāne District's open spaces are well-managed, sustainable, and meet the needs of growing and changing communities. It focuses on three core objectives to enact the underlying principles:

1. Responsible Stewardship

Council will protect and enhance open spaces through enduring relationships, careful management, and future-focused decision-making:

- Build trusted relationships with whānau, hapū, and iwi to reflect shared responsibilities and values.

Manage open spaces in a way that is financially sustainable and aligned with community priorities:

- Safeguard land for future generations by preventing irreversible loss and maintaining long-term public benefit.

2. Thriving Communities

Council will deliver open spaces that actively improve quality of life and meet the evolving needs of diverse communities:

- Design and maintain spaces that support health, wellbeing, play, and social connection
- Align open space planning with demographic trends and wider strategies such as climate resilience and public health
- Prioritise inclusive, accessible environments that reflect the full diversity of the district.

3. Strategic Delivery

Council will plan and invest in open spaces using clear, coordinated strategies that maximise impact over time:

- Embed environmental sustainability into every stage of planning and decision-making
- Use data and forecasting to guide land acquisition, development, and reallocation
- Strengthen delivery through coordinated partnerships, resource sharing, and community involvement.

This strategy aligns with the Whakatāne District Council's Long-Term Plan 2024–2034, relevant Activity Management Plans, Reserve Management Plans, and other policy documents. Together, they form the framework for how Council will protect, enhance, and invest in the district's open spaces.

4.2. Principles of the strategy

As we plan for the future, we are guided by a set of foundational values that reflect Council's commitment to long-term stewardship, inclusive community outcomes, and meaningful engagement with mana whenua. These ensure that open spaces are protected and enhanced for future generations, remain accessible and relevant to all, and celebrate the unique cultural heritage and natural environment of the Whakatāne District.

Tiaki taiao | Caring for the environment

9.3 Whakatāne District Draft Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

We care for and protect the natural environment, ensuring the sustainable use of resources and the long-term health of open spaces.

Oranga hapori | Community wellbeing and inclusion

We design inclusive, accessible open spaces that support physical activity, and enhance social and cultural wellbeing.

Hononga | Connection

We develop and enhance opportunities for people to connect with place, with environment and with one another.

5. Consultation

The development of the strategy has been informed by a broad range of feedback since 2021, including:

- Analysis of our current open spaces and how they are used
- Insights gathered through the Long-Term Plan 2024–2034 (LTP) community engagement
- Iwi engagement
- Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Master Plan: Mā Koutou Mā Tātau consultation
- Arts, Culture and Creativity Strategy consultation
- Annual Resident Satisfaction Surveys

6. Options Analysis - *Ngā Kōwhiringa*

There are no options for consideration in this report.

7. Significance and Engagement Assessment - Aromatawai Pāhekoheko

7.1. Assessment of Significance

The decisions and matters of this report are assessed to be of low significance, in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

7.2. Engagement and Community Views

Further engagement on this matter is not being undertaken, in accordance with Section 6 of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

8. Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro*

8.1. Strategic Alignment

No inconsistencies with any of the Council's policies or plans have been identified in relation to this report.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035

8.2. Financial/Budget Considerations

There are no budget considerations associated with the recommendations of this report.

8.3. Climate Change Assessment

There are no significant or notable impacts associated with the matters of this report. Future open spaces development will include climate change assessments as part of each development business case.

8.4. Risks

There are no significant or notable risks associated with the matters of this report.

9. Next Steps – E whai ake nei

Following adoption, the strategy will be made live and uploaded to the Whakatāne District Council website.

Attached to this Report:

- Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035
- Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)



Appendix A

WHAKATĀNE DISTRICT OPEN SPACES STRATEGY 2025-35

Te Rautaki Tarawaha o Whakatāne 2025-35

whakatane.govt.nz



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Contents

Rārangi upoko

Mihi2

Contents3

Whakatāne District Open Space Strategy – Introduction4

Tangata Whenua, Tangata Taiao.....5

Vision.....6

What are open spaces?7

Types of Open Space8

Why do we need a Strategy?.....9

Current view – open space.....10

Future view – open spaces11

What you have told us so far..... 13

Council’s role in Open Spaces..... 15

Long Term Plan 2024-3416

Who will be using our open spaces in the future..... 19

Growth vs. demand20

Key focus: Mahi tahi - working together21

Key focus: Sustainability 22

Key Projects: A 10-year plan.....24

Turning strategy into action 25

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)



Whakatāne District Open Space Strategy – Introduction

Te Rautaki Tarawaha o Whakatāne – Whakatakinga

The Whakatāne District is defined by its diverse and striking natural environment – from expansive coastlines to inland forests and urban parks. These open spaces shape the character of the Whakatāne District and play a critical role in the everyday lives of its residents. These spaces are where we live, relax, connect, and explore.

More than simply providing the backdrop, open spaces support health and wellbeing, provide opportunities for recreation, and strengthen community connections. As the district's population grows and its communities evolve, the demand on these spaces will continue to increase.

This is Whakatāne District Council's first Open Spaces Strategy. It sets a clear vision, principles, and strategic direction to guide how Council will plan, protect, develop, and manage its open space network. The strategy is designed to meet the changing needs of communities and ensure open spaces remain accessible, high quality, and fit for purpose.

The purpose of this strategy is clear: to establish a future-focused, resilient, and inclusive open space network that supports a growing district and enhances the wellbeing of all who live and spend time here.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

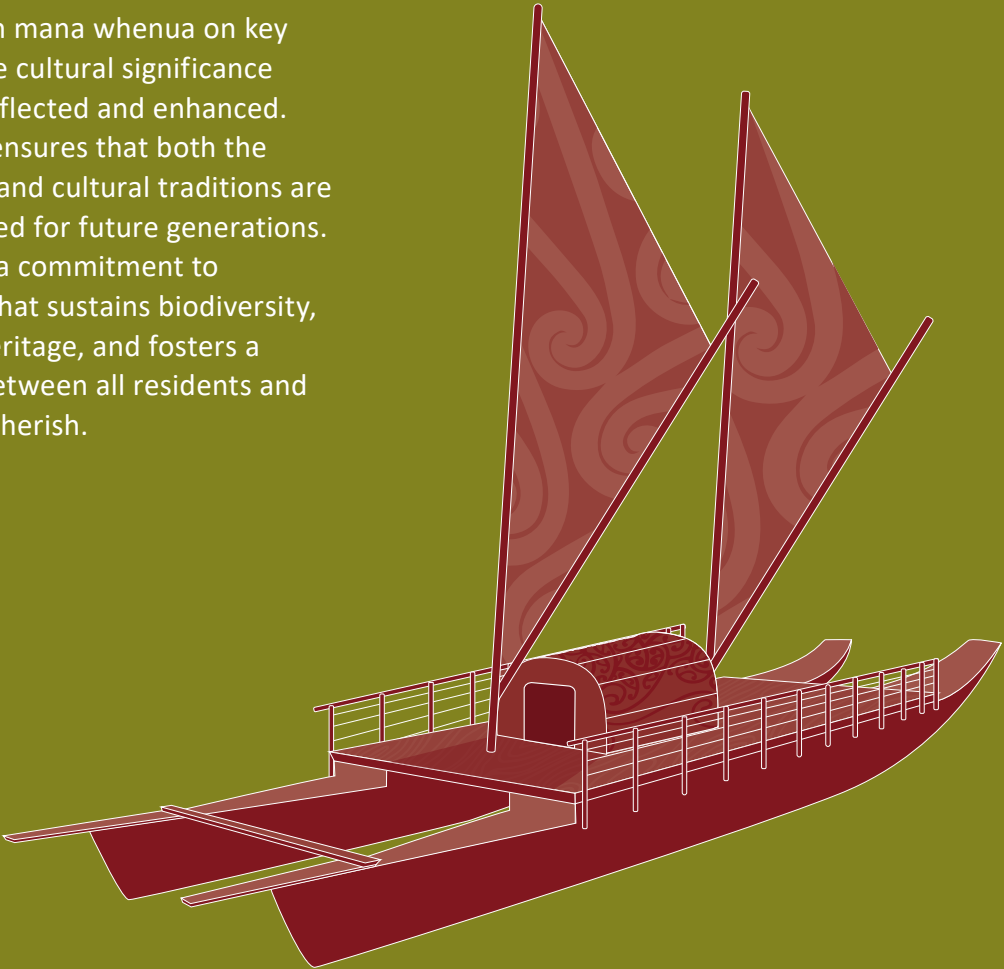
Tangata Whenua, Tangata Taiao

The maunga, awa, and natural beauty of the Eastern Bay of Plenty made it one of the earliest places settled by Māori, with significant arrivals by Mataatua and Te Arawa waka. This rich whakapapa has left an enduring legacy deeply embedded in traditional and cultural values. Early explorers such as Toi Te Huatahi/Toi Kai Rākau exemplified sustainable practices and a harmonious relationship with te taiao, setting a standard for the respect of tapu and the mauri of the land and waters.

Council aims to emulate this connection by integrating modern stewardship with traditional Māori values in managing open spaces. Council’s collaboration with iwi, hapū and whānau ensures the protection of taonga and the enhancement of te taiao.

Embracing Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and forming meaningful relationships with mana whenua helps to enhance deep connections to the land, and supports Council’s vision for an inclusive and culturally resonant open space network. The Council is committed to honouring Te Tiriti and the objectives of its Māori Relationships Strategy - Te Toi Waka Whakarei. This includes protecting ecological associations and improving scenic and landscape qualities through a bilingual approach that acknowledges the intertwined heritage of the region.

Council will work with mana whenua on key projects to ensure the cultural significance of open spaces are reflected and enhanced. By doing so, Council ensures that both the natural environment and cultural traditions are respected and elevated for future generations. These efforts reflect a commitment to holistic stewardship that sustains biodiversity, celebrates cultural heritage, and fosters a deeper connection between all residents and the landscapes they cherish.



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Vision

Matakitenga

Draft vision

**As the environment flourishes,
the people thrive**

**Ka ora te taiao,
ka ora te hāpori**

Principles

Ngā mātāpono

As we plan for the future, we are guided by a set of foundational values that reflect Council’s commitment to long-term stewardship, inclusive community outcomes, and meaningful engagement with mana whenua. These ensure that open spaces are protected and enhanced for future generations, remain accessible and relevant to all, and celebrate the unique cultural heritage and natural environment of the Whakatāne District.

Tiaki taiao | Caring for the environment

We care for and protect the natural environment, ensuring the sustainable use of resources and the long-term health of open spaces.

Oranga hāpori | Community wellbeing and inclusion

We design inclusive, accessible open spaces that support physical activity, and enhance social and cultural wellbeing.

Hononga | Connection

We develop and enhance opportunities for people to connect with place, with environment and with one another.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

What are open spaces? *He aha ngā tarawaha?*

Open spaces

Places where public can access the natural environment to engage in a variety of activities. Open spaces include ‘green space’, rivers, lakes and beaches*, civic centres, tracks and trails, cycleways, walkways and cemeteries. They are places which help to establish connections and linkages where people can move through, visit, congregate and offer respite and connection with nature and with each other.

Public open space includes land that is set aside primarily for outdoor recreation (including but not primarily sports), passive outdoor enjoyment and nature conservation and cemeteries. Local examples include the Warren Cole River Walkway where residents enjoy riverside walks, Ōhope Reserves which provides coastal access and natural enjoyment, and Mokoroa/Kohi Point that offers conservation value alongside recreational opportunities.

More recently, open spaces are being seen as ‘dual’ assets that not only provide recreation but also storm-water catchment areas for storm events and active transport links through ‘green corridors’. The many different types of open space and the combination of these spaces make up the open space network. These interconnected spaces deliver value beyond their individual purposes, creating a system that serves both environmental and community needs.

This draft Strategy relates to Open Spaces managed by Whakatāne District Council and how these spaces link to and contribute to the wider network of open spaces.

* Whilst rivers, lakes and beaches are ‘open space’, they are not in the scope of this strategy



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Types of Open Space | *Ngā momo tarawaha*

Council manages open spaces for different purposes. Council uses eight different categories to explain what it manages and why. The categories also guide decisions on how to invest in each. Collectively these spaces comprise the open space network and help determine how the strategy will be implemented over time. While many open space reserves are multi-use, allocation of a primary purpose category for all open space enables efficient and effective planning.

A full version of these categories*, including where each of the current Council open spaces sit, their levels of service and their ideal volume and size and closeness to residents can be found in the Supporting Documents. The eight categories are:



Premier district reserves

Larger multi-use spaces with a high amenity value and an emphasis on providing for the needs of the wider community. Examples include Whakatāne Rose Gardens and Thornton Beach Park Recreation Reserve.



Neighbourhood (local and amenity) reserves

Smaller low-profile spaces often located on a pedestrian/commuting route and typically bordered on several sides by houses. Examples include Mananui Crescent Reserve and Galatea Recreation Reserve.



Local sport and recreation reserves

Spaces for sport and recreation activity for the local area. Small scale and less infrastructure than the Sport and Recreation (District) category. Examples include Waimana Domain and Eivers Park.



District sport and recreation reserves

Parks with the primary purpose of providing for sport and recreation and activity, as well as recreation facilities and buildings. Examples include Rex Morpeth Park and Warren Park.



Cultural and heritage reserves

Localities for protection of built cultural, historical, and archaeological environment to provide for commemoration, understanding, appreciation, and remembrance. Examples include Puketapu Pā and Tāneatua Cemetery.



Natural reserves

Areas for experience and protection of the natural environment. Types of use/value include conservation, education, ecosystem management, low-impact recreation, and landscape protection. Examples include Kōhī Point Scenic Reserve and Port Ōhope Recreation Reserve.



Utility and linkage reserves

Land containing link strips, access ways, drainage, or other service ways where their primary purpose is to support services other than recreation. Examples include Plantation Reserves and Whakatāne Airport Reserve.



Civic amenity open space

Land adjacent to roadways/streets and other civic open space predominantly for pedestrian provision to civic, retail and commercial services in the CBD areas. Examples include Whakatāne CBD and Edgecumbe College Road/Bridge Street.

* Recreation Aotearoa Parks Categories 2017. These categories have established a national model and are due to be updated in 2025/26

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Why do we need a Strategy?

He aha mātau e matea ai i tēnei rautaki?

This strategy sets out a clear direction to ensure Whakatāne District’s open spaces are well-managed, sustainable, and meet the needs of growing and changing communities. It focuses on three core objectives to enact the underlying principles:

1. Responsible Stewardship

Council will protect and enhance open spaces through enduring relationships, careful management, and future-focused decision-making.

- Build trusted relationships with whānau, hapū, and iwi to reflect shared responsibilities and values
- Manage open spaces in a way that is financially sustainable and aligned with community priorities
- Safeguard land for future generations by preventing irreversible loss and maintaining long-term public benefit

2. Thriving Communities

Council will deliver open spaces that actively improve quality of life and meet the evolving needs of diverse communities.

- Design and maintain spaces that support health, wellbeing, play, and social connection
- Align open space planning with demographic trends and wider strategies such as climate resilience and public health
- Prioritise inclusive, accessible environments that reflect the full diversity of the district

3. Strategic Delivery

Council will plan and invest in open spaces using clear, coordinated strategies that maximise impact over time.

- Embed environmental sustainability into every stage of planning and decision-making
- Use data and forecasting to guide land acquisition, development, and reallocation
- Strengthen delivery through coordinated partnerships, resource sharing, and community involvement

This strategy aligns with the Whakatāne District Council’s **Long Term Plan 2024–2034**, relevant Activity Management Plans, Reserve Management Plans, and other policy documents. Together, they form the framework for how Council will protect, enhance, and invest in the district’s open spaces.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)



Current view – open spaces

Ngā tarawaha ināianeī

Approximately 1,440 hectares or 330 public open spaces



37 Playgrounds



6 Cemeteries and a crematorium



2 Campgrounds



2 Aquatic centres



15 Sports reserves



Open spaces and facilities like parks, sports fields, cemeteries, courts and nature reserves are highly valued by communities and visitors to the district. They provide places to play, relax, or simply enjoy being outdoors. They are where community life happens. A map and analysis of open spaces by town is available in the Supporting Documents.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Future view – open spaces

Ngā tarawaha anamata

So, what can Council do to ensure a smooth transition between the current state and its future vision? Understanding how communities may change, identifying emerging trends, and knowing Council’s role and available tools are all important steps.

Council’s vision is that open space continues to offer opportunities for communities to connect and support wellbeing, while working in partnership to protect and enhance the health of the natural environment. Investment in open spaces delivers wide-reaching benefits, even if some of those benefits take time to be realised.

Over the next 10 years, the district will change and grow. As communities evolve, pressure on open spaces will increase—whether from population growth, greater use, or external impacts. Council will need to invest in new spaces and activities to meet these changing needs,

while also maintaining and improving existing spaces so they continue to serve those who live, work, and play in the district.

Recent data shows that 66% of New Zealand households are using more free or low-cost activities than they were a year ago (2024)*. This includes walking, running, and spontaneous play in council-managed open spaces.

A long-term strategy must also be flexible. While we are beginning to understand the impacts of climate change and are planning for adaptation and decarbonisation, we don’t yet fully know how these challenges will affect open space demand or location. Council is also developing a sub-regional Spatial Plan and a Local Growth Strategy. The amount and location of future open spaces will be influenced by these plans.

As communities continue to change, Council’s focus must also expand to include emerging priorities like food systems and food security (sometimes referred to as food sovereignty)** , which could shape future open space needs and uses.

New recreation trends—such as the growing popularity of e-bikes—are enabling more people to stay active for longer. This reinforces the need for more green corridors for active transport and for integrating technology that supports active recreation in our open spaces.

All of these, and other changes, will require Council to be flexible, to manage and create spaces that are multi-use or are re-purposed in the intervening years until they are needed.

* The term ‘food sovereignty’ refers to a food system in which the people who produce, distribute, and consume food also control the approach to and means of food production and distribution. Māori food sovereignty “empowers whānau and hapū driven food production” (Hutchings, 2015). *Food Sovereignty and Equitable Food Systems. A report for the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors in Aotearoa.* Centre for Social Impact. April 2023
** Sport NZ FutureFit Conference presentation: Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa, March 2025

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

In a not-too-distant future, residents are likely to use green open spaces in diverse ways that emphasise sustainability, community and well-being, reflecting the evolving relationship between residents and te taiao/nature. Some potential uses that will assume more importance and daily use in future years include:

- Recreational and well-being activities:
 - » Residents may engage in more outdoor fitness activities like yoga, meditation, cycling, or walking, with a focus on mental health and relaxation. Open spaces will likely include smart exercise equipment, nature trails, and areas for relaxation, promoting holistic wellness.
- Urban farming and community gardens:
 - » As the push for sustainability grows, green spaces could feature urban farms, vertical gardens, or community plots where residents can grow their own food. These spaces could help combat food deserts and foster a sense of community ownership.
- Biodiversity and education:
 - » Many parks and open spaces could be designed as eco-zones that support local biodiversity. They may serve educational purposes, with interactive displays or augmented reality (AR) experiences, teaching residents about ecology, sustainability, and climate change.

- Social and cultural gatherings:
 - » Parks and open spaces will likely become hubs for socialising, hosting events like concerts, festivals, outdoor movies, or cultural programmes. These areas might be digitally enhanced with smart lighting or sound systems integrated into the landscape.
- Sustainable infrastructure and energy:
 - » Open spaces could double as environmental infrastructure, incorporating solar panels, rainwater collection systems, or wind turbines. Residents might contribute to energy generation or engage in interactive systems that show real-time environmental data, blending nature with technology.
- Work and study environments:
 - » As remote work and flexible jobs remain the norm, open spaces might offer outdoor co-working zones, equipped with park-wide Wi-Fi and charging stations. Residents may choose to work or study in nature to improve creativity and focus.

- Climate resilience and adaptation:
 - » Open spaces and particularly green space and canopy cover will likely be designed to mitigate urban heat, manage stormwater, and provide cooling areas during extreme weather events. They will offer residents a refuge during heatwaves or floods, contributing to urban climate resilience.
- The changing nature of structured sports in the future may not need all the open space currently provided for Saturday sport.* An increased focus on individual activities and spontaneous play may change the entire concept of dedicated sports fields and will free up open space for other uses (the space is fit-for-purpose to whoever is using it at that time).

Whakatāne District’s open spaces are crucial for enhancing te taiao/environmental health and quality of life for residents. Council’s strategic priorities and the Strategy’s principles will be the foundations encompassing this future view.

* Active Recreation for Rangitahi Plan, 2011-24. Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa. 2021
Note: This section contains AI generated content. AI generated content has been reviewed by the author for accuracy and edited/revised where necessary. The author is an accredited member of the Association of Professional Futurists (APF).

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)


What you have told us so far

He aha tā koutou i kī mai

Feedback from people across the district, along with an analysis of how open spaces are used, has played a key role in shaping this strategy. Community input from the Long-Term Plan 2024–2034, the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Master Plan, Arts, Culture and Creativity Strategy, and Annual Resident Satisfaction Surveys have also informed its development.

These insights have helped shape the vision, principles, and strategic direction for action and delivery.

While there is general agreement that the district has plenty of open space, feedback highlighted the need for more equitable access, consistent quality across townships, and more high-quality, accessible playgrounds.*

Our open spaces are easy to access, we can bike and walk to access the activities we want to (if you live in town).	The way our parks are cared for makes accessing these spaces easier and accentuates their beauty and useability.	I value connection to te ao Māori and to te taiao.
Lots of open spaces and parks around our rohe that are multi use and not restricted in their purpose. Love it!		I love the natural beauty of our spaces. We have everything here. Rivers, beaches, forests, parks, lagoons.
There's heaps of space - we have lots of spaces and we need to keep them.		Maintenance and management of parks and reserves should be a priority.
Large spaces for whānau and friends to come together.	Add food sovereignty and climate change action into our spaces, e.g., bee pollinating areas, don't mow where you don't need to, create food forests.	
Consider which spaces need high attention and which don't e.g., are there areas that could be planted in high carbon capture / low maintenance plants rather than regular mowing.		Green space promotes mental health and our community's mental health.

