

▪ Kororāreka Russell ▪

# Placemaking Plan:

## The Strand and Waterfront

Completed for the  
Kororāreka Russell Placemaking Steering Group  
by Catalyse, May 2025.



# Foreword

We all love our beautiful Strand: a place to meet, to stroll, to sit, for our kids to swim and play. And visitors love it, it's one of the things that makes Kororāreka Russell so unique, our beautiful seaside boulevard. Could our iconic Strand be even better? How could we protect and look after what we have, and make it even more special? That's what The Strand Placemaking Project is all about.



This project began in 2021 where the community put forward ideas to improve The Strand. In 2024, the opportunity to build on this, and other, previous work led to the formation of the Placemaking Project Steering Group and we are very proud to present the Kororāreka Russell Placemaking Plan for The Strand and waterfront areas.

The Strand and Waterfront Placemaking Plan comes from the community. It builds on input and feedback from local people to provide a cohesive, integrated and clear road map of what matters to local people, and how we have begun to achieve the top priorities together, as a community. It is the people of Kororāreka Russell's plan.

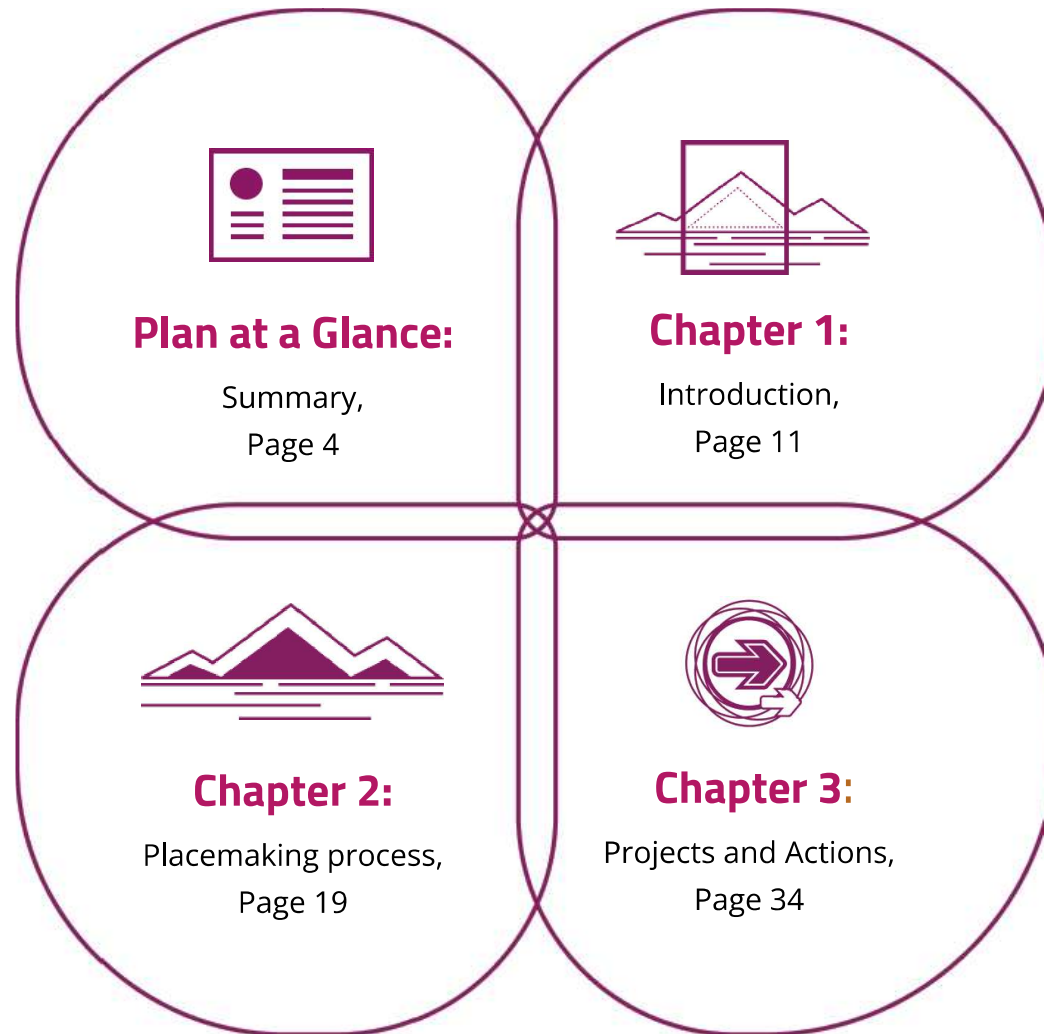
It also provides strategic direction for Far North District Council, identifying shorter term actions and longer term aspirations for how The Strand and waterfront can be managed and developed. Our plan is intended to be a living document.