* A goal also targeted in Sport Bay of Plenty 'Spaces and Places Strategy' 2024

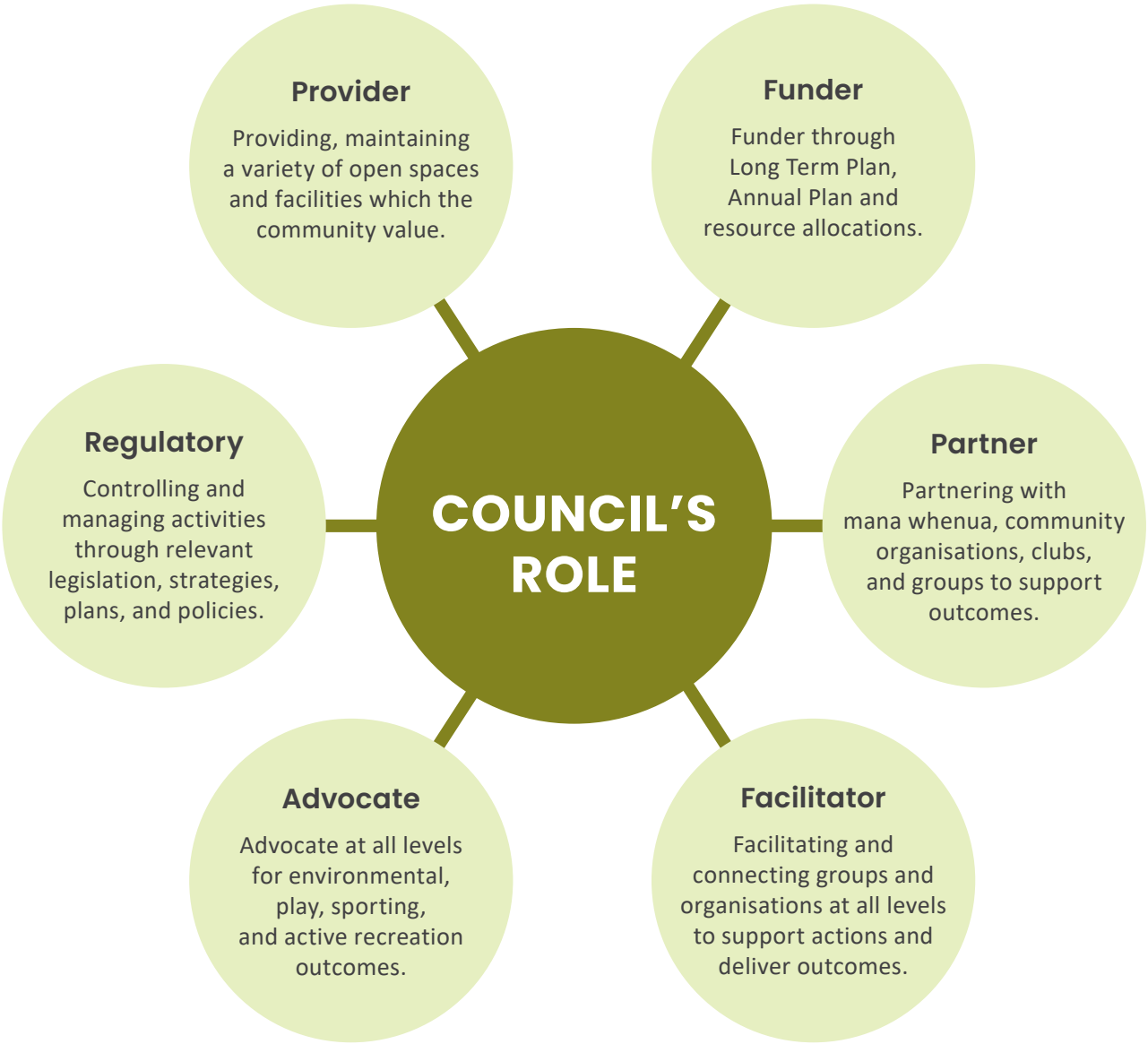
9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

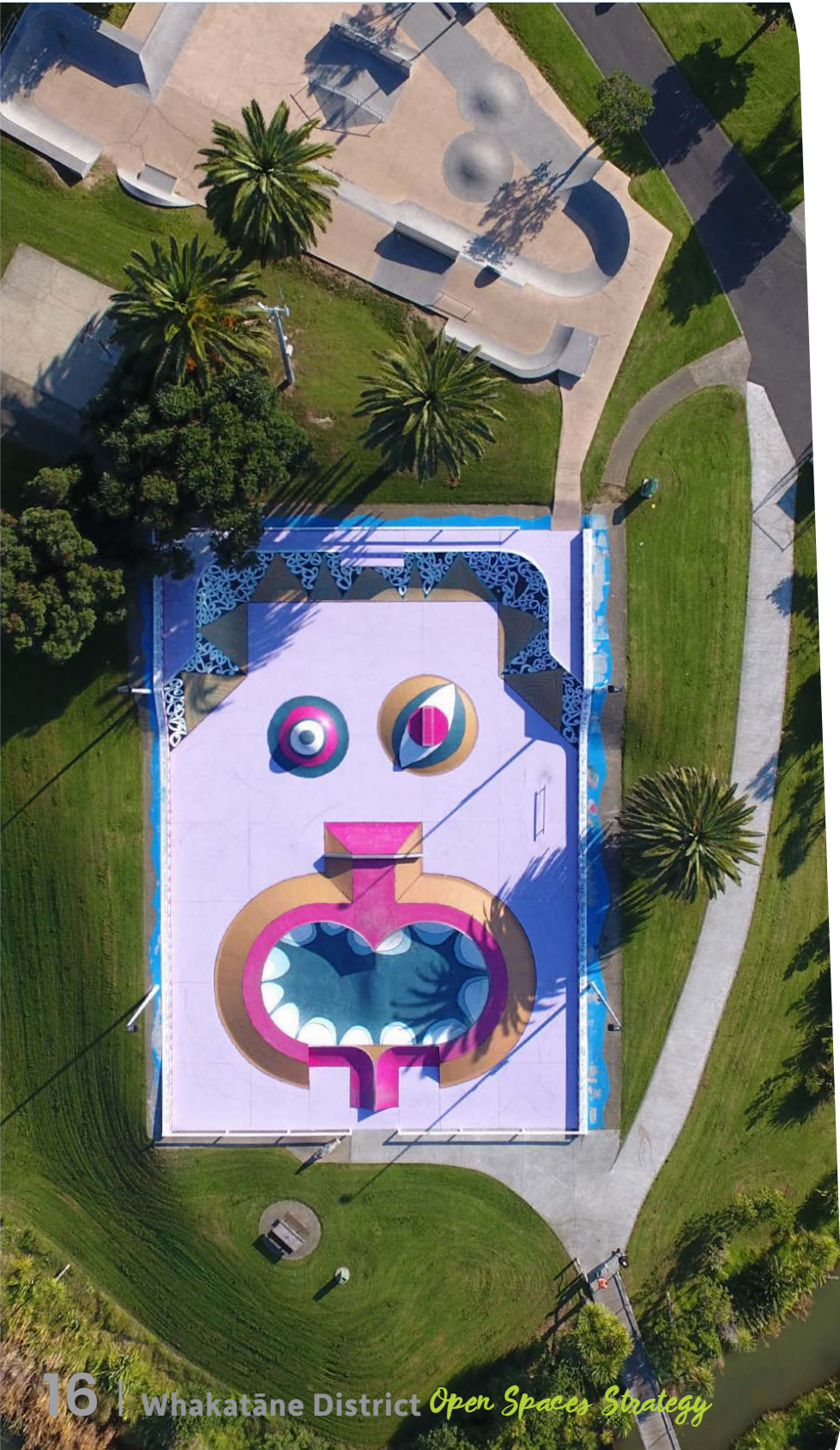


Council’s role in Open Spaces

Te mahi a te Kaunihera i ngā tarawaha

Council’s aim is to support the wellbeing of both the environment and communities, while delivering services that are financially responsible. Open spaces play a key role in achieving this, making their management an important responsibility for Council. Six key roles that Council should play have been identified in supporting open space outcomes now and over the life of this strategy.





Long Term Plan 2024–34

Te Mahere Pae Tawhiti 2024–34

The Council’s Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 (LTP) sets out the Council’s strategic direction including the vision of ‘More life in life’. The Community Outcomes and the Strategic Priorities (below) together with the Strategy Principles, underpin the LTP and drive the priorities and projects the Council is proposing over the next 10 years.

The LTP to 2034 notes the following in relation to Parks and Reserves and Community Facilities:

Parks and reserves

Activities in this group

▲ Parks, Reserves and Gardens

▶ Cemeteries

LEVELS OF SERVICE KEY	
▲	Increase
▶	Maintain

The level of service for Parks, Reserves and Gardens will increase.
The level of service for Cemeteries will be maintained.

What we do and how we do it

This group of activities provides and maintains spaces and facilities for community use, recreation, and amenities. Additionally, it manages the planning, operation, and upkeep of five Council-owned cemeteries and one crematorium. Through these efforts, we aim to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing for both residents and visitors.

Key projects

- Awatapu Lagoon Wetland construction
- Cemetery expansion and site development for a new cemetery
- Accessible play spaces

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Contribution to community outcomes



Strong, connected, interdependent, diverse communities



Integrating nature into our decision making



Constructively and collaboratively engaging with iwi, hapū and whānau

Significant negative effects

There are no significant negative effects associated with the activities in this activity group.

Challenges

- Ensuring communities are safe when using parks and reserves is a key challenge for Council, addressed by effective public messaging and community partnerships.
- Vandalism is an ongoing challenge that impacts on Social and environmental wellbeing. Council tries to address this problem with education and outreach where possible, and enforcement/penalties where necessary.
- The availability of land for a new cemetery in the district is an ongoing challenge and Council continues to consider all possibilities for an effective solution.

Alignment with strategic priorities



Enhancing the safety, wellbeing, and vibrancy of communities – *Me mātua whakanui i te marutau, te oranga, me te wana o ngā hapori*

- Invest wisely in recreation, events, and the arts to have a broader range of ‘things to do’ (especially for our youth).



Shaping a green District – *Kia toitū te rohe*

- Ensure Council’s decision-making and operations reflect our environmental priorities.



Strengthening relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau – *Me mātua whakawhanake i ngā kōtuituinga ā-iwi, ā-hapū, ā-whānau anō hoki*

- Work with iwi, hapū and whānau, to improve equity and wellbeing outcomes.

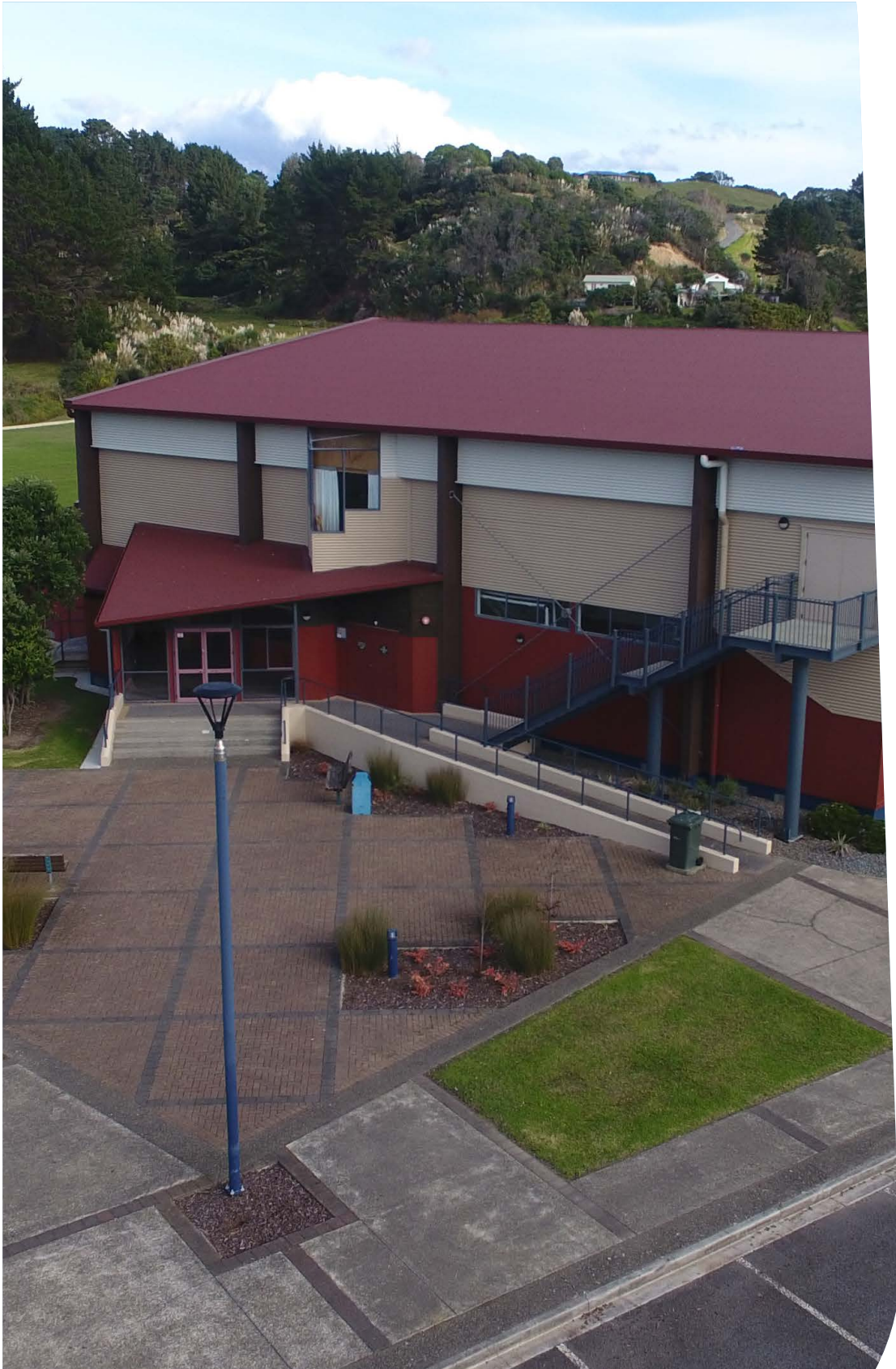
Key performance indicator

For this group, we have set the following performance measures and targets. We will report on these measures in our annual reports each year to show you how we are performing against the levels of service we have said you can expect from us.

Level of Service (What you can expect from us)	Performance Measures	Results for 2022/23	TARGET - Year 1 (2024/2025)	TARGET - Year 2 (2025/2026)	TARGET - Year 3 (2026/2027)	TARGET - Year 4+ (2027-34)
We provide a variety of quality recreational and community facilities that meet community needs.	User satisfaction with cemeteries and crematorium facilities.	New measure*	77%	77%	77%	77%
	User satisfaction with recreation facilities in the Whakatāne District (sports fields, park and reserves, playgrounds).	New measure*	77%	77%	77%	77%

*This is a new measure for the Long-Term Plan 2024-34. Therefore, we do not have results from previous years to compare our targets to.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)



Community Facilities

Activities in this group

- Halls
- Public Conveniences

LEVELS OF SERVICE KEY	
▲	Increase
▶	Maintain

The level of service for Halls will increase.
The level of service for Public Conveniences will be maintained.

What we do and how we do it*

This group of activities provides the community with access to great venues and ensures public conveniences are always available and well maintained.

* Although facilities are not in the strategy scope, it is important to note the inter-connectedness of spaces and facilities as one experience across the district.

Key projects

- Renewal work for our rural and urban halls.
- Rex Morpeth Park and War Memorial Hall redevelopment
- Public conveniences upgrade programme

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Who will be using our open spaces in the future

Mā wai ngā tarawaha e whai take

The Long-Term Plan 2024–2034 assumes that Whakatāne District’s population will grow to around 42,400 people by 2034, and that the median age will continue to rise. This Strategy is based on those assumptions.

Like other parts of New Zealand, Whakatāne District has seen faster-than-expected population growth. However, this growth varies across the district—some areas are growing, others are stable, and some are declining.

The proportion of older people in the district is expected to keep increasing, while younger age groups are expected to decline. By 2043, people aged 65 and over are expected to make up 30% of the population. This ageing population will affect demand for Council services, housing, healthcare, and aged care. It will also influence how open spaces are used, highlighting the need for accessible green corridors that support daily life and promote sustainability.

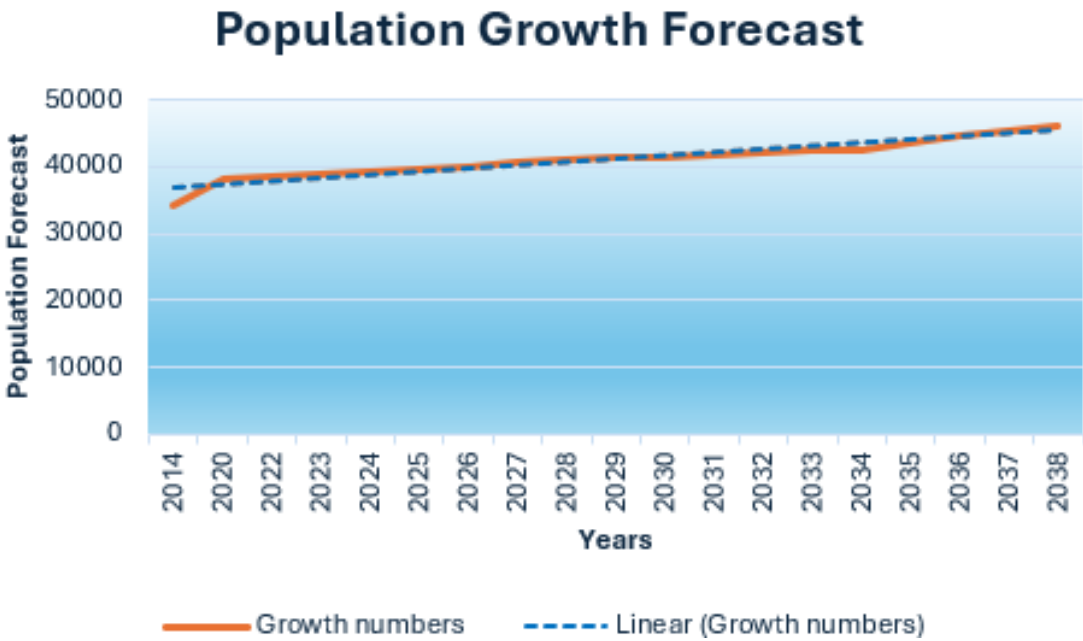
In contrast, the median age of Māori in the district is much younger i.e. 26.3 years compared to 39.8 years for the overall population. Nearly half of the Māori population is aged 14 and under, which creates demand for more housing and open spaces that support recreation and community connection. Ensuring access to quality open spaces in these areas is essential.

Work on the Whakatāne District Local Growth Strategy (in progress at the time of writing this strategy) has identified areas with higher concentrations of either older or younger people. These insights will help Council plan open spaces that meet local needs, for example, green corridors for older residents, or playgrounds and basketball courts for younger people in the appropriate locations.



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Figure 8: Whakatāne District population – forecasting assumption



Growth and demand planning allows for the identification and quantification of areas within the district that are likely to experience significant pressures. To assist in the development of this section a number of sources have provided important information around growth and demand drivers, which are considered key for the district’s progression.*

Growth vs. demand *Whakatipuranga ki te tonotono*

Although Growth and Demand are considered together in the District Reserves Management Plan (DRMP) and this draft strategy, it is worth noting that they do have different implications regarding the ongoing function/delivery of those spaces.

Growth in relation to recreational activity, mainly refers to the growth in population, or areas that are growing due to new residential developments. These changes create a demand for new spaces, cemeteries, playgrounds and camping grounds etc. and it will be possible to determine where in the district these changes may occur.

Demand for facilities/services can be influenced by change in attitudes or in trends (e.g. more people want to ride their e-bike along green corridors, play ultimate-frisbee or do tai chi), seasonal fluctuations, changes in demographics etc. or moves towards using open spaces for environmental sustainability purposes and responses to climate change impacts.

Outcomes of the Regional Spatial Plan and the Local Growth Strategy will inform both growth and demand functions and therefore future provision.

* Source : for 2022 and 23: Subnational population estimates (TA, SA2), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996-2023 (2023 boundaries) (stats.govt.nz)

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Key focus: Mahi tahi – working together
Arotahinga matua: Te mahi tahi

Community Plans
Ngā Mahere Hapori

Planning over a long timeframe is best considered in the context of local knowledge, local aspirations and local sweat. Whilst an agency such as the Council can provide support, oversight and professional expertise, it is the local community that know best what is required, where and often how. Council’s role becomes one of facilitator and that of ensuring equity across the district – equity of access and equity of quality experiences. Locally developed Community Plans such as those in Awatapu, Matatā and Edgecumbe should be used as a touchstone of future open space development. To a large extent, this is already recognised in the Council’s District Reserve Management Plan which states:

‘To a large degree the direction for the future development of open space is based on the views expressed by the general public’.

A Community Plan, a mechanism that Council endorse and facilitate, is a way to capture and prioritise the aspirations of area-based communities and provides a pathway forward to achieve those goals for open spaces. These plans are curated by the community, for the community through collective action, engagement and planning. Although each plan relies on a group of committed members to volunteer their time to keep the momentum going, community plans are a way of mobilising the sense of autonomy and ownership for a community to get things done for themselves, creating resilience. The process is designed to ensure that whatever planning process the community takes, it’s a successful one.

Community Plans are an avenue for Council to partner with communities and help assist in supporting them towards achieving their goals. As part of this Strategy, Council commits to working with Community Plans and the process in ensuring open spaces are relevant to communities and are fit-for-purpose for those communities.

Key focus: Sustainability

Arotahinga matua: Toitūtanga

Climate Change and Open Spaces

Te Huringa Āhuarangi me ngā tarawaha

In 2024, Council adopted the Whakatāne District Climate Change Pathway – a strategy to help understand, reduce, and adapt to the effects of climate change.

Climate change is about more than just weather. It affects many of the things we value in this district – like swimming in rivers, protecting cultural and historic sites, enjoying the bush, fishing, growing food, and even the safety of our homes. It influences our way of life, our economy, our health, and our environment – and it will have a direct impact on how we plan and manage open spaces.

What we know for sure is that the climate of the future will be very different from what we experience today.



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Climate Change Pathway Principles | Ngā Kaupapa Take Āhuarangi



Act with urgency
Ka mahi nonoi



Listen, learn and adapt
Ka whakarongo, ka ako, ka urutau



Acknowledge, care for, and support those most affected
Ka taunaki i a rātou kua pā mārika i ngā take huringa āhuarangi



Be part of the solution
Ka āwhina i te whakautu



Care for and protect the environment
Ka manaaki, ka tiaki i te taiao



Build resilience to a changing climate
Ka whakakaha i te aumangea ki te huringa o te āhuarangi



Think and act long term
Ka whakaaro pae tawhiti, ka mahi pae tawhiti

The adopted Whakatāne District Tree Strategy* clearly highlights the vital role that open spaces and trees play in our response to climate change. As the strategy notes, future climate conditions are expected to bring more extreme temperatures and weather events, placing greater stress on both existing trees and new plantings. To ensure long-term resilience, it is essential that climate impacts are factored into decisions about where and how we plant. Well-planned tree planting can help offset many of the negative effects of climate change—by cooling urban areas, absorbing excess stormwater, supporting biodiversity, and capturing carbon. In this way, the district’s open spaces and the trees within them are not just environmental assets—they are critical infrastructure for a more climate-resilient district.