The Steering Group would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to our plan, especially locals who joined working groups and volunteered many hours to make initial projects happen - thank you all! Together we can sustain and create the thriving, vibrant environment we cherish now and for many generations to come.

*Deb Rewiri, Bob Drey, Marsha Davis, David McKenzie, Jane Hindle and Manuela Gmuer-Hornell, Helen Ough Dealy, & the late Tim Grant –  
Kororāreka Russell Placemaking Project Steering Group*

# Contents

Find your way:



# Our Vision

The Strand and waterfront are protected, maintained and improved in ways that honour and respect histories, enhance the intrinsic natural and architectural beauty and enable access and enjoyment for all people.



Our Strand Placemaking Plan is about restoring, sustaining and enhancing The Strand and waterfront area in ways that maintain the area's unique charm and ambiance. It is also about how we as a community relate to each other, our shared interests and pride in our community and community spirit.

This vision has developed from extensive local engagement, guided by a Steering Group of diverse local residents and informed by subject matter experts. It reflects the things that matter to locals, both now and into the future. Placemaking was identified as a way for community-led priorities to be identified and acted upon with the support of Far North District Council.

Our Plan provides a way for Council and other agencies to organise their priorities for The Strand and waterfront at Kororāreka Russell within their Annual Plans, District and Regional Plans, Long Term Plans and various action plans.

This Plan can feed into those plans by establishing and communicating the priority actions that locals see as important. This means that other plans are more likely to be relevant and enhancing to local lives and that these priority actions have a better chance of implementation.



## Plan of placemaking activities 2024-25.

### PEDESTRIAN-ONLY AND SHARED ZONES

Making The Strand safer for pedestrians by prioritising them.

### IMPROVED BEACH ACCESS

Preserving our historic pohutukawa trees and preventing erosion while encouraging use of the beach

### INCREASED PUBLIC SEATING

Creating more spaces for people to come together and connect.

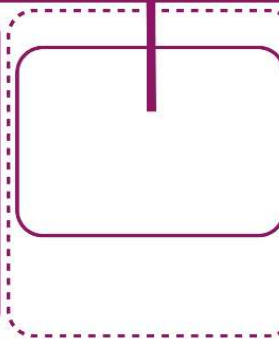
### TAMARIKI-LED PLAY TRAIL

Creating opportunities for our tamariki to play, explore and create lasting memories.



### LEGEND:

	Shared Zone		Waharoa
	Pedestrian Zone		Marae
	More Beach Access		Town Hall
	Seat / Bench		Play Whare
	Picnic Table		Chalk Walk
	Barrel Garden		Tuna & Ladders
	Planting		Dancing Footsteps
	Whale's Tail		



# Plan in brief

Our placemaking plan reflects what locals say matters and considers visitors and generations to come too.

Locals	Visitors	Engagement	Actions
<b>798</b> usual residents in 2023	<b>7000+</b> Pedestrians on The Strand per week in peak season	<b>4</b> engagement methods for this Plan	<b>25+</b> locals in 2024-5 working groups
<b>64%</b> NZ born	<b>213</b> visitors on census night	<b>880</b> submissions	<b>4</b> priorities to focus on now
<b>61 yrs</b> median age	<b>77%</b> increase Mar 2022-Feb 2023	<b>1303</b> ideas	<b>4</b> priorities to work on next
<b>22%</b> Māori	<b>55</b> cruise ships 01 Dec 24 - 31 March 25	<b>456</b> people prioritised these ideas	<b>3</b> Priorities for later

Our plan builds on what has come before, the things locals love, how they wish to host visitors, what they want to provide for themselves and for future generations. Over a 10 day period in April-May 2024, over 1300 moemoeā big ideas for improvements were shared in 880 submissions via a pop-up shop, in a survey and on the 'Russell Noticeboard' Facebook group<sup>1</sup>.

These big ideas were refined in a public workshop held over two weekend days in June 2024, prioritised by 456 of us, to come up with 4 immediate actions, 4 to work on next and 3 to come later . Direct engagement with businesses and key local organisations and groups also happened through June and July 2024.

Short term:	Medium term:	Longer term:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strand traffic management trial (6 months)</li> <li>• Adding more seats along The Strand</li> <li>• A play trail along The Strand</li> <li>• Natural steps with rails for beach access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional picnic tables and rubbish bins</li> <li>• Additional pontoon with water play feature</li> <li>• Commission a landscape plan for the Village Green</li> <li>• Explore options for drinking fountain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review signage and commission new signage</li> <li>• Identify stories and how to tell them</li> <li>• Explore options for BBQ/Hangi area</li> </ul>

The Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board allocated \$100,000 for placemaking on The Strand via two resolutions in 2022 (2022/09 \$15,000 and 2022/56 \$85,000). This funding will be used to achieve the above four short-term priority projects. The medium-term and longer-term projects identified above are unfunded.

Funded projects	Allocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial placemaking report (Barkers and Associates)</li> <li>• The Strand traffic management trial (6 months)</li> <li>• Adding more seats along The Strand</li> <li>• A play trail along The Strand</li> <li>• Natural steps with rails for beach access</li> </ul>	\$7, 500 \$40, 000 <sup>2</sup> \$25, 000 \$7, 500 \$20, 000
Total	\$100, 000

<sup>1</sup> You can see a summary of our engagement findings in Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> \$5, 500 of this figure was committed to Ambassadors to provide guidance on the changes over the peak period in Summer 2025.

## Short term priority projects for 2024-25 are:

### The Strand traffic management trial

A trial pedestrianisation of the south side of The Strand and a shared space on the north side and the wharf end of Cass Street was approved by Far North District Council in September 2024 and began in December 2024. This required temporary changes to Cass Street too, to ensure traffic safety to slow down cars entering the shared space zone.

The trial focused on establishing the town square as an entranceway. Drivers were discouraged from turning into Cass Street by signage, planters, gardens and a painted whale's tail on the road surface. The south Strand was marked as pedestrianised on various map apps, and those who did drive into Cass Street were directed along the north side of The Strand. Both sides of The Strand received planted barrels to both slow any vehicles and continue the enhanced amenity value beyond the Cass Street area.

Key elements were modified several times in response to user experiences. Both quantitative and qualitative data shows that, overall, community feedback was very positive, with 80% rating the changes a 4 or 5/5. A formal community consultation process run by Council informed decisions about any permanent changes.

### Public seating along The Strand

A stocktake of existing seating identified where new seating could go and which of the existing seats need repair, refurbishment or replacement. The current seats are a mixture of styles and designs: 'Victorian', 'Modern', timber slat benches and slabs.

Some seats were beyond repair and have been replaced, including the much-loved 'Old Man's Seat'. Others have been repaired and maintained. One slab was removed altogether and not replaced in order to open up access to steps to the beach and also from the wharf to the Strand. Five new hardwood slab benches have been added and several concrete slabs under existing seats were made safer and less obtrusive by having soil placed around their edges, landscaped and grassed to blend into the existing verge.

This work along with the addition of more public seating using natural, durable materials has added extra amenity for public enjoyment while enhancing the charm and ambience of the area which is such a unique feature of the historic village and its waterfront.

Continued on the next page...



## Short term priority projects for 2024-25 are:

Continued from the previous page...

### A play trail along The Strand

After seeing interest in more play along the waterfront, an anonymous local donated and installed a series of swings in December 2024. These were removed a few weeks later, causing much local discussion. Swings in the same design were reinstated in late February 2025.

Over the same time, the Play Trail Working Group was working with tamariki ('play experts') to build more play opportunities that complement the swings and existing chalk paint game of hopscotch, follow the line and noughts and crosses. During the pedestrianisation trial more temporary play spaces were created outside the Town Hall and on The Strand itself using chalk paint. With the blessing of the play experts, these included a 'tuna and ladders game and some dancing footsteps.

Also chosen by the play experts, a permanent play whare was installed at Kororāreka marae. Made by locals, this whare has the night sky painted on its ceiling and has been gifted the name "Te Whare kohungahunga o Matariki". The name echoes the whakatauki "Kia kaha te tuupato me te tiaki i ngaa koohungahunga kia tupu kaha ai kia tupu ora ai" (Be energetic in cautioning and looking after the young people so they grow up strong and healthy) and references Matariki - the life force that radiates and strengthens. The whare was opened with an event in early April 2025.

### Beach access along The Strand

Explorations for improved and increased beach access have revealed the complexity of providing steps with rails.

To better understand this, a coastal assessment process report was commissioned and delivered. This established a 50-year history of wind and tides to understand the impact on the waterfront. While mitigating and remedying erosion is larger than this project can accommodate, that process impacts on the installation of permanent beach access.

Instead, temporary beach access is being explored. 'Soft approaches' are supported by Heritage New Zealand and Northland Regional Council and offer a relatively low cost and low risk way to learn more about the environment while providing access in the shorter term.