* Whakatāne District Tree Strategy Ngā Taonga a Tāne. Whakatāne DC. 2024



9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Key Projects: A 10-year plan *Ngā Waitara matua: Mahere ia tekau tau*

The key projects and priority actions outlined below represent targeted, high-impact investments that go beyond Council’s day-to-day management of open spaces. While many operational activities continue to support and maintain the district’s parks, reserves, and recreation areas, these projects are strategic in nature — directly aligned with the objectives of this strategy and Council’s Long Term Plan 2024-34. They are designed to unlock long-term value, address identified community needs, and enhance the quality, accessibility, and resilience of Council’s open space network.

Key projects (KP) – 10 years	Long Term Plan activity area
Awatapu Lagoon Wetland (KP) Restoring the lagoon to support water quality and biodiversity through new wetland features.	Parks and Reserves
New Cemetery – Site Development (KP) Developing a new cemetery to meet future community needs.	Parks and Reserves
Accessible Play Spaces – Across The District Improving and creating play spaces that are inclusive and accessible for all children.	Parks and Reserves
Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub Redevelopment (KP) Enhancing and upgrading facilities to improve sports, culture and recreational offerings.	Community Facilities
Eve Rimmer Carpark (PA) Improving carpark layout and access at this key sports facility.	Parks and Reserves
Murupara Parks Improvements (PA) Upgrading parks in Murupara to better serve local needs.	Parks and Reserves
Maraetōtara Improvements (PA) Enhancing park facilities to support greater access and use.	Parks and Reserves
Southern Regeneration – Murupara (PA) Revitalising open spaces as part of wider community regeneration.	Parks and Reserves
Southern Regeneration – Minginui (PA) Improving local open spaces to support wellbeing and connection.	Parks and Reserves
Wairaka Park Upgrade (PA) Upgrading this well-used park to improve access, play, and community use.	Parks and Reserves
Tāneatua Cemetery Expansion (PA) Expanding the cemetery to ensure future capacity.	Parks and Reserves

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Turning strategy into action

Ka huri tēnei rautaki hei mahi

This Strategy sets a bold and future-focused vision for Whakatāne District’s open space network. To make this vision real and measurable, Council must now translate it into a targeted, deliverable programme of projects, partnerships, and actions.

This section sets out how the Strategy will be implemented, monitored, and adapted over time. It includes a clear planning and prioritisation framework, defines the three delivery phases over the next decade, and outlines how Council will track progress to ensure open spaces continue to meet the needs of our people, environment, and place.

From strategic priorities to project pipeline

Ka huri tēnei rautaki hei mahi

Council will use the vision, principles, and strategic priorities in this Strategy to develop a consistent and structured project pipeline. This will allow for clear alignment between community outcomes and the way open spaces are delivered and managed.

What this will involve

Ngā mahi e whai ake nei

Audit and baseline review (2026–2027)
Council will complete a full district-wide review of all open space assets. This will assess the condition, function, classification, and accessibility of each site, building a comprehensive picture of current supply and performance.

- Strategic alignment review**
Each project and investment will be assessed against the Strategy’s core principles, focusing on:
- Environmental resilience and biodiversity
 - Social inclusion and accessibility
 - Cultural connection and place-based identity
 - Climate responsiveness and low-carbon design
 - Dual-purpose functionality (e.g. flood protection and recreation)

Understanding community need
By integrating spatial population and demographic data (e.g. age, deprivation, household makeup), Council will identify where new, or improved open space provision is needed most. Particular attention will be given to future growth areas, intense population distribution, and ageing communities.

Spatial analysis to support decisions
Spatial tools will provide an evidence base to guide investment and delivery. These tools include:

Tool	Purpose
Provision mapping	Identify areas that lack sufficient access to open space, based on a 500m or 10-minute walk threshold.
Equity heatmaps	Combine demographic and socio-economic data to identify areas of low service or historical underinvestment.
Demand forecasting	Use growth and trend data to anticipate future needs across the district.
Environmental overlays	Map sensitive areas or opportunities for nature-based infrastructure and dual-purpose spaces.
Usage data	Capture actual use through digital tools, community surveys, and observational studies to ensure planning reflects lived experience.

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Prioritisation framework

An investment and prioritisation framework will be applied to guide the Long Term Plan, Annual Plan, and supporting Asset Management Plans. Each open space project will be ranked according to:

- Strategic fit
- Community impact
- Climate and environmental value
- Deliverability and readiness
- Co-investment or partnership potential

This framework will create a live and adaptable project pipeline that ensures Council is always delivering where the need, opportunity and alignment is strongest.

Implementation phases

Ngā whakahaerenga o tēnei mahi

To manage delivery over the 10-year horizon, Council will adopt a phased approach aligned to long-term planning and monitoring cycles.

PHASE ONE: Foundations (2025–2027)

WĀHANGA TUATAHI: Ngā Tūāpapa

Goal: Establish the foundation for strategic delivery, monitoring, and spatial planning.

Focus areas:

- Develop the Open Spaces Provision and Action Plan by 2026
- Complete district-wide spatial mapping and baseline assessment
- Embed open space provision targets in the District Plan and Reserve Management Plans
- Strengthen relationships with mana whenua through co-design

- Initiate targeted pilot projects for nature-based design, food sovereignty, or accessibility improvements.

Key deliverables:

- Action Plan adopted
- Embed open space criteria in Activity Management Plans
- Provision maps publicly available
- Advance Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub project in alignment with Long Term Plan
- Support Sport Bay of Plenty-aligned sub-regional facility upgrades e.g. lighting, to support active recreation
- Pilots launched in at least three locations

PHASE TWO: Expansion and activation (2027–2031)

WĀHANGA TUARUA: Whakawhānui me te whakamahi

Goal: Scale up investment and respond to demand in growth and equity-priority areas.

Focus areas:

- Deliver open space improvements in high-growth and underserved communities
- Expand play infrastructure, green corridors, and shade planting
- Upgrade underused sites to better reflect local needs (e.g. informal play, exercise, cultural connection)
- Embed dual-purpose functions into open space redevelopment
- Formalise collaborative delivery models with sports groups, schools, and trusts
- Align funding applications to Sport BOP’s hierarchy framework to secure external contributions

Key deliverables:

- 70% of key projects from the Long Term Plan delivered or under construction
- Demonstrated increase in equitable open space access
- Deliver dual-purpose infrastructure (e.g. stormwater and play)
- Unlock matched-funding opportunities with Sport BOP and central government for recreation investment

PHASE THREE: Optimisation and innovation (2031–2035)

WĀHANGA TUATORU: Āhuatanga me te auahatanga

Goal: Refine the network, remove duplication or inefficiencies, and embed innovation into design and delivery.

Focus areas:

- Reassess provision standards in light of use trends, population shifts, and climate pressures
- Evaluate LTP and Sport BOP outcomes to repurpose or divest surplus facilities based on regional value, where they no longer serve a clear community or environmental function
- Scale up digital tools to track use, temperature, and ecological performance
- Pilot new models for community stewardship (e.g. community leases or guardianship agreements)
- Apply regenerative design and blue-green infrastructure at a district-wide scale

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

Key deliverables:

- 60% of open space network meets provision and quality targets and 90% within 30-years
- Smart infrastructure e.g. sensor lighting, in use in at least 30% of open spaces
- Strategy formally reviewed and updated for next planning cycle

Supporting key focus areas:

working together and sustainability

E taunaki ana i ngā take matua:

mahi tahi me te toitūtanga

This implementation framework is designed not just to deliver physical outputs but to fully embody the Strategy’s two key focus areas: **mahi tahi (working together)** and **toitūtanga (sustainability)**.

Mahi tahi | Working together

Successful delivery of this Strategy will rely on genuine, place-based relationships that reflect shared ownership, trust, and co-design. Council will:

- **Work with mana whenua** early in project development, including through cultural landscape planning, shared decision-making, and co-design opportunities
- **Support community-led planning and delivery**, especially through endorsed Community Plans, encouraging local input into design, use, and maintenance
- **Convene cross-sector partners** — including schools, NGOs, health providers, and sports organisations — to leverage funding, share resources, and create multifunctional spaces that serve a wider purpose

- **Enable volunteer and community stewardship**, by creating clearer pathways for locals to contribute to the care and enhancement of open spaces.

By embedding these approaches across all stages — from strategy to design, to delivery — Council will ensure open spaces reflect the values, stories, and aspirations of the people who use and care for them.

Toitūtanga | Sustainability

Toitūtanga is embedded throughout this implementation approach — from how we plan, to what we prioritise, to how we deliver. Council will:

- **Prioritise nature-based and climate-resilient designs** in all new projects, including urban greening, canopy enhancement, and water-sensitive infrastructure
- **Apply a carbon lens** to decision-making, favouring low-carbon materials, low-maintenance landscapes, and designs that support active transport
- **Enable biodiversity and ecological recovery** by repurposing underutilised land for habitat restoration, native planting, and green corridors
- **Incentivise dual-purpose infrastructure**, such as stormwater parks, food forests, or renewable energy integrated into open space networks

Every project will be assessed not just for its function or form, but for its contribution to a more resilient, climate-conscious, and intergenerationally valuable open space system.

Monitoring and adaptive management

Aroturuki me te whakahaere urutau

Delivering this Strategy is not a one-off task, but an ongoing commitment to learning, adjusting, and improving. To support this, Council will track progress annually and review the Strategy every three years.

Performance will be monitored using the following indicators:

- **Quantity:** amount and distribution of open space per resident
- **Quality:** community satisfaction, maintenance levels, and amenity value
- **Accessibility and equity:** proximity and inclusiveness of spaces for all communities
- **Use and functionality:** actual use across different groups and activities
- **Climate and environmental resilience:** tree canopy, stormwater management, biodiversity indicators

An *implementation dashboard* will be maintained and shared with elected members, partners, and the community to track tangible progress.

After each formal review (every three years), Council will update the project pipeline, adjust priorities, and reallocate funding where necessary to respond to:

- Emerging needs
- New development
- Climate or environmental events
- Partnership opportunities

9.3.1 Appendix A - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035(Cont.)

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9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents

**9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 -
Supporting Documents**

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



DRAFT

Appendix B

Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025–35
Te Rautaki Tarawaha o Whakatāne 2025–35

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT NGĀ TUHINGA ĀPITI

whakatane.govt.nz



MĀ KOUTOU, MĀ TĀTAU
Our People, Our Spaces



WHAKATĀNE
District Council
Kia Whakatāne au i ahau

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Contents
Rārangi upoko

Open Space Network Partners4

Long Term Plan 2024-20347

Types of Open Space Managed by Council.....10

Reserves Categories Standards 13

Open Space Maps.....18

 Whakatāne19–21

 Ōhope.....22–24

 Coastlands25–27

 Matatā..... 28–30

 Edgecumbe31–33

 Murupara 34–36

 Galatea37

 Te Mahoe.....38–40

 Tāneatua.....41–43

 Te Teko44–46

 Awakeri.....47–49

 Waimana 50–52

Open Space Accessibility Analysis and Commentary53

Future Planning to inform the Open Spaces Strategy 54

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Open Space Network Partners

Ngā Kōtuinga Tarawaha

The spaces that contribute to the district’s rich environment extend well beyond the open spaces that Whakatāne District Council manage. Council acknowledges all who contribute to the richness of the districts open space network.

Mana Whenua

Understanding and honouring the deep connection of tangata whenua to the land will be vital in achieving the vision for the open space network. By embracing the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and cultivating meaningful partnerships with mana whenua, Whakatāne district can celebrate and preserve its rich historical heritage and establish inclusive spaces that align with the values and aspirations of its diverse communities.

Marae play a crucial role for Māori. Marae function as both physical and spiritual anchors for Māori identity, nurturing social, economic, and cultural wellbeing. These sites epitomise Māoritanga, and by their very nature, bridge the gap between the past and the present, acting as both a refuge and a place for the fullest expressions for tangata whenua.

Across the district, marae bring whanau together and provide many of the same benefits as well as additional benefits that open space does. Whakatāne District Council acknowledges the crucial roles that marae play in greatly enhancing community wellbeing.

Beyond Whakatāne, Edgecumbe, and Murupara townships, many rural and remote communities revolve around Māori traditions, centred around whānau, their hapū, and their marae. Whakatāne District Council works with seven iwi and the over 80 hapū that whakapapa to these iwi across the district:

- Ngāti Awa
- Ngāti Mākino
- Ngāti Manawa
- Ngāti Rangitihi
- Ngāi Tūhoe
- Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau
- Ngāti Whare
- Whakatōhea

Mana whenua also have ownership or stewardship over other land that offer open space experiences through partnership. The knowledge and mahi of Māori Land Trusts across the district contribute significantly to the overall network.

The **Department of Conservation** administers some of the district’s most valued and ancient open spaces, including Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne.

The **Bay of Plenty Regional Council** have programmes and people who work with landowners and community groups to restore whenua and wai and improve biodiversity.

Schools, kura and education providers contribute to the open space network through the local provision of open spaces, sport fields, and playgrounds. This is particularly important in the smaller and more rural settlements.

QEI National Trust works with landowners to preserve and enhance areas of significant natural vegetation or scenic beauty.

There are valued open spaces for active recreation on private land managed by **community groups. The Onepū Mountain Bike Park is an example of this approach. The Whakatāne Mountain Bike Club manages the trails within a privately owned commercial forest. This collaboration provides open space through partnership between public and private interests.**

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Community groups are also often important to achieve environmental objectives on land of all kinds of ownership.

Other groups such as Halo, and Forest and Bird contribute knowledge and resource to the district’s open spaces.

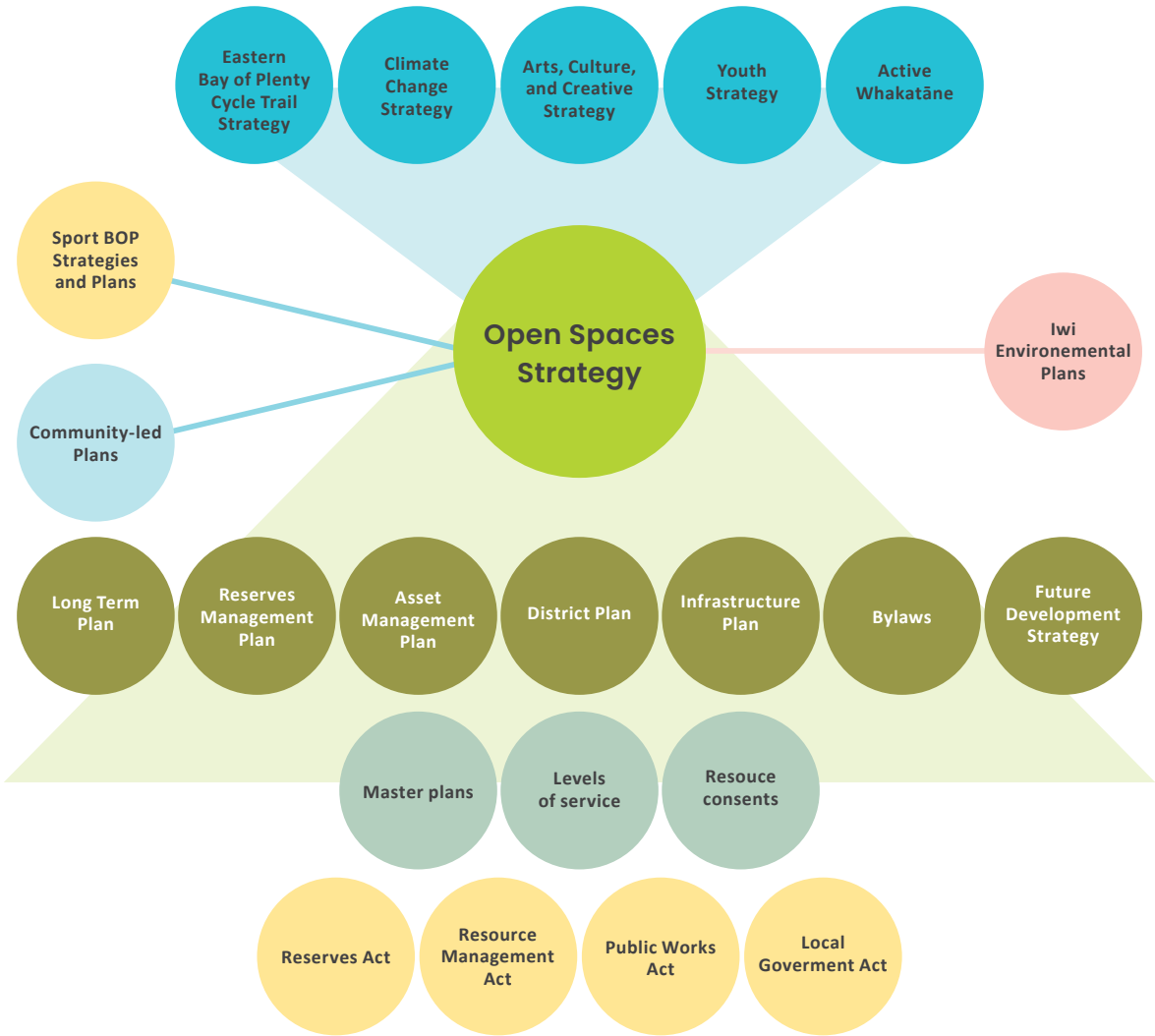
Many **private landowners** across the district are fundamental to protecting and enhancing the environment through riparian planting or protecting trees and natural environments on their property. Some work formally with organisations like the QEII National Trust, while some allow public access to open spaces on their land that connect the community to the whenua.

Finally, there are agencies and groups that contribute or advise on the district’s open spaces in many ways. These include Sport Bay of Plenty and Sport NZ, and Kawerau and Opotiki District councils - the Eastern Bay of Plenty local government partners.

Council’s Strategic Context

Te Horopaki Rautaki

This draft Open Space Strategy is informed by and informs a variety of strategies, plans, pieces of legislation, and other Council and community documents. The following diagram shows these relationships (as at March 2025).



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



Long Term Plan 2024–2034

Te Mahere Pae Tawhiti 2024–34

Council’s Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 (LTP) sets out Council’s strategic direction including the vision of ‘More life in life’. The Community Outcomes and the Strategic Priorities (below) together with the Strategy Principles, underpin the LTP and drive the priorities and projects Council is proposing over the next 10 years.

The LTP to 2034 notes the following in relation to Parks and Reserves and Community Facilities:

Parks and reserves

Activities in this group

- ▲ Parks, Reserves and Gardens
- ▶ Cemeteries

LEVELS OF SERVICE KEY	
▲	Increase
▶	Maintain

The level of service for Parks, Reserves and Gardens will increase.
The level of service for Cemeteries will be maintained.

What we do and how we do it

This group of activities provides and maintains spaces and facilities for community use, recreation, and amenities. Additionally, it manages the planning, operation, and upkeep of five Council-owned cemeteries and one crematorium. Through these efforts, we aim to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing for both residents and visitors.

Key projects

- Awatapu Lagoon Wetland construction
- Cemetery expansion and site development for a new cemetery
- Accessible play spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Contribution to
community outcomes



**Strong, connected,
interdependent,
diverse communities**



**Integrating
nature into our
decision making**



**Constructively and
collaboratively
engaging with iwi,
hapū and whānau**

Significant negative effects

There are no significant negative effects associated with the activities in this activity group.

Challenges

- Ensuring communities are safe when using parks and reserves is a key challenge for Council, addressed by effective public messaging and community partnerships.
- Vandalism is an ongoing challenge that impacts on Social and environmental wellbeing. Council tries to address this problem with education and outreach where possible, and enforcement/penalties where necessary.
- The availability of land for a new cemetery in the district is an ongoing challenge and Council continues to consider all possibilities for an effective solution.

Alignment with strategic priorities



Enhancing the safety, wellbeing, and vibrancy of communities – *Me mātua whakanui i te marutau, te oranga, me te wana o ngā hapori*

- Invest wisely in recreation, events, and the arts to have a broader range of ‘things to do’ (especially for our youth).



Shaping a green District – *Kia toitū te rohe*

- Ensure Council’s decision-making and operations reflect our environmental priorities.



Strengthening relationships with iwi, hapū and whānau – *Me mātua whakawhanake i ngā kōtuituinga ā-iwi, ā-hapū, ā-whānau anō hoki*

- Work with iwi, hapū and whānau, to improve equity and wellbeing outcomes.

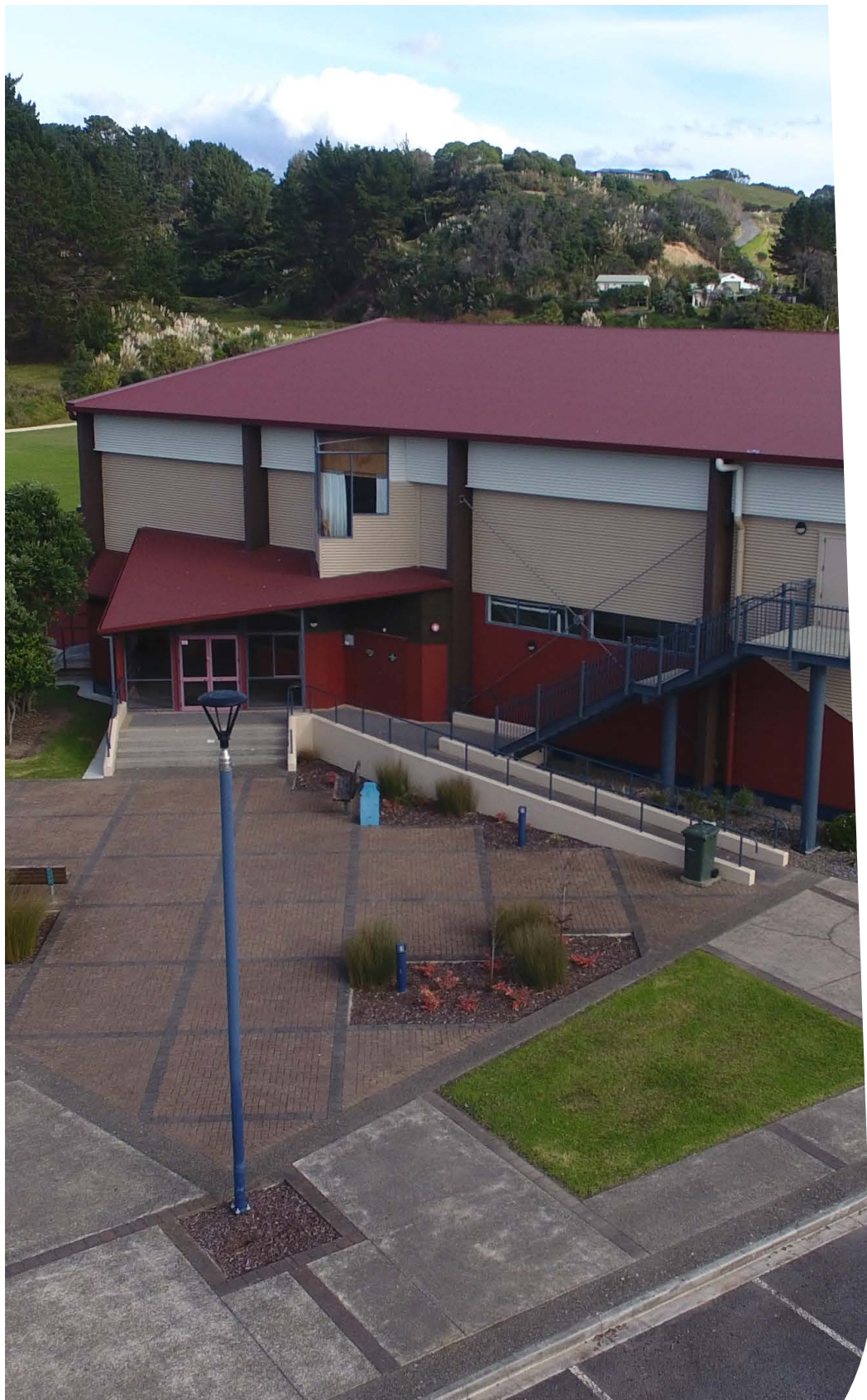
Key performance indicator

For this group, we have set the following performance measures and targets. We will report on these measures in our annual reports each year to show you how we are performing against the levels of service we have said you can expect from us.

Level of Service (What you can expect from us)	Performance Measures	Results for 2022/23	TARGET - Year 1 (2024/2025)	TARGET - Year 2 (2025/2026)	TARGET - Year 3 (2026/2027)	TARGET - Year 4+ (2027-34)
We provide a variety of quality recreational and community facilities that meet community needs.	User satisfaction with cemeteries and crematorium facilities.	New measure*	77%	77%	77%	77%
	User satisfaction with recreation facilities in the Whakatāne District (sports fields, park and reserves, playgrounds).	New measure*	77%	77%	77%	77%

*This is a new measure for the Long-Term Plan 2024-34. Therefore, we do not have results from previous years to compare our targets to.

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



Community Facilities

Activities in this group

- Halls
- Public Conveniences

LEVELS OF SERVICE KEY	
▲	Increase
▶	Maintain

The level of service for Halls will increase.
The level of service for Public Conveniences will be maintained.

What we do and how we do it*

This group of activities provides the community with access to great venues and ensures public conveniences are always available and well maintained.

* Although facilities are not in the strategy scope, it is important to note the inter-connectedness of spaces and facilities as one experience across the district.

Key projects

- Renewal work for our rural and urban halls.
- Rex Morpeth Park and War Memorial Hall redevelopment
- Public conveniences upgrade programme

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Types of Open Space Managed by Council

Ngā momo tarawaha e whakahaerehia e te Kaunihera

Cemeteries and Crematorium

Council owns and administers six cemeteries. The crematorium is situated in Hillcrest Cemetery. The cemeteries are:

- Hillcrest – Whakatāne (including Crematorium)
- Taneatua
- Matatā (Awakaponga)
- Waimana
- Murupara / Galatea
- Domain Road - Whakatāne (closed)
- The Awakaponga Urupā (also known as the Matatā cemetery) is on Crown owned land and managed solely by the Awakaponga Cemetery Trustees. The Burial and Cremation Act 1964 requires Council to meet specific legal obligations.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are located on almost every reserve and include play equipment (swings, slides, etc.), surfacing, and in some areas, shade-sails.

Google Maps: goo.gl/439W3W

Sports and Recreational Facilities

These are large reserves almost exclusively used for organised sport which may contain sports fields, clubrooms and other improvements etc.

Reserves

Reserves are located across the district in urban Whakatāne, Edgecumbe, Murupara, Ōhope, Taneatua and various other rural areas. Many of these contain playground facilities (swings, slides etc.). Council has classified reserves to demonstrate their overall function. There are several classifications for reserves which are outlined below.*

Premier District reserves

Premier District Reserves are generally larger multiple-use spaces with a high amenity value and an emphasis on providing for the needs of the wider community. These reserves and open spaces provide for a range of informal recreational activities for all age groups. They may be located near or adjacent to other community facilities (e.g. libraries, halls, suburban or town centres). These generally provide easy pedestrian access, play equipment and seating, flat or gently undulating grass areas, adequate space for running and informal ball games, neighbourhood amenity, high value amenity planting, and access to open space and the natural environment.

Neighbourhood (Local and Amenity) Reserves

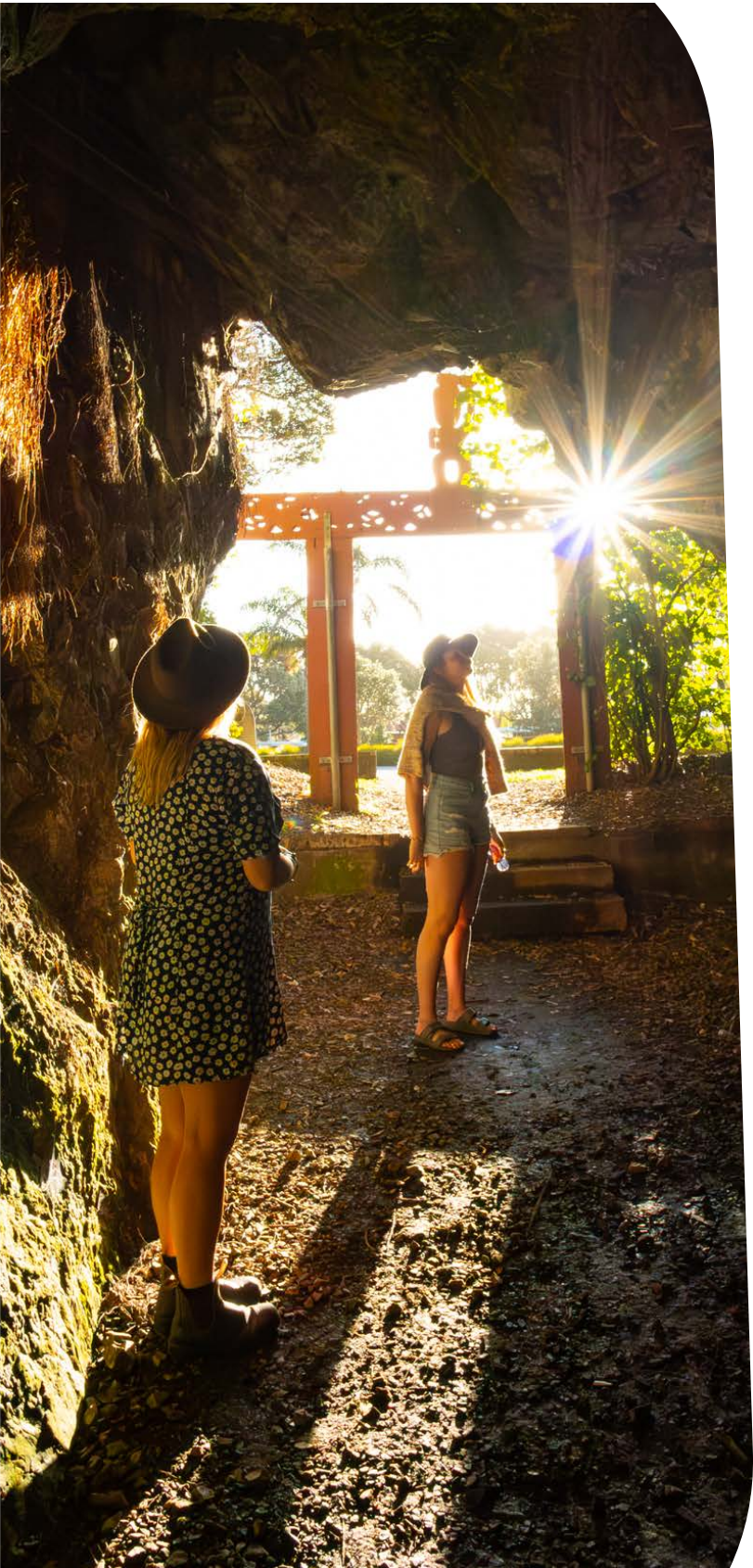
Neighbourhood (local and amenity) reserves are often located on a pedestrian/commuting route and typically bordered on several sides by houses. They may have open space that contributes to the character and amenity of the neighbourhood through provision of pockets of open space and/or sites for amenity trees and other vegetation. They may contain no built infrastructure but may provide neighbourhood amenity alongside a specific function (such as a playground, pedestrian and/or cycle access, or a dog exercise area). Council designs these open spaces primarily for the local residential community

District Sport and Recreation Reserves

District sport and recreation reserves are spaces with the primary purpose of providing for sport and recreation and activity, recreation facilities and buildings. These open spaces often have multiple uses and values with a focus on organised recreation and sports-field and/or court provision to meet the district’s needs.

* Recreation Aotearoa Reserves Categories 2017

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



Local Sport and Recreation Reserves

Local sport and recreation reserves are open spaces that allow for sport and recreation activity for the local community. This category allows for smaller scale and less infrastructure than the district sport and recreation reserve category. These open spaces are likely to be multiple use but generally consisting of one sports-field used by both organised sport and informal sport.

Cultural and Heritage Reserves

Cultural and heritage reserves are localities for protection of the built cultural, historical and archaeological environment to provide for commemoration, understanding, appreciation, and remembrance. These spaces often have multiple values for example – amenity and ecological value in addition to heritage or layers of historical fabric.

Significant sites:

- Kaokaoroa Street Redoubt Site
- War Memorial Shelter
- Fred Judd Crescent Reserve
- Mokorua Bush Scenic Reserve
- Commerce Street Escarpment
- Pohaturoa Bluff and Rock
- Ōtarawairere Road Lookout
- Muriwai Cave
- Pāpaka Lookout
- Kohi Point Scenic Reserve
- Paru Site
- Puketapu
- Wairere Waterfall

Natural Reserves

Natural reserves allow for the experience and/ or protection of the natural environment. Types of use/value include conservation, ecological restoration/enhancement, and access to the natural environment. Activities on this space usually include walking (cycling in some areas only), information/education/interpretation, ecosystem management, and landscape protection such as some reserve land in coastal areas.

Utility and Linkage Reserves

Utility and linkage reserves includes link strip land, access-ways, drainage or other service ways where the primary purpose is to support services other than recreation such as storm water retention or other in ground infrastructure. These reserves can also provide pedestrian and/ or cycling linkages and corridors between service areas, access along water-margins and areas set aside for protection of the natural environment.

Civic Amenity Open Spaces

Land adjacent to roadways/streets and other civic open space predominantly for pedestrian provision to retail and services in central business district areas. These are areas of high amenity value and usually incorporate amenity planting in and around the CBD streetscape, street furniture, sculptures/artwork etc.

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Reserves Categories Standards

Ngā Paerewa Tarawaha

The table below provides information on the category standards for each of the reserve and open space categories. Urban area is defined as a settlement which has a residential zone within the District Plan in that settlement. This includes Whakatāne, Ōhope, Edgecumbe, Matatā, Te Teko, Murupara, Tāneatua, Te Mahoe and Waimana.

Categories Standards*

Category	Function standards	Quality standards	Quality standards	Accessibility standards
Premier District Reserves	<p>Larger multiple-use spaces with a high amenity value and an emphasis on providing for the needs of the wider community. Also provide cultural, visitor and event functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Destination areas and playgrounds• High quality natural areas• High quality assets are provided and maintained	<p>Quality standards vary depending on the specific reserve, but generally high-quality areas, facilities and amenities are provided.</p> <p>There are no minimum size, configuration or topography requirements but these open spaces are often large (>5,000m²) with flat topography.</p> <p>Generally premier reserves include the following amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialised facilities• Toilets• High standards of landscaping and amenity• Cultural connections• Large events space• Public artworks• Walking and cycling connections• Wayfinding and entry signage• Interpretive signage• Seating• Rubbish bins	<p>No specific quantity standards or requirements.</p> <p>Council assesses the volume of Premier District Reserves on a case-by-case basis, depending on the specific open space area.</p> <p>Council may require new open space for Premier District Reserves as areas grow and needs change. Council will assess and managed these throughDistrict Plan changes, and in conjunction with the other three standards.</p>	<p>No specific accessibility standard regarding how far people should travel.</p> <p>However, spaces closer to the main population mean better utilissation, enhanced community experience,satisfaction and value for money on the investment.</p> <p>Most of current premier reserves driven by the natural environment and existing infrastructure in these locations.</p>

* Recreation Aotearoa Reserves Categories 2017

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Category	Function standards	Quality standards	Quality standards	Accessibility standards
Neighbourhood (Local and Amenity) Reserves	<p>Smaller low-profile spaces often located on a pedestrian/commuting route and typically bordered on several sides by houses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas for play (particularly young children)• Passive spaces• Green environment• Amenity	<p>Size ranging from 1,000m² to 5,000m² with an ideal size of 3,000m².</p> <p>Generally regular shape and flat topography.</p> <p>Located in residential areas and each open space is intended to serve a population of around 500 people. Require good visibility and access from adjacent roads and footpaths.</p> <p>Generally, neighbourhood reserves include the following amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playgrounds• Landscaping• Pathways• Seating• Rubbish bins <p>May also include community and rongoā gardens.</p>	<p>1.0ha per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>This provides standard provides a higher level of open space than national benchmark established by Yardstick in 2020 which is 0.62ha per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>If this standard is not met within an area, then Council will assess the type and quantity of other open spaces within the area and if appropriate include those open spaces in the quantity standards.</p>	<p>Generally located within 500m or 10-15-minute walk of 90% of residences in urban areas as defined in Section 2.</p> <p>Rural and rural residential – no requirement and assessed for the community on a case-by-case basis.</p>
District Sport and Recreation Reserves	<p>Open spaces with the primary purpose of providing for sport and recreation and activity, as well as recreation facilities and buildings. These reserves are intended to serve everyone who lives within the district and are destinations for sport and recreation where people will travel to access them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas for organised activity• Social and community use• Local events• Themed landscape	<p>Size requirements are specific to the sports/ recreation the open space is designed for.</p> <p>Generally larger areas with regular shape and flat topography.</p> <p>Generally, District Sport and Recreation Reserves include the following amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports fields• Clubrooms• Public toilets and changing rooms.• Cycle stands• Carparking• Playgrounds• Pathway connections• Hard courts• Other play opportunities such as skateparks.	<p>1.0ha per 1,000 residents</p> <p>Provision and development determined by a needs analysis (supply and demand) as outlined in the Sport NZ Guidance Document for Sports Field Development Dec 2019.</p> <p>As a comparison, Yardstick (2020) provides a national benchmark of 2.1ha per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>If this standard is not met within an area, then Council will assess the type and quantity of other open spaces within the area and if appropriate include those open spaces in the quantity standards.</p>	<p>No specific accessibility standard regarding how far people should travel.</p> <p>Ideally the closer the location to the main population the better.</p> <p>It is recognised most people will travel to sports by car or bike.</p> <p>Focus for accessibility should be on creating easy access (good vehicle accesses, good carparking, good footpath network) rather than distance travelled.</p>

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Category	Function standards	Quality standards	Quality standards	Accessibility standards
Local Sport and Recreation Reserves	<p>Spaces for sport and recreation activity for the local area. Smaller scale and less infrastructure than the District Sport and Recreation category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for organised activity • Social and community use • Local events • Themed landscape 	<p>Size requirements are specific to the particular sports/recreation the open space is designed for. Generally larger areas with regular shape and flat topography.</p> <p>Generally, Local Sport and Recreation Reserves include the following amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports fields • Clubrooms • Public toilets and changing rooms. • Cycle stands • Carparking • Playgrounds • Pathway connections • Hard courts • Other play opportunities such as skateparks. 	<p>2.0ha per 1,000 residents</p> <p>provision and development determined by a needs analysis (supply and demand) as outlined in the Sport NZ Guidance Document for Sports Field Development Dec 2019.</p> <p>As a comparison, Yardstick (2020) provides a national benchmark of 2.1ha per 1,000 residents.</p> <p>If this standard is not met within an area, then Council will assess the type and quantity of other open spaces within the area and if appropriate include those open spaces in the quantity standards.</p>	<p>No specific accessibility standard regarding how far people should travel, although it is recognised local sport reserves should be more accessible (less travel distance) than District Sport reserves.</p> <p>Ideally the closer the location to the main population the better.</p> <p>It is recognised people will travel by car, bike or walking.</p> <p>Focus for accessibility should be on creating easy access (good vehicle accesses, good carparking, good footpath network) rather than distance travelled.</p>
Cultural and Heritage Reserves	<p>Localities for protection of built cultural, historical, and archaeological environment to provide for commemoration, understanding, appreciation, and remembrance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive spaces • Green environment • Open space • Can have multiple values 	<p>Quality is case by case specific depending on the open space requirements and function.</p> <p>Development of cultural and heritage reserves and cemeteries will be appropriate to the proposed use of the site and level of expected visits.</p> <p>Restoration and enhancement work may be required.</p> <p>Generally, have larger mown grassed areas and well-maintained vegetation.</p> <p>Size, shape and topography are all dependant on the specific reserve with no set requirements.</p> <p>Indicative amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way finding signage • Interpretive signage • Rubbish bins • Seating • Pathways. • Art and education 	<p>No specific quantity standards or requirements.</p> <p>The purpose of these reserves tends to be because of protecting a particular site due to its special characteristics and hence are to be assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific open space area.</p> <p>Yardstick (2020) provides a national benchmark of 0.45ha per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>As these reserve locations are driven by the natural, environment, cultural and heritage features there are no specific accessibility standards.</p> <p>Focus on improving connectivity, access, and functionality.</p>

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Category	Function standards	Quality standards	Quality standards	Accessibility standards
Natural Reserves	<p>Areas for experience and/ or protection of the natural environment. Types of use/ value include conservation, ecological restoration/ enhancement, and access to the natural environment, walking/cycling, information/education/ interpretation, ecosystem management, low-impact recreation, and landscape protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Natural environmentPassive spacesGreen environmentAmenityOpen spaceAreas for walking	<p>No specific size, shape or topography requirements. Generally restored or remnant native vegetation.</p> <p>Indicative amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Way finding and naming signageNative vegetationMown grassWalking track.Art and education	<p>No specific quantity standards or requirements.</p> <p>These tend to be as a result of protecting a particular site and hence are to be assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific open space area.</p> <p>Yardstick (2020) provides a national benchmark of 6.7ha per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>As these reserve locations are driven by the natural environment there are no specific accessibility standards.</p> <p>Focus on improving connectivity and access etc.</p>
Utility and Linkage Reserves	<p>Land containing link strips, access ways, drainage, or other service ways where their primary purpose is to support services other than recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Areas for walkingPassive spacesGreen environmentAmenityOpen space	<p>No specific size, shape, or topography requirements.</p> <p>Indicative amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Way finding and naming signageHigh quality and durable furnitureLandscapingMown grassWalking track. <p>Yardstick (2020) provides a national median benchmark of 1088m of walking path and tracks per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>No specific quantity standards or requirements. These open spaces are typically acquired as part of infrastructure or to enable access.</p> <p>Yardstick (2020) provides a national benchmark of 2.92ha per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>As these reserve locations are driven by the natural environment and infrastructure there are no specific accessibility standards.</p>

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Category	Function standards	Quality standards	Quality standards	Accessibility standards
Civic Amenity Open Space	<p>Civic open space land adjacent to roadways/ streets and the linkages between; predominantly for pedestrian provision to civic buildings, retail and commercial services in central business district areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amenity• Passive spaces• Themed landscape• Cultural linkages	<p>No specific size, shape, or topography requirements.</p> <p>Generally high-quality amenity and maintenance to support the creation of vibrant central business district areas.</p> <p>Indicative amenities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard and soft surfaced urban space• Universal access design• Way finding and naming signage• Interpretive signage• High quality and durable furniture• Well maintained landscaping• Toilets• Rubbish bins• Public art• Multiple transport modes supported	<p>No specific quantity standards or requirements.</p> <p>Assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific open space area.</p>	<p>Specifically located around the central business district and urban/retail areas. No specific accessibility standards.</p>

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Open Space Maps

Ngā Mahere Tarawaha

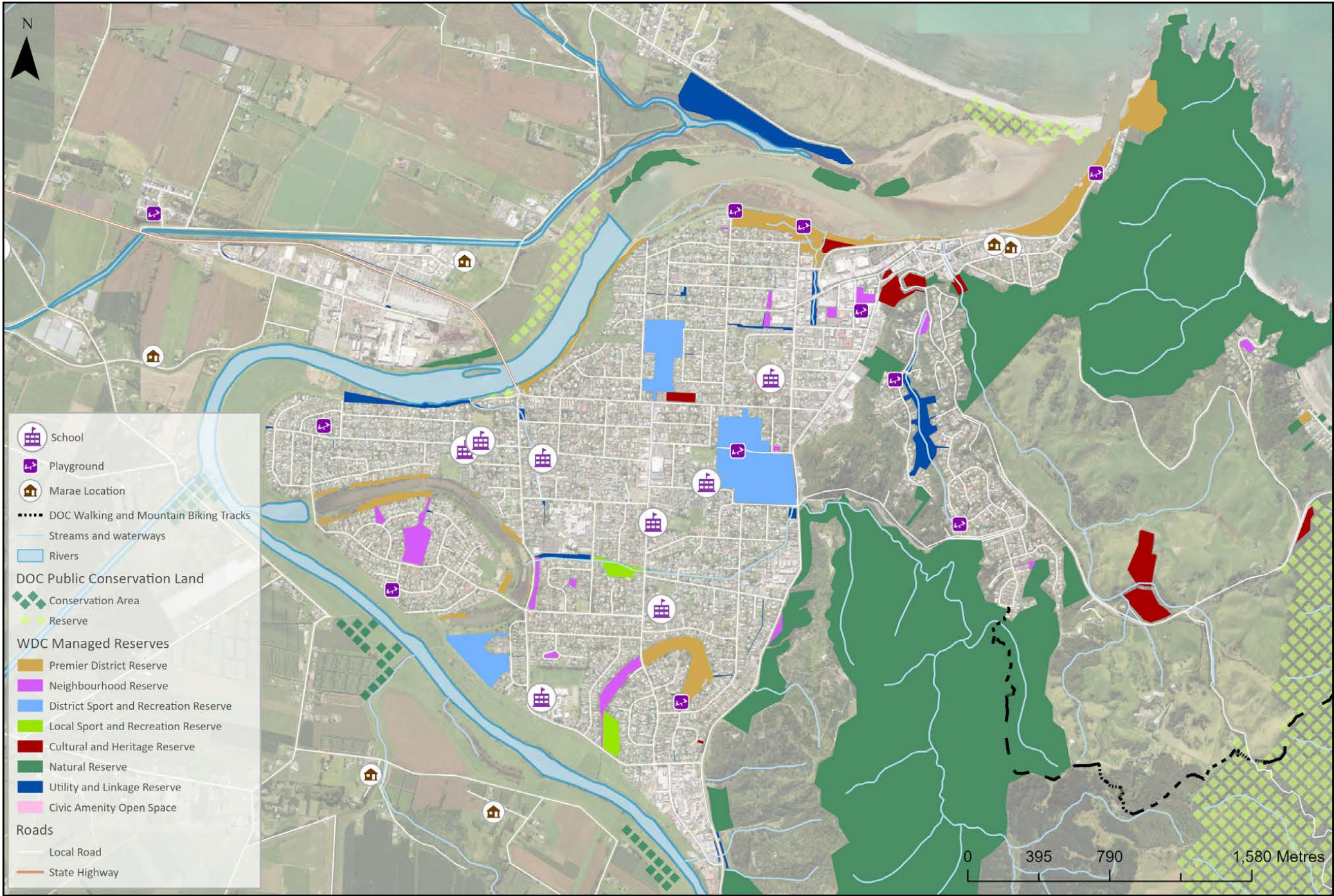
The maps that follow provide an overview of the open spaces and associated amenities provided by Council and partners across the district. Primarily though, the focus is on Council-managed spaces. The maps show spaces, reserve categories and examples of 5-minute and 10-minute walk times as a metric of provision across the district’s towns and villages. One of the actions in the Open Spaces Strategy is to review these provision metrics to see if they are still the best metric for Whakatāne District when considering provision into the future.

Due to the large geographical spread of some townships and their surrounding areas, accessibility ratings are only relevant for Council Residential Planning Zones, specifically the General Residential Zone, Medium Density Residential Zone and Future Urban Zone.



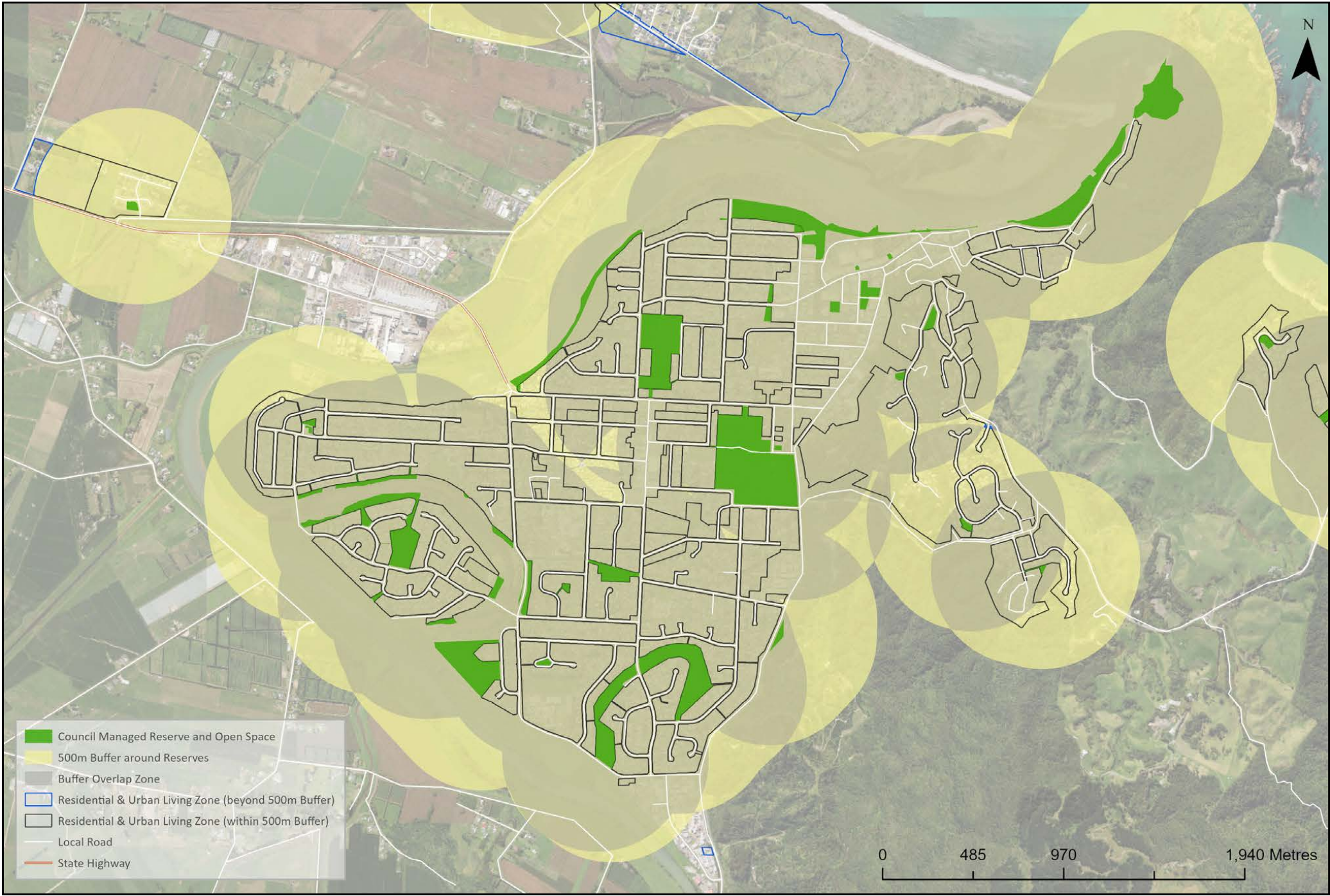
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Whakatāne – Open Spaces



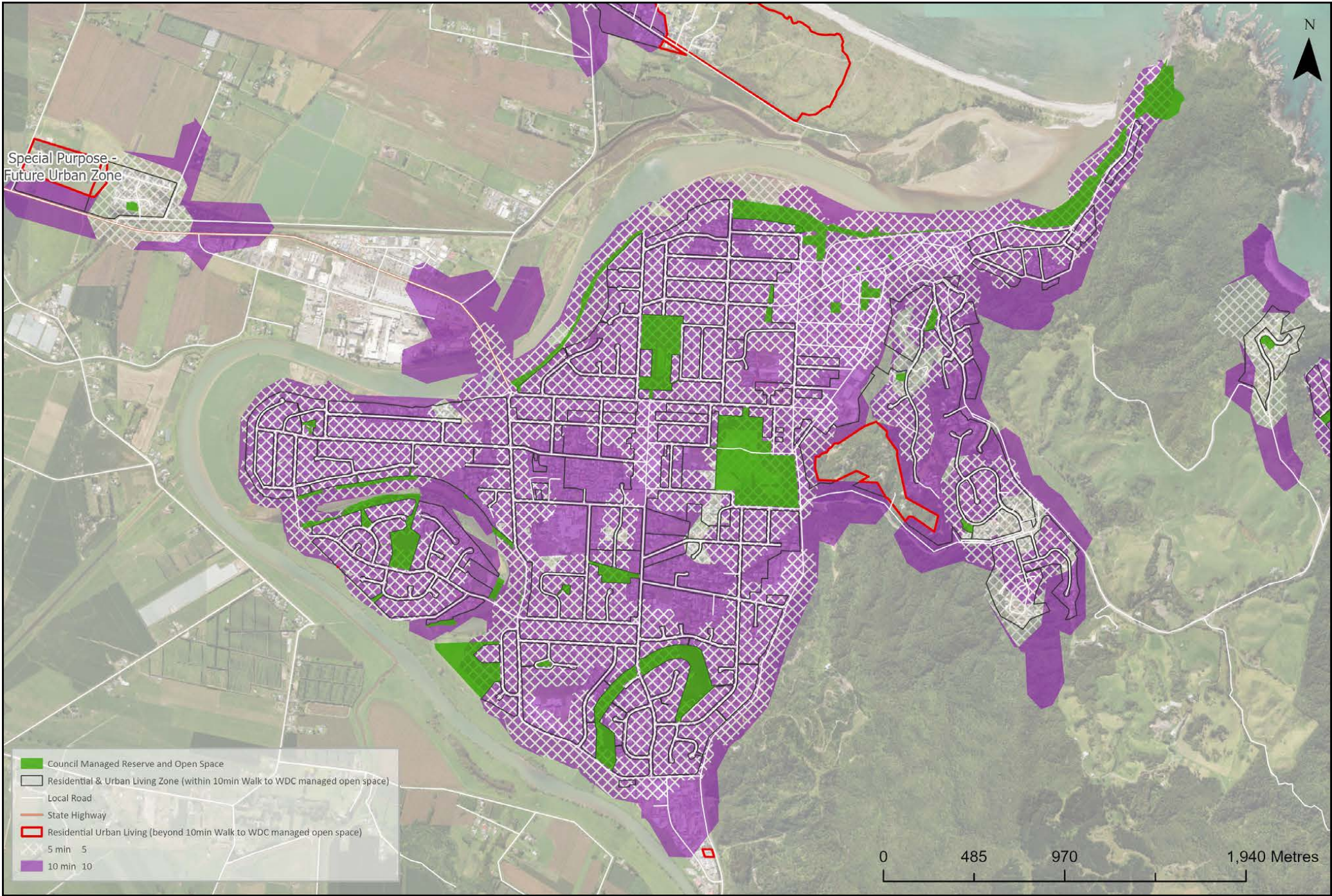
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Whakatāne – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



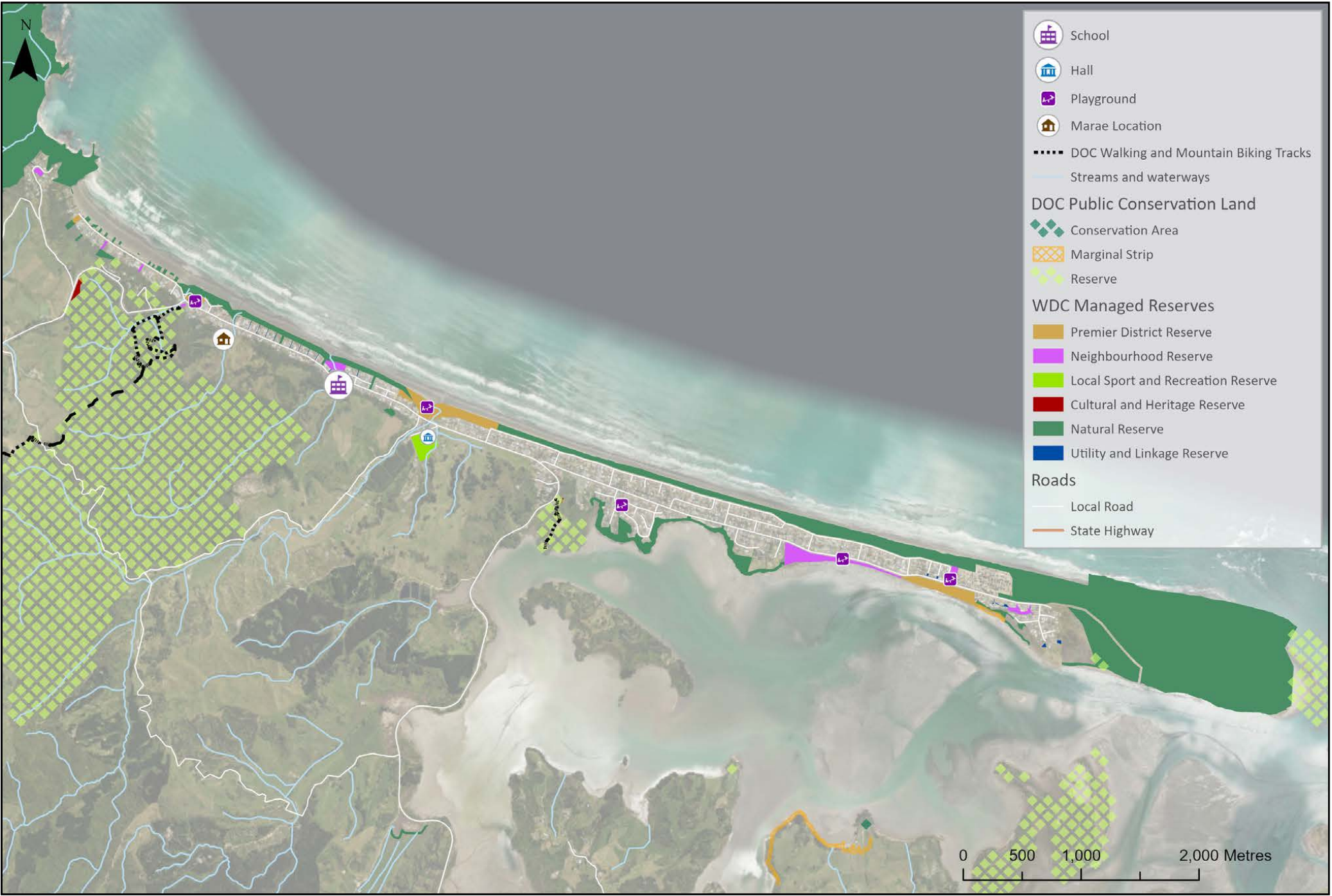
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Whakatāne – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



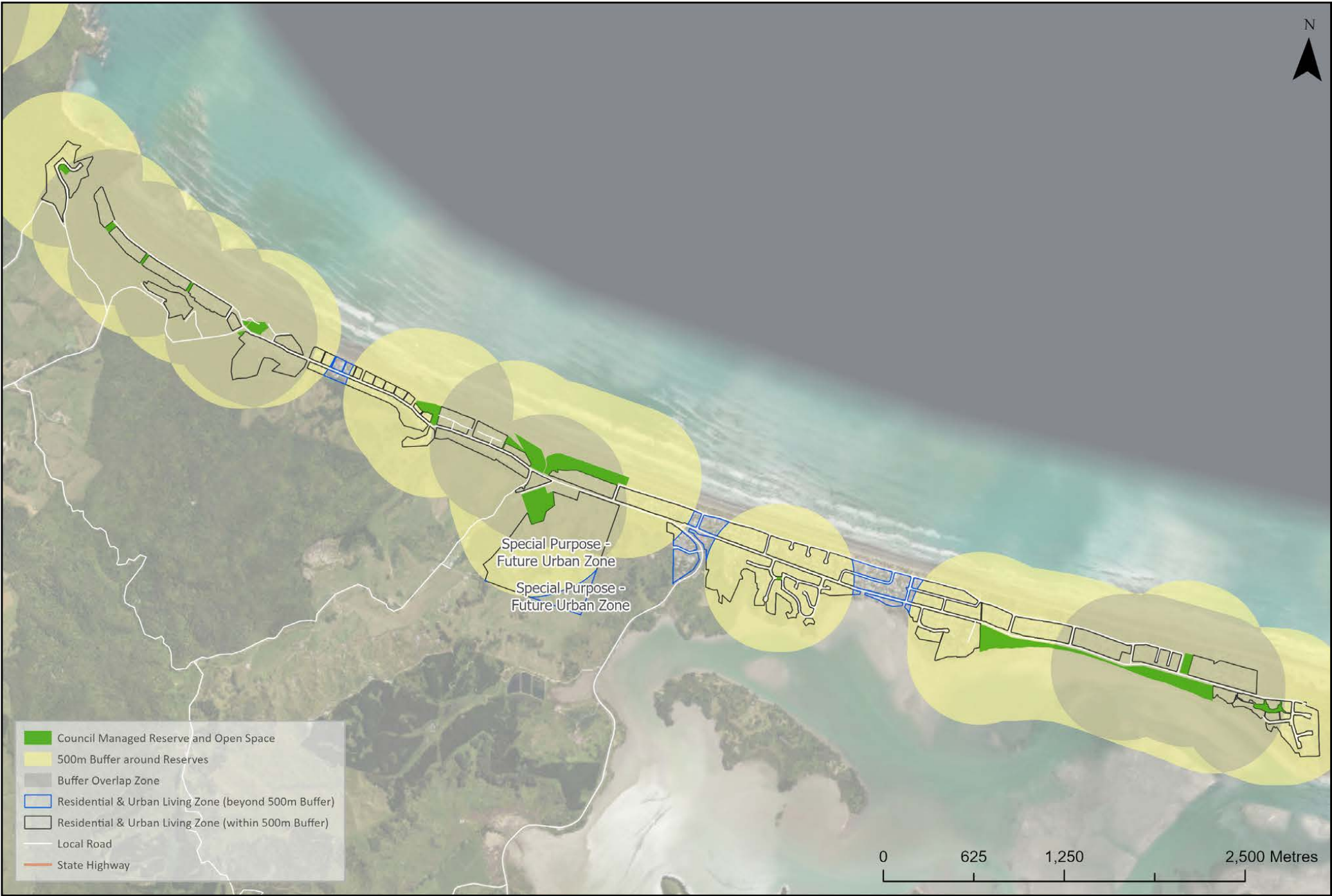
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Ōhope – Open Spaces



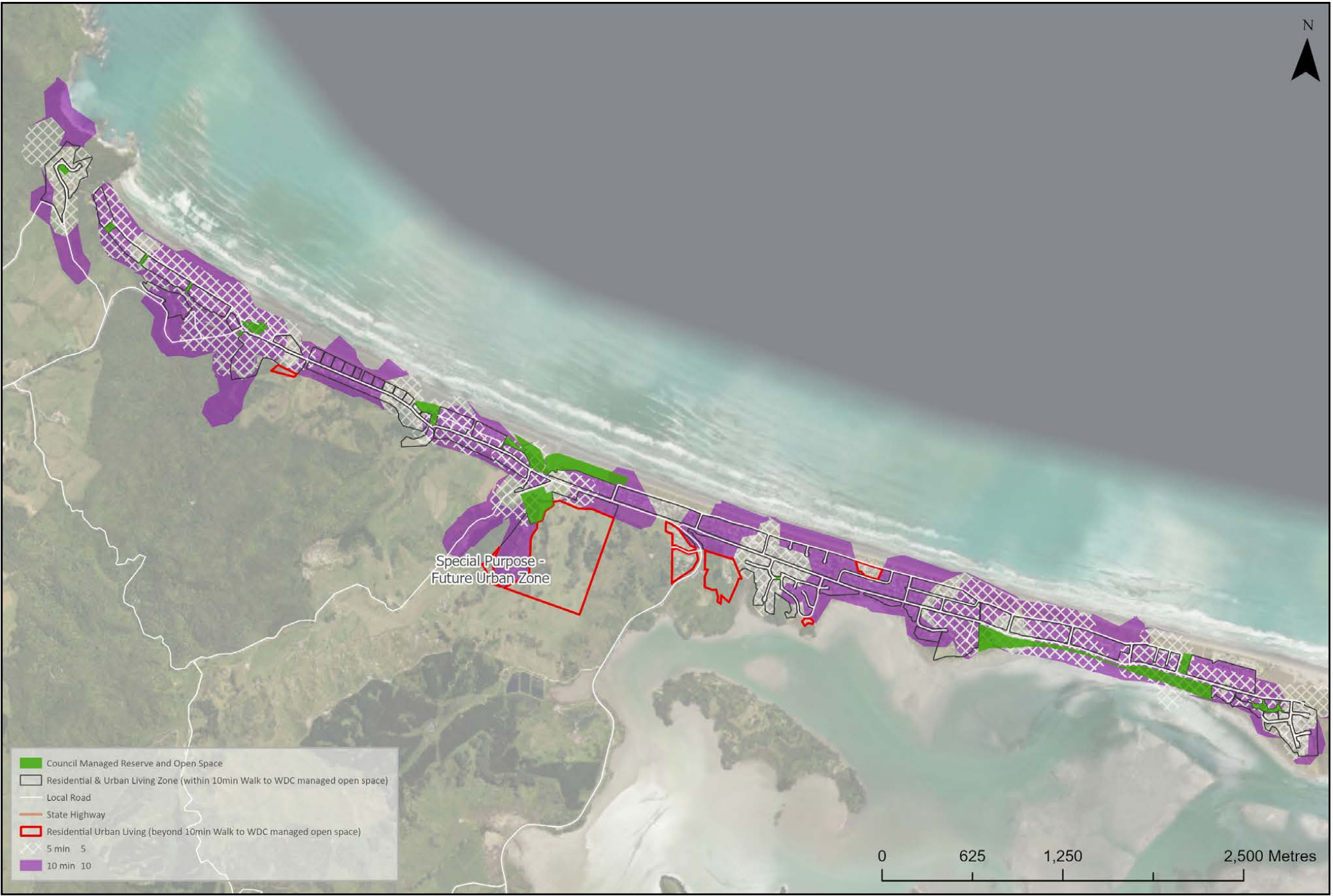
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Ōhope – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Ōhope – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Coastlands – Open Spaces



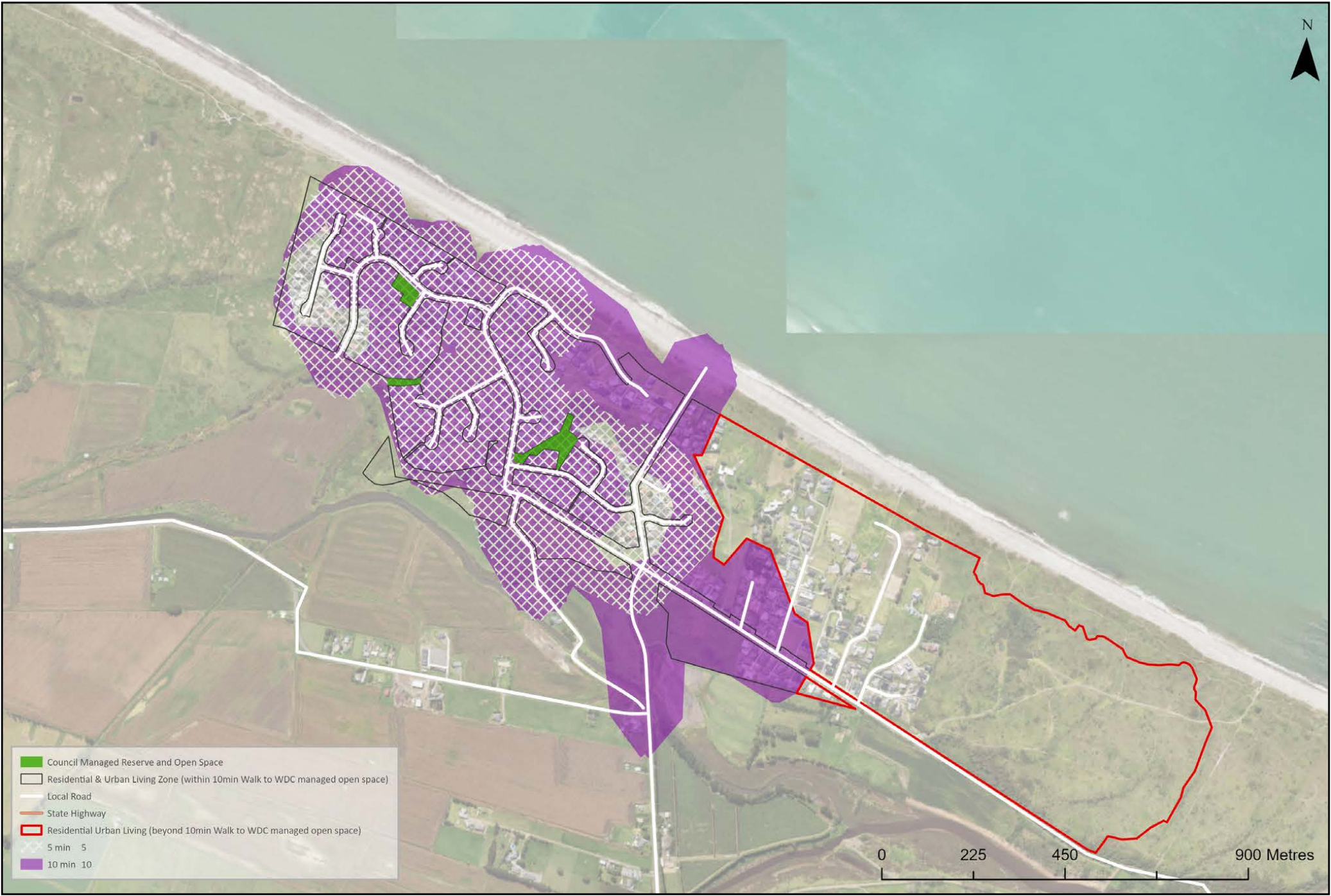
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Coastlands – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Coastlands – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Matatā – Open Spaces



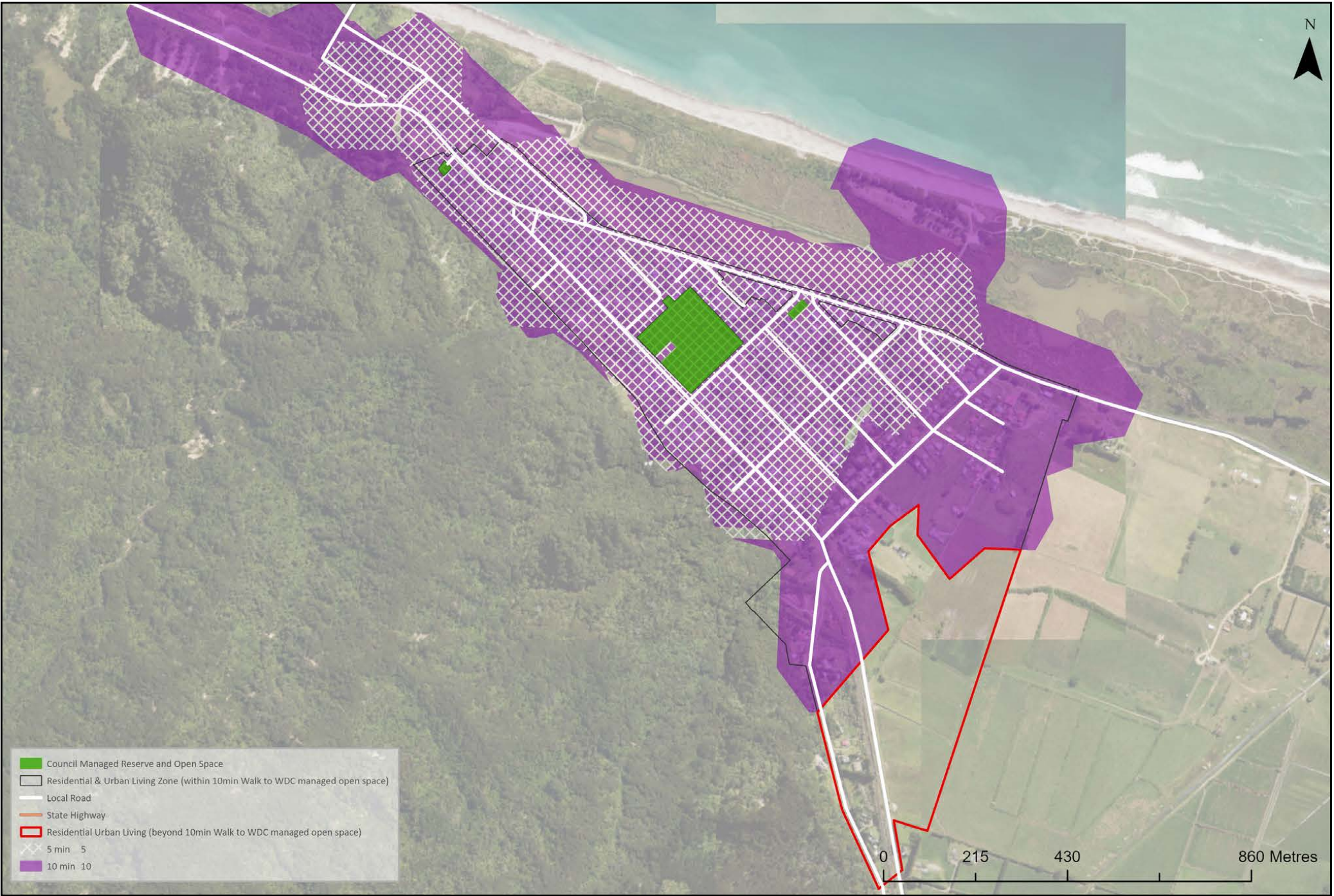
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Matatā – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



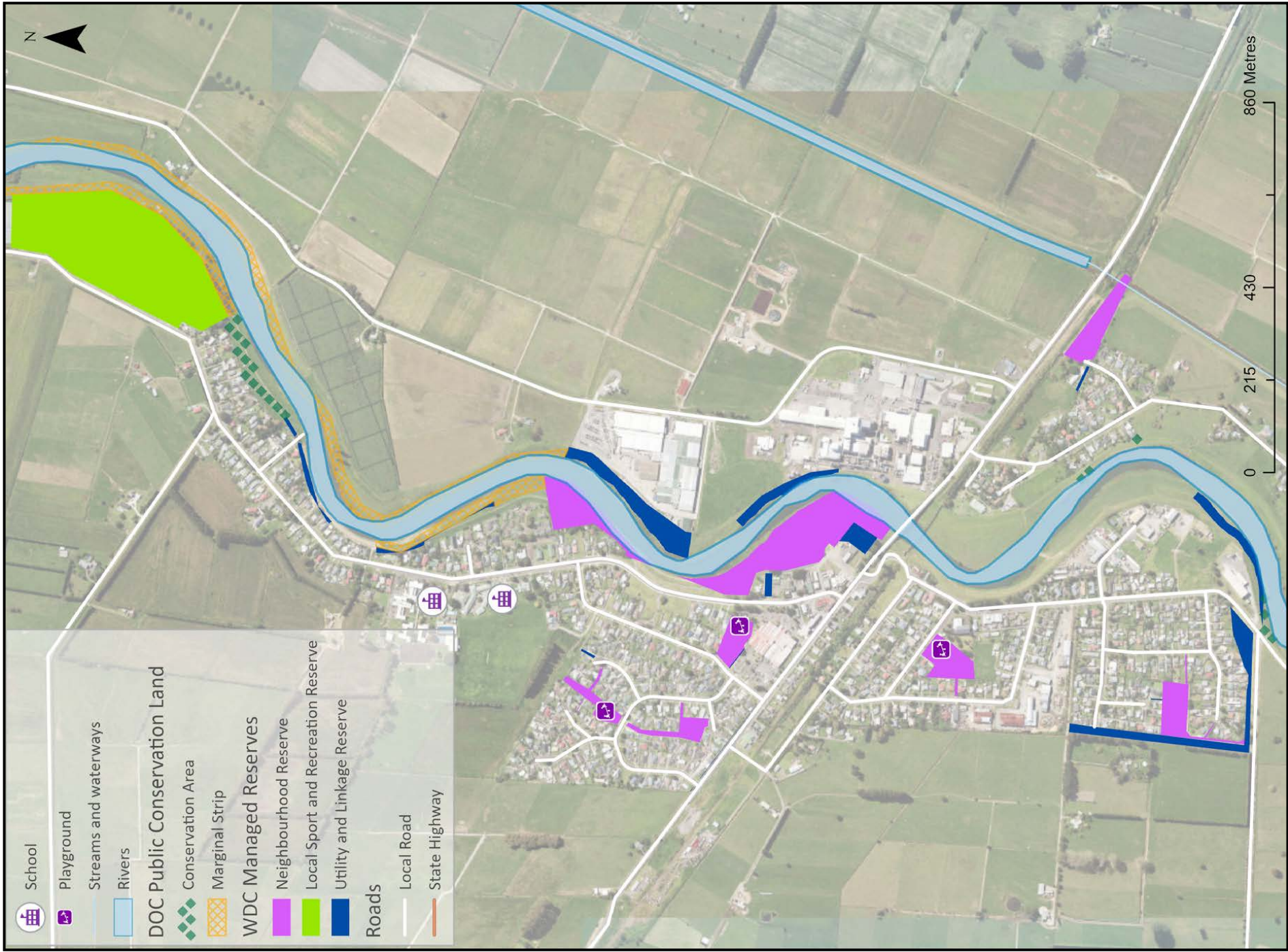
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Matatā – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



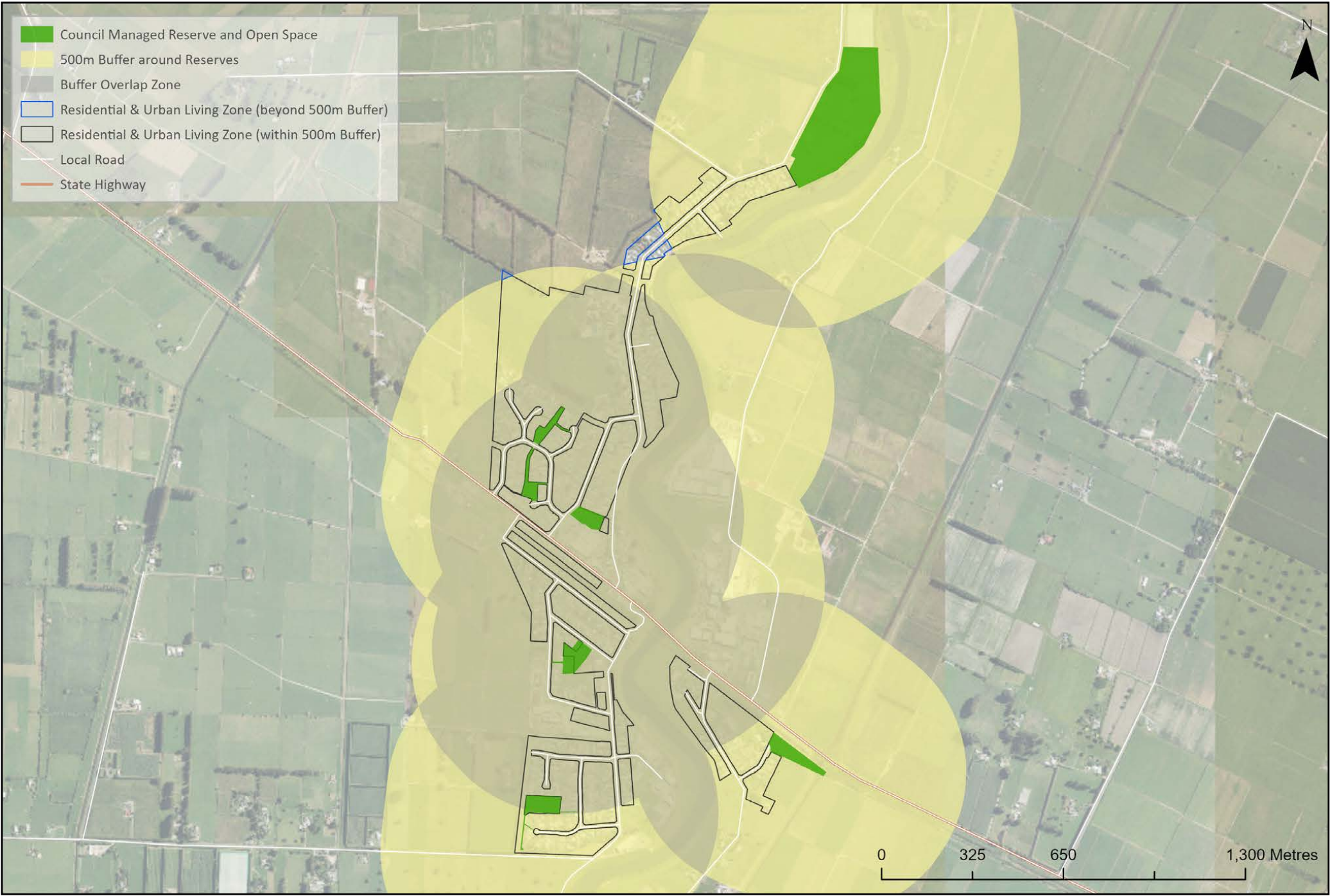
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Edgecumbe – Open Spaces



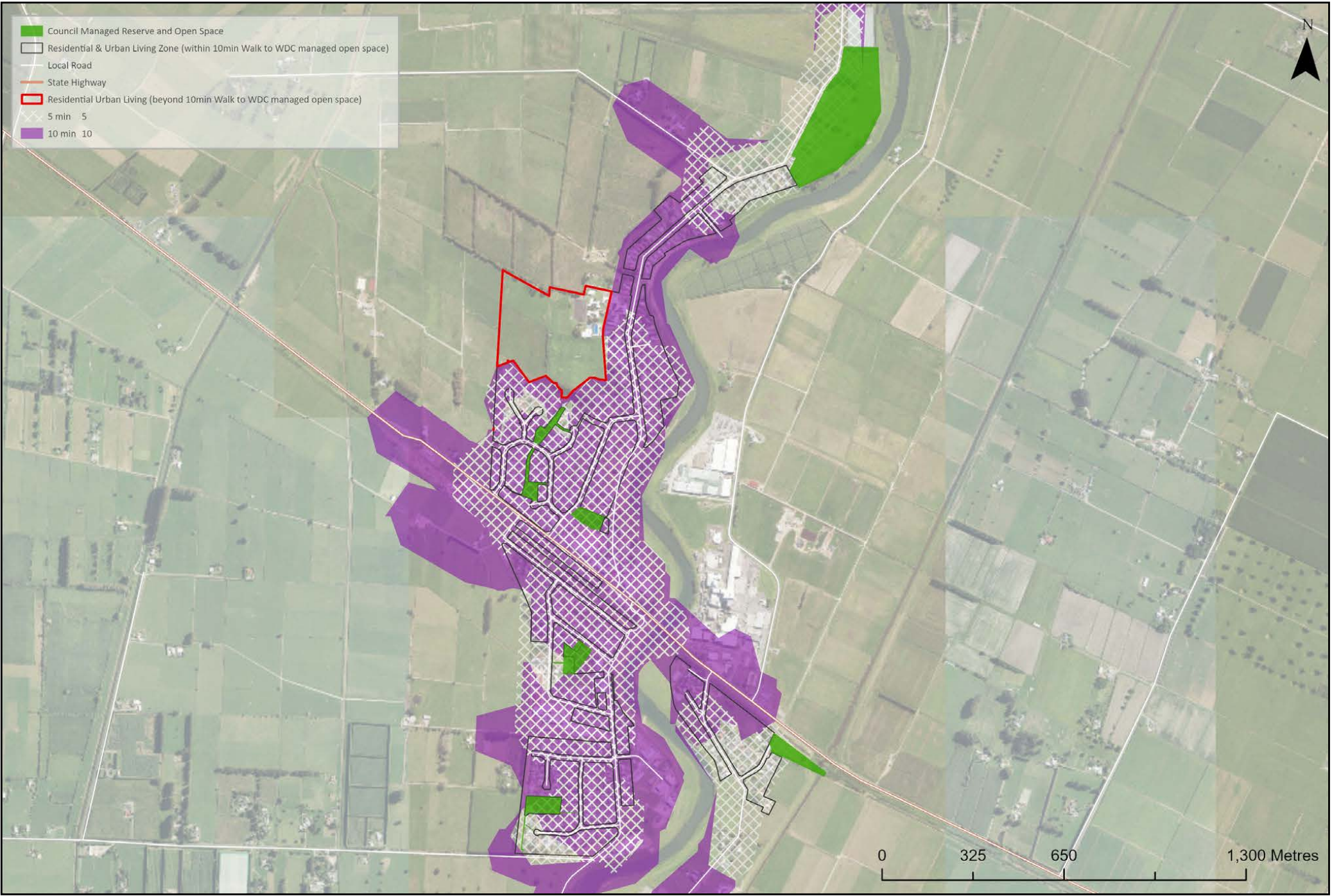
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Edgecumbe – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



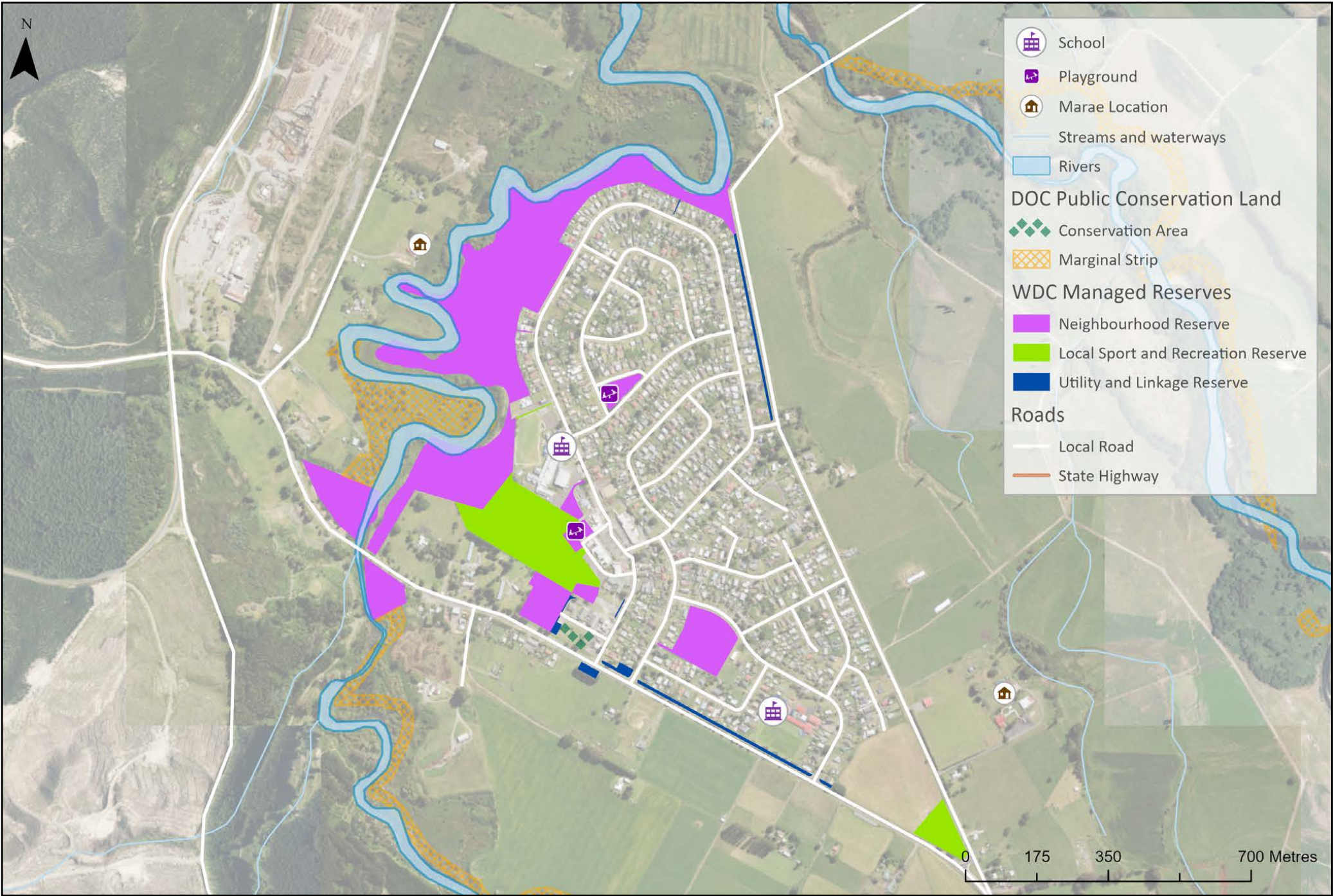
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Edgecumbe – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



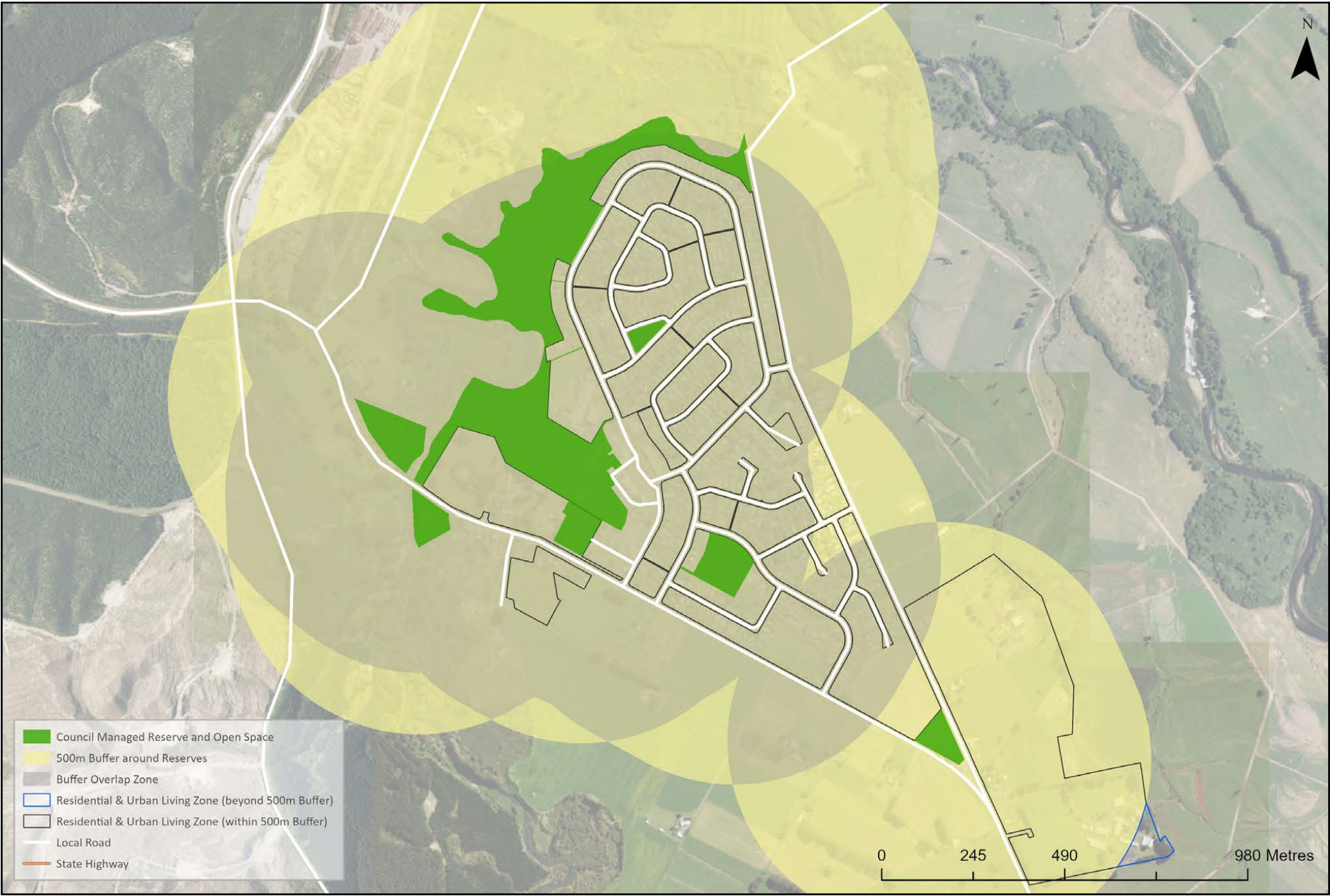
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Murupara – Open Spaces



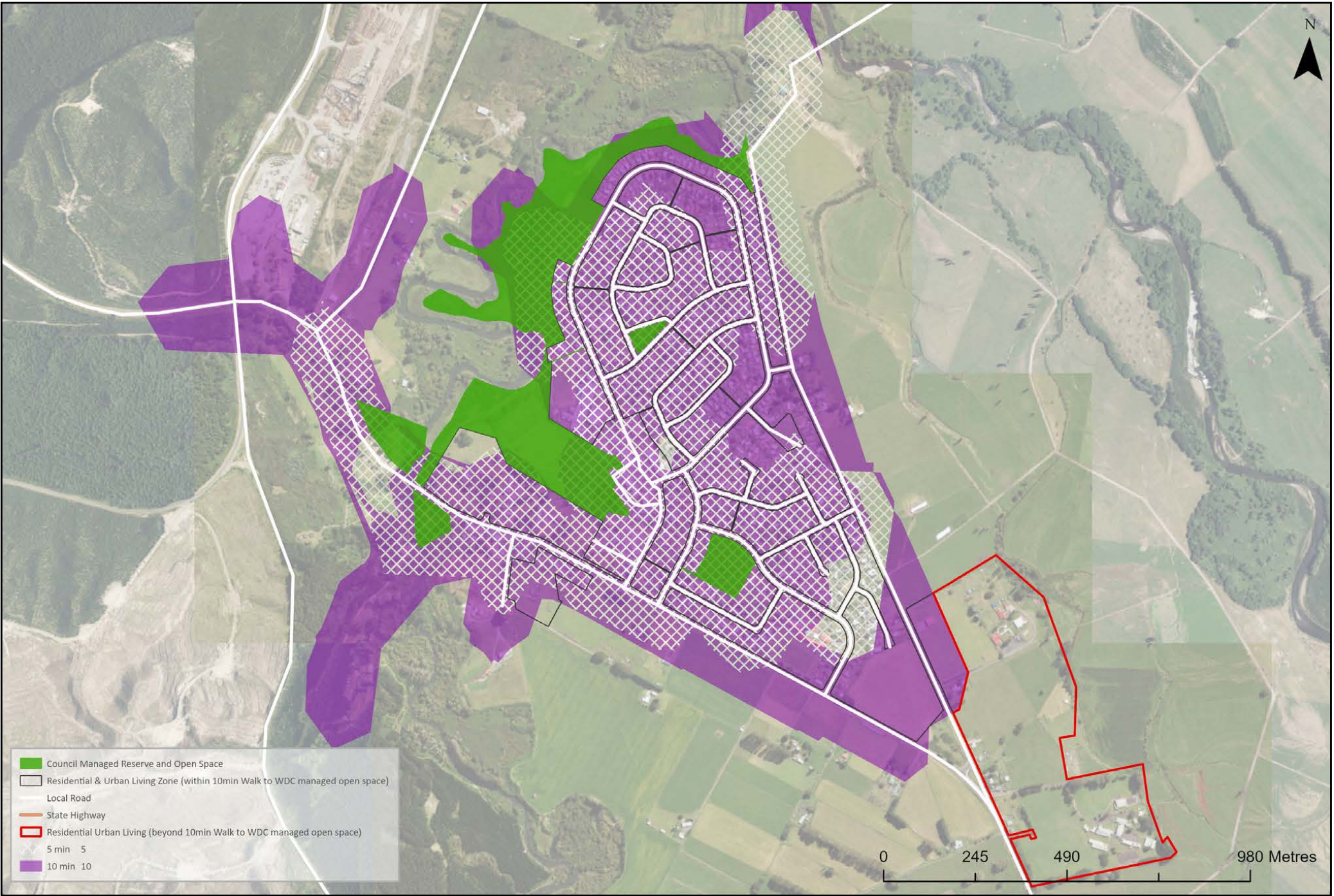
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Murupara – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



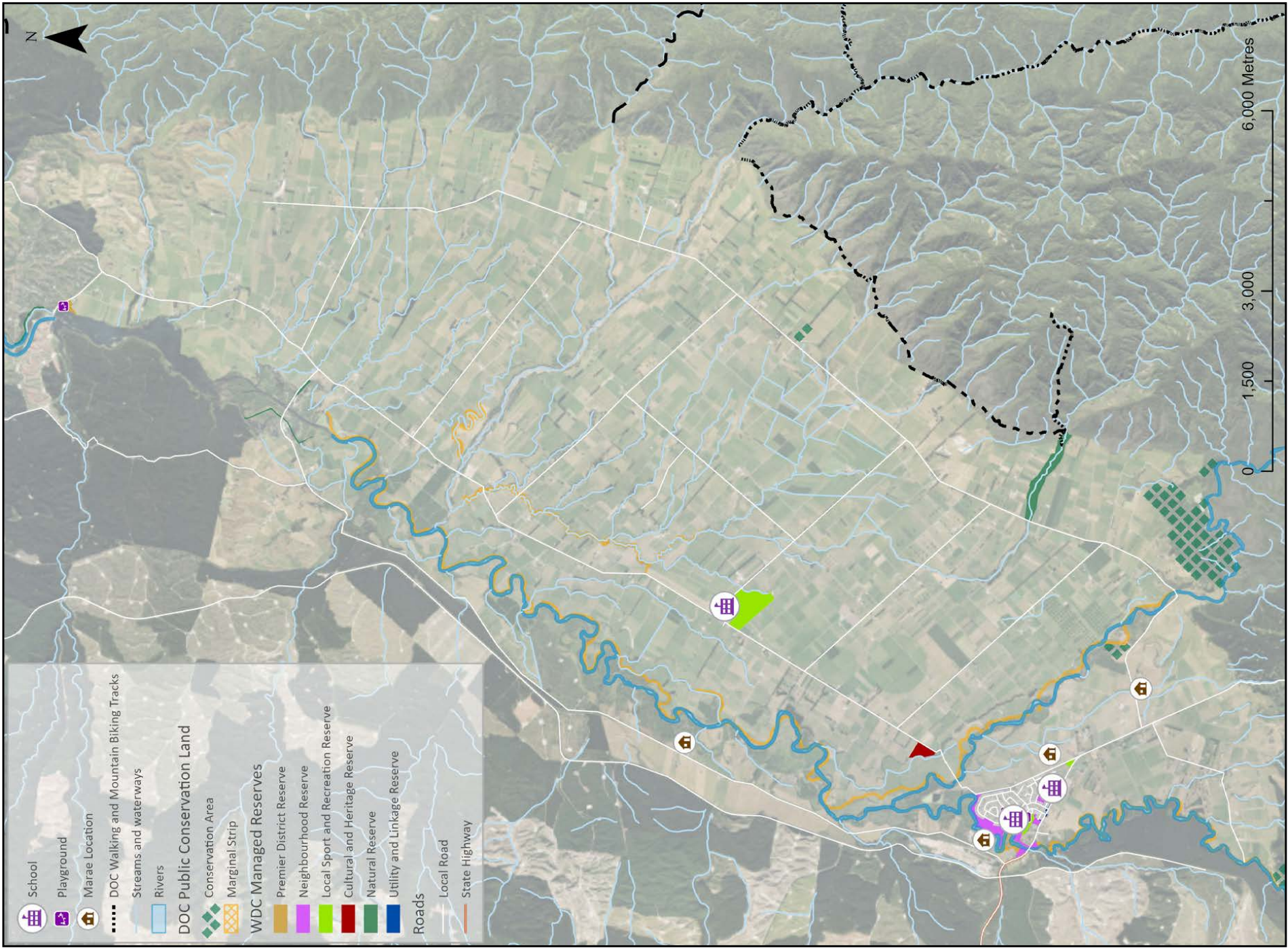
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Murupara – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



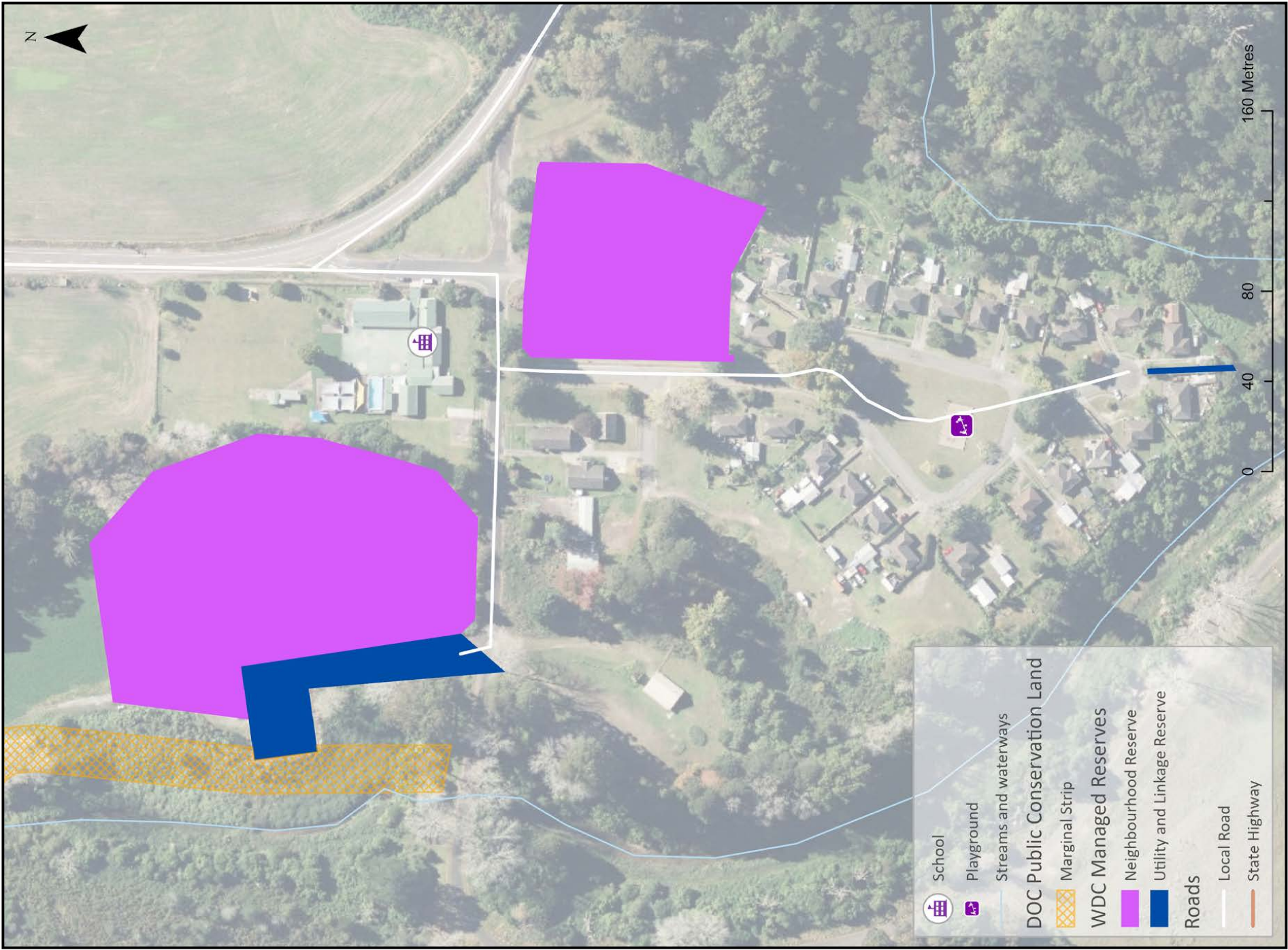
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Galatea – Open Spaces



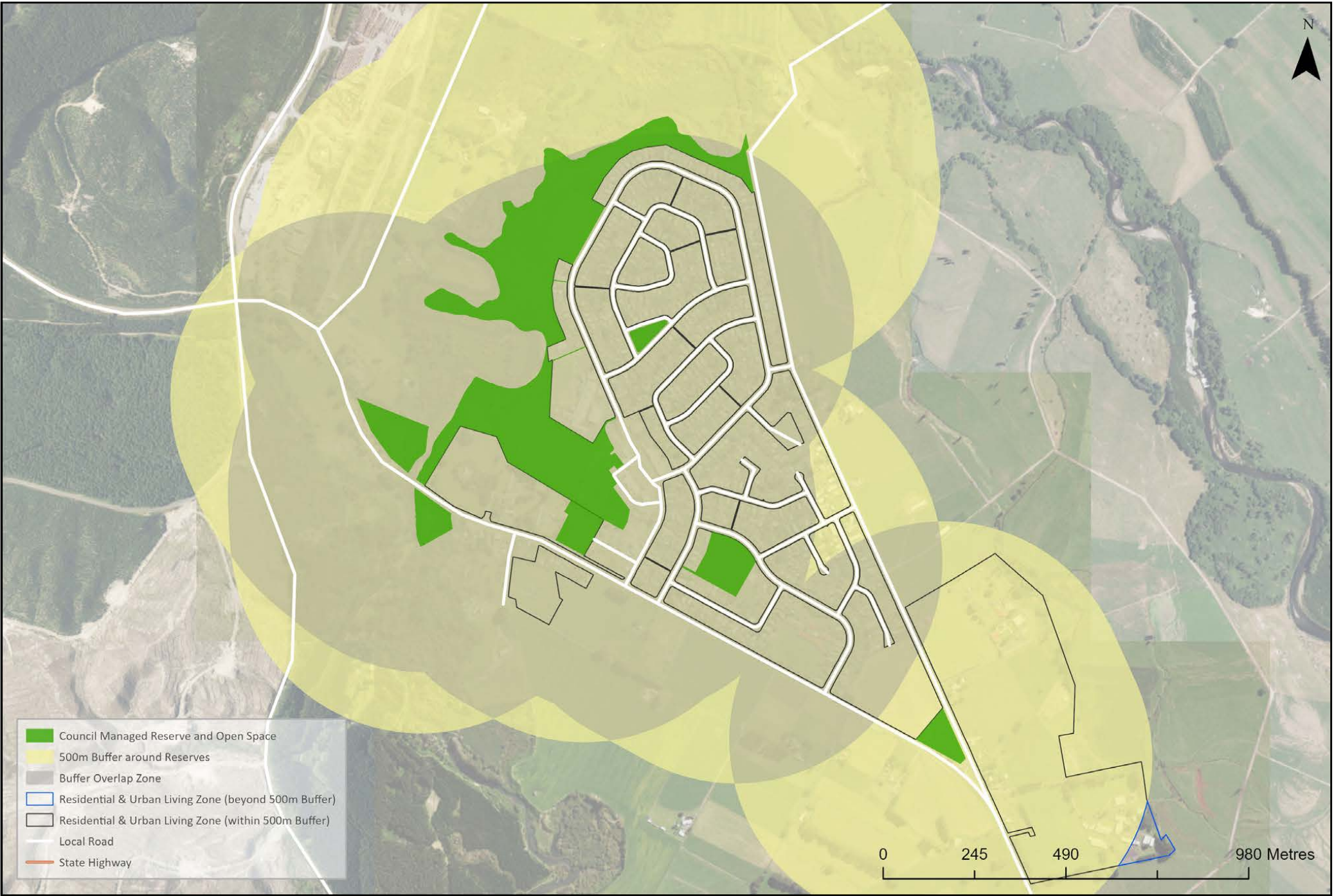
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Mahoe – Open Spaces



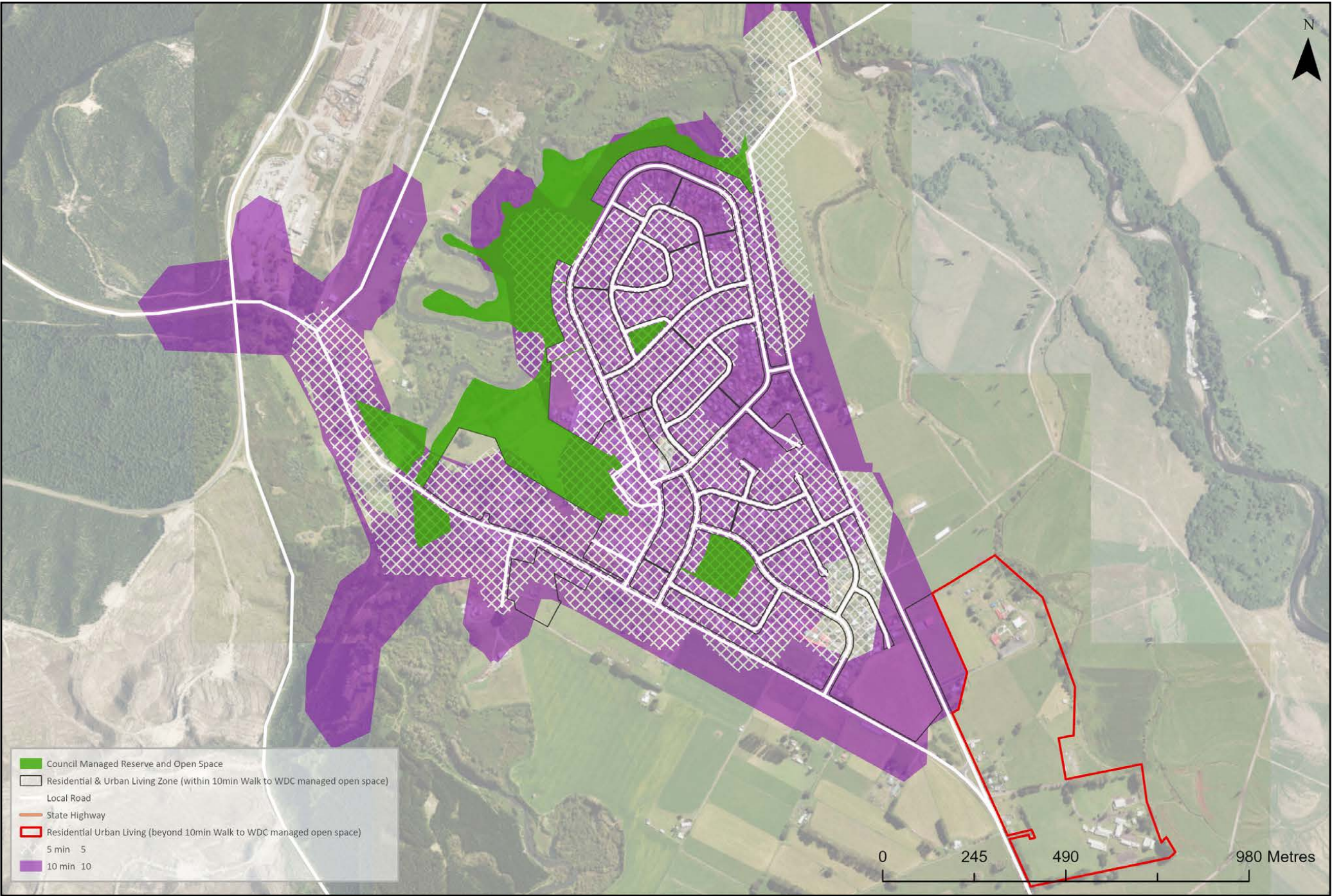
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Mahoe – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



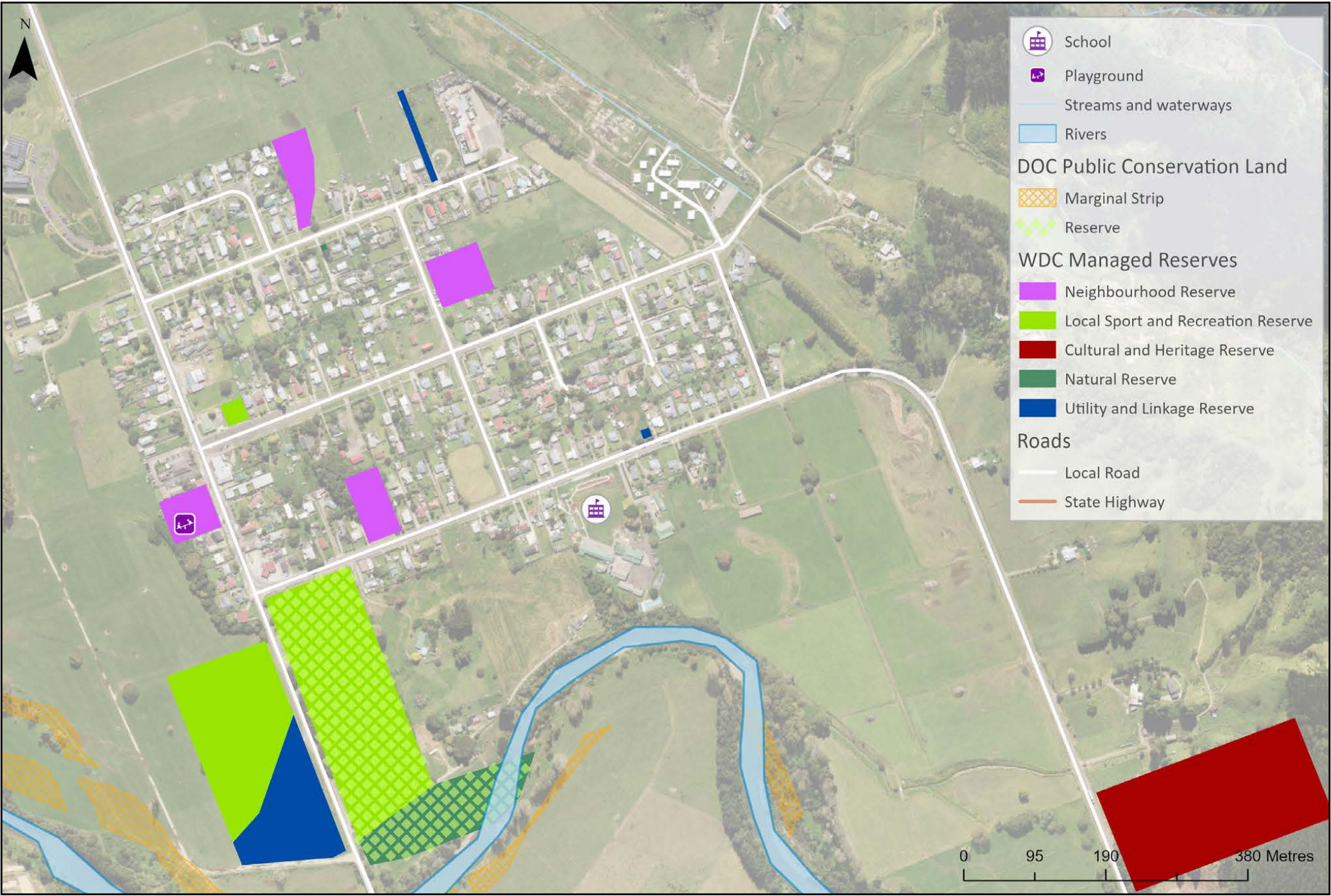
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Mahoe – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Tāneatua – Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Tāneatua – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



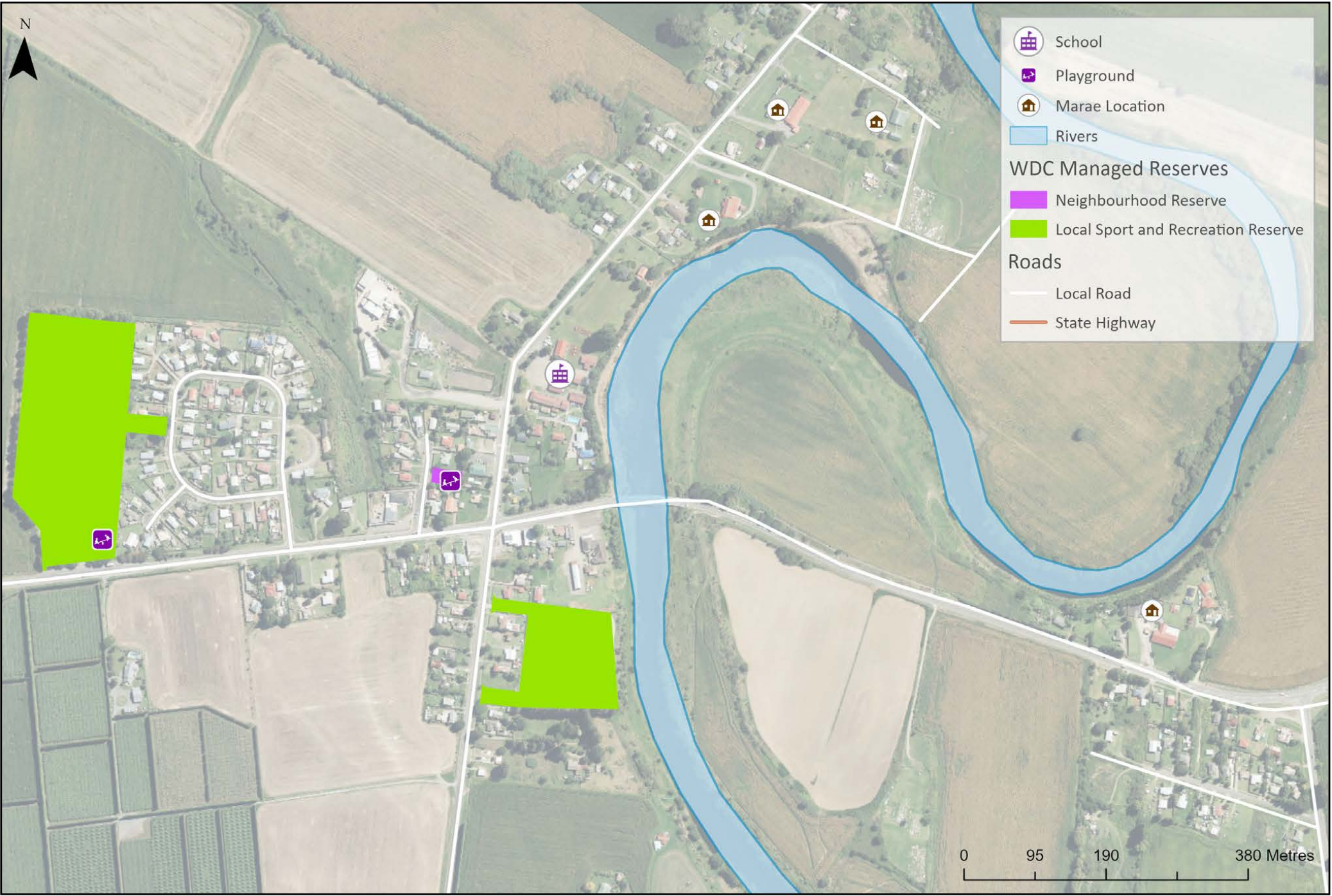
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Tāneatua – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



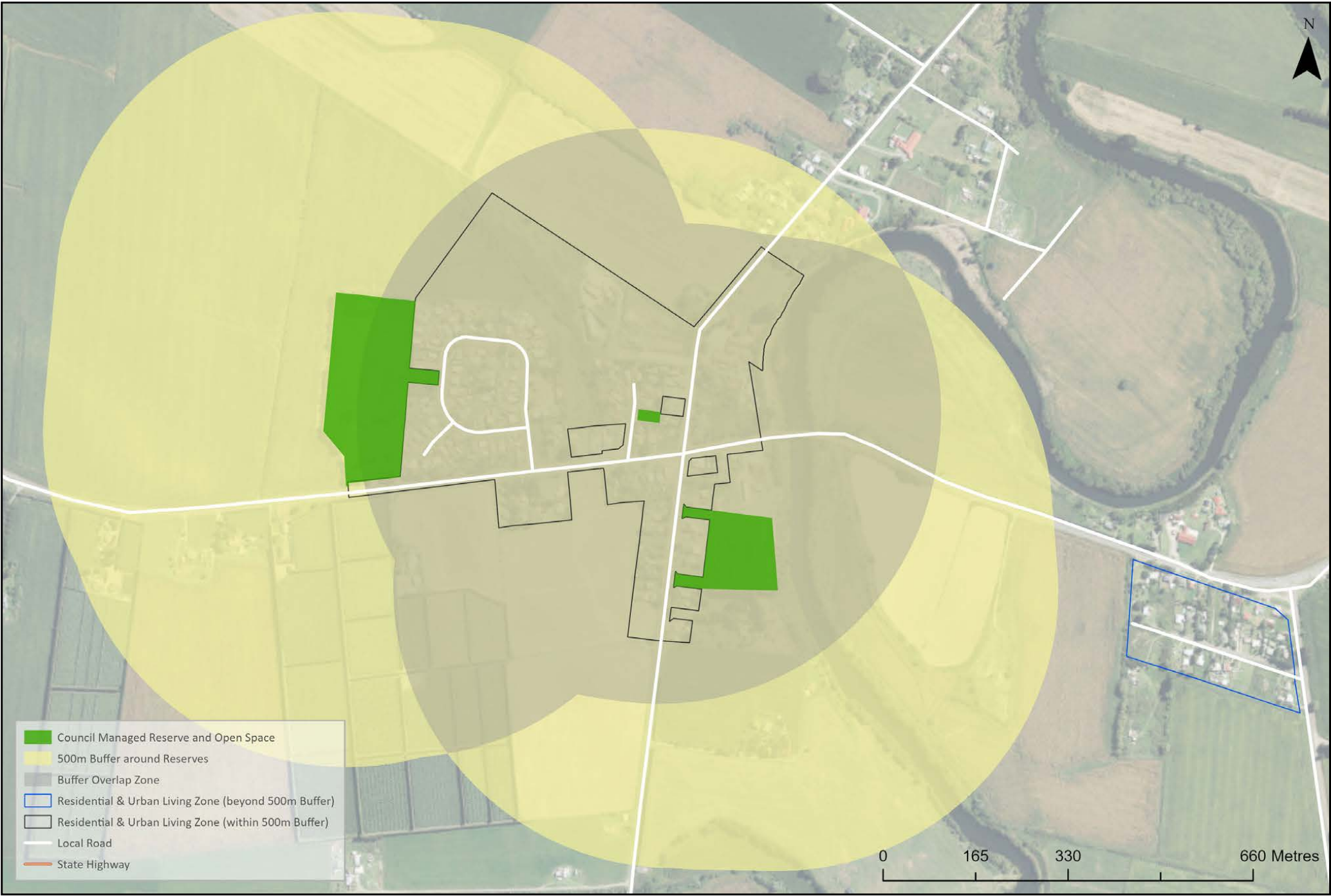
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Teko – Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Teko – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Te Teko – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



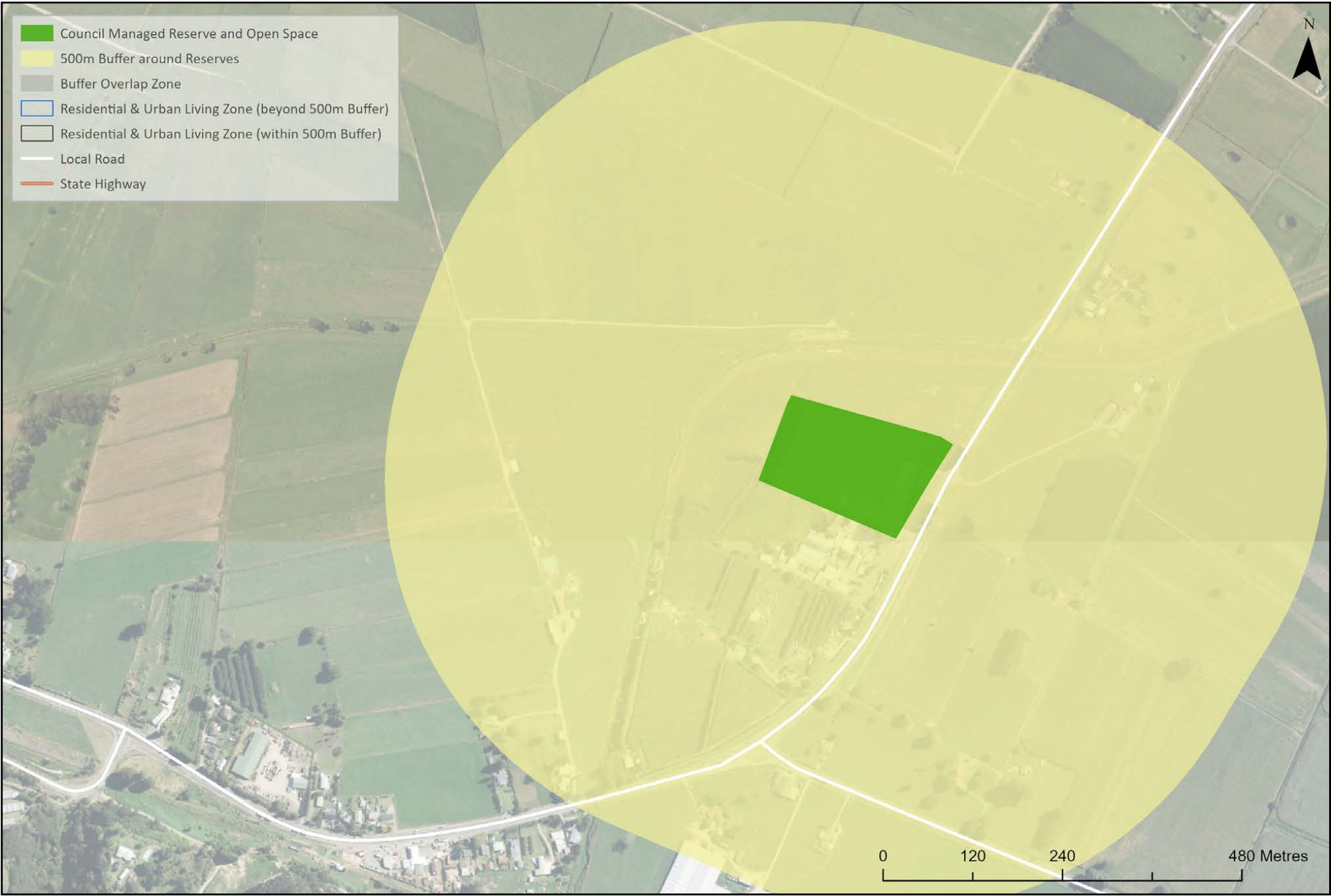
9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Awakeri – Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Awakeri – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Awakeri – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Waimana – Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Waimana – Proximity to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Waimana – Walk time to Whakatāne District Council Managed Reserves and Open Spaces



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Open Space Accessibility Analysis and Commentary

Te Tātaritanga Āheinga Tomopai o ngā Tarawaha

Whakatāne, Ōhope and Coastlands statistics

	Accessibility to Open Space within 500m*	Number of Playgrounds	Total number of reserves	Total number of hectares	Ha / 1000
Whakatāne	99%	10	168	826	42
Ōhope	89%	5			
Coastlands	79%	2			

Expected growth for region:

- Current = 19,480
- Year 2043 = 21, 309
- **Estimated Growth = 1,829**

Tāneatua and Waimana statistics

	Accessibility to Open Space within 500m*	Number of Playgrounds	Total number of reserves	Total number of hectares	Ha / 1000
Tāneatua	100%	1	30	30.9	8
Waimana	68%	1			

Population Growth:

- Current = 4,050
- Year 2043 = 4,431
- **Estimated Growth = 381**

Murupara and Galatea statistics

	Accessibility to Open Space within 500m*	Number of Playgrounds	Total number of reserves	Total number of hectares	Ha / 1000
Murupara/ Galatea	97%	3	29	79	22

Population Growth:

- Current = 3,560 (combined)
- Year 2043 = 3,895
- **Estimated Growth = 335**

*** NOTE:** Due to the large geographical spread of some townships and their surrounding areas, accessibility ratings are only relevant for Council Residential Planning Zones, specifically the General Residential Zone, Medium Density Residential Zone and Future Urban Zone.

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

Future Planning to inform the Open Spaces Strategy

He tirohanga whakamua hei taunaki i te Rautaki Tarawaha

The outcomes of the Regional Spatial Plan, Whakatāne Local Growth Strategy and Climate Change Risk Assessments will inform a separate Open Spaces Future Provision Plan that will be prepared in 2027 to sit alongside this strategy which sets direction on:

- Expected provision metrics for provision of open space for each resident (specific to the requirements of the Whakatāne District, this might be a 500-metre /10-minute walk or another agreed metric)
- Which areas require new spaces to accommodate growth, and which areas have sufficient open spaces, and
- Priority areas in the Whakatāne District for acquisition and investment, particularly in high growth and high-density areas
- Stormwater/Recreation Reserve or linkage reserves/green corridor dual purpose guidance, based on outcomes of ‘Local Water Done Well’ (such as the potentials for recreation and water holding in linear parks noting anticipated increased rain events).

Upon adoption of this draft strategy a full **Action and Implementation Plan** will be developed to inform the 10-year scope of the strategy. This will include updating the open spaces provision maps found above in response to any changes in provision metrics.

9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)



9.3.2 Appendix B - Draft Whakatāne District Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035 - Supporting Documents(Cont.)

WHAKATĀNE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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9.4 Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report

9.4 Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report



To: **Living Together Committee**

Date: **Thursday, 21 August 2025**

Author: **K Hogg / Project Manager Open Spaces**

Authoriser: **A Pickles / GM Community Experience**

1. Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

To provide a project update on the Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub (RMRH), noting that the Project Steering Group (PSG) has now been established and held its inaugural meeting on Monday 28 July 2025. This report provides a summary of outcomes from that meeting, a high-level overview of next steps, and an update on the project budget.

2. Recommendations - *Tohutohu akiaki*

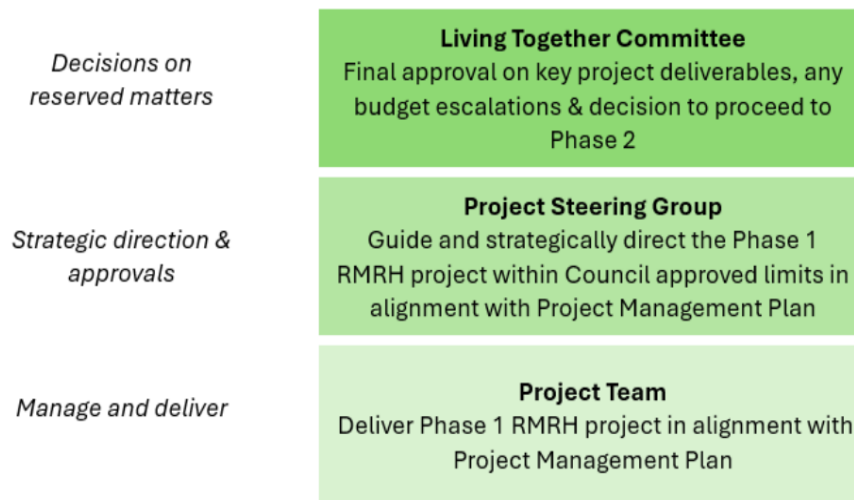
1. THAT the Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub Phase 1 Update report be **received**; and
2. THAT the Committee **note** that a verbal update on the second Rex Morpeth Project Steering Group Meeting held Friday, 15 August 2025 will be provided in the meeting.

3. Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

As noted in previous reporting, through the Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Council has endorsed a phased approach to the RMRH project to respond to community priorities and financial constraints. Phase 1 of this project is now underway and prioritises immediate health and safety and functionality upgrades and finalisation of a Concept Design for the precinct to underpin a future decision on any wider RMRH redevelopment. A funding plan will be developed in parallel to identify external funding options available to support the delivery of the approved Concept Design and assist Elected Members as they consider the affordability of a proposed wider redevelopment.

To support delivery of Phase 1, a three-tiered governance structure has been established, including the newly formed Project Steering Group (PSG).

9.4 Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report(Cont.)



The PSG has delegated authority for decisions within the scope and budget of Phase 1, excluding matters reserved for Living Together Committee or full Council approval. These matters are:

- Final approval of the RMRH Concept Design, to inform the development of a Funding Plan
- Final approval of the Funding Plan
- Decision regarding progression to Phase 2 wider redevelopment
- Approval of any budget escalations

4. Discussion - Kōrerorero

4.1. Project Steering Group Establishment

The PSG held its first meeting on Monday 28 July 2025. Key outcomes from the PSG's inaugural meeting include:

- Adoption of the Project Steering Group Terms of Reference
- Approval of the Project Brief and Project Management Plan, which provide a baseline for delivery and formalise the project's scope, governance and delivery arrangements
- Approval of the Communications and Engagement Plan, which outlines strategic actions to ensure effective stakeholder engagement, including with Ngāti Awa and key user groups. (Note that any media releases on this project will be provided to Elected Members ahead of time.)
- Endorsement of the overall work programme and noting of progress across key workstreams, including:
 - i. **Concept Design Development** – PSG noted the approach to developing alternative concept options for a wider redevelopment that respond to financial constraints and community feedback.
 - ii. **Functional Upgrades** – PSG noted the early planning for a staged programme of works aligned to the Council's Long Term Plan direction, with Tranche 1 works focused on progressing priority works that are not dependent on the finalisation of a Concept Design.

All PSG resolutions were passed unanimously.

9.4 Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report(Cont.)

4.2. Project Objectives

A key focus of discussion at the inaugural PSG meeting was the importance of clearly articulating the project's objectives to support robust, consistent decision-making. While some objectives have already been defined, the group recognised the need to refine and formalise these into a more precise and structured framework. This will help guide decision making and provide a strong foundation for the development of a Business Case to support future external funding applications.

The refined project objectives will be workshopped between the Project Team and the Project Steering Group at the second PSG meeting held Friday 15 August. A verbal update on this process and the meeting more broadly will be provided to the Committee.

4.3. Project Budget Update

A high-level project budget breakdown was approved by the Project Steering Group as part of the Project Brief. This shows the way in which the \$7.72m approved via the LTP 2024-34 will be divided between the three key Phase 1 workstreams and the supporting project overheads.

Workstream	Budget
Project overheads	\$470,000
Concept Design Development (including Phase 2 planning)	\$400,000
Funding Plan development	\$50,000
Functional Upgrades	\$6,800,000
TOTAL Project Estimate	\$7,720,000

This budget breakdown reflects a deliberate focus on directing the majority of Phase 1 funding toward addressing functionality and health and safety issues across the site, with the aim of maximising usability and improving the overall user experience in the short term. It also signals an intent to build upon, rather than restart, the significant body of Concept Design work already completed. A rich repository of community and user feedback, asset condition assessments, and documented requirements is available to inform the development of a viable, refined design for the future redevelopment — ensuring that investment to date is leveraged and momentum is maintained.

A total of \$303,450 was spent in the 2024-25 financial year. This was significantly below the \$1,054,000 allocated in the Long Term Plan. This variance reflects the strategic decision to introduce more formal project structures to support the successful delivery of this first phase of the project before progressing into physical works. While establishing these structures has required additional time, it is expected to lay a stronger foundation for the workstreams and enable long-term efficiencies.

4.4. Functional Upgrades

After gaining PSG approval of the refined project's objectives, the project team will develop a Functional Upgrades Plan that aligns both to these objectives and the approved high-level budget breakdown. This plan will outline the scope of the Functional Upgrades to be progressed in Phase 1

9.4 Rex Morpeth Recreational Hub – Phase 1 update report(Cont.)

of this project, and their staged approved to delivery, recognising that some works will be deferred until there is clarity over Concept Design direction. Once this plan is approved by PSG, it will be provided to the Living Together Committee for noting.

4.5. Concept Design workstream

The Concept Design workstream will resume once the Project Steering Group (PSG) has formally approved the refined project objectives. These objectives will guide the next stage of design and will form the foundation for a robust and transparent assessment of Concept Design options.

Building on previous work, the project team and RSL will finalise two alternative Concept Design options that respond to both community priorities and fiscal constraints, as outlined through the 2024–2034 Long Term Plan process.

This Committee will continue to receive updates as this workstream progresses. Concept Design workshops will be scheduled with both the PSG and this Committee at key points to support understanding, input, and eventual selection of the preferred design in 2026, to inform the development of a Funding Plan. Public engagement will occur at a later stage, aligned to the question of community affordability and supported by the project's Funding Plan, which will inform future Council decision-making on the wider redevelopment.

5. Next Steps- – E whai ake nei

- PSG agreement to Project Objectives & Functional Upgrades Plan
- Concept Design workstream recommencement