Further progress on temporary options requires input from Northland Regional Council and Far North District Council. That work is in process.

## All our placemaking actions are guided by these principles:

Including Mana Whenua	Offering manaakitanga & hospitality	Building kotahitanga & working together	Respecting & enhancing existing charm	Improving access for various ages & abilities
Sharing stories & histories	Being creative, fun & generative	Having little negative impact on the natural environment	Complementing local businesses	Working within existing rules & regulations

*Manaaki: The Strand is the gateway to Russell/Kororāreka. Its 'front door'. The place to welcome guests. So I didn't see The Strand as only 'things to do' or a 'place to be more comfortable' but also a statement of who we are or aspire to be.*

## Our timeline

2021	April 2024	April-May 2024	April-May 2024	June 2024	June-July 2024	September 2024 - May 2025	May-August 2025
Placemaking pūtea	Media and Facebook engagement	Pop-up shop idea gathering	Survey idea gathering	Activation weekend refining ideas	Voting for priorities and draft plan	Working groups deliver/trial initial priorities	Decisions on permanent installations made



# **Chapter 1: Introduction and context**

Our plan builds on what has gone before, and what matters in the context of Kororāreka Russell and Far North District Council in 2024.

## **1. Histories**

Kororāreka has many amazing stories to tell and much of that is still seeking to be told.

### **Māori histories**

#### **/connections and sites of significance**

A whakataukāki from Rāhiri explains the interconnected relationships between the descendants of both revered sons.

**Ka mimiti te puna ki Taumārere,  
ka tōtō te puna ki Hokianga.  
Ka tōtō te puna ki Taumārere,  
ka mimiti te puna ki Hokianga.**

When the fountain of Taumārere is empty  
The fountain of Hokianga is full  
When the fountain of Taumārere is full  
The fountain of Hokianga is empty

Rāhiri had drawn upon the imagery of two rivers; Hokianga in the west and Taumārere in the east, to show his sons that what happened to one affected the other. Their fortunes were intertwined, and so the whakataukāki represents an alliance of destinies of Ngāpuhi on the Tai Tama Wahine (eastern) and Tai Tama Tāne (western) coasts.

The eastern coast was called Tai Tama Wahine because of its beautiful, tranquil harbours and bays. And although still beautiful, Tai Tama Tāne was less forgiving than the east coast, more rugged and a thousand times more dangerous.”<sup>3</sup>

Kororāreka is one of the oldest villages in the country as being occupied by Pākehā, first and foremost as a trading port which had been domiciled 600 yrs prior to their arrival by Ngaare Raumati.

The historical significance of Kororāreka and its place in shaping the future of Aotearoa is well documented as we commemorate 180 yrs of Te Putaki o te riri more commonly known as the Northern Wars in 2025.

Kotahitanga, the process of working together to Hohou te Rongo - bring the peace, means that we work across the space of difference to honour both our past , present and future ideals.

Placemaking has been one of the processes to create shared outcomes premised off our collective future ideals Tangata Whenua Tangata Tiriti.

<sup>3</sup> Rāwiri Taonui, 'Ngāpuhi - Ancestors', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/ngapuhi/page-3> (accessed 20 April 2023)

## Settler/colonial history

Kororāreka Russell occupies a unique place in Aotearoa New Zealand's history. Captain Cook brought 'Endeavour' into the Bay of Islands in November 1769 during his first voyage to Aotearoa. Other explorers followed and by the late 18th century the area was providing a place for British, French and American whaling crews to rest, replenish and carry out repairs.

Whalers were soon followed by traders, and Kororāreka became a chief place of trade and the unofficial outpost of British presence in Aotearoa in the 1820s under the protection of Chief Whareumu. In 1827, Augustus Earle described the area as:

*"...the general place of rendezvous for all Europeans whom chance might bring into this bay... the spot is a most delightful one, being about three-quarters of a mile in extent, sheltered by two picturesque promontories, and possessing a fine circular firm, sandy beach, on which there is seldom much surf so that boats can at all times land and haul up."*

A small village began to develop and by 1835 an Anglican church was built where, five years later in January 1840, Governor Hobson first read the British proclamation of governorship. Christ Church, Pompallier Mission and the original Duke of Marlborough date from this era. The village was a thriving port, the busiest in the country but in 1845 the Battle of Kororareka saw the town largely abandoned. Slowly, however, people returned; the current Gables is dated 1847. Maps from the 1850s-70s show a small grid of streets on the flat waterfront area, with the commercial centre and wharf in the same position as they are today. The Customs House was built in the 1870s and other buildings were added in the colonial style, including Russell school in 1892

Until 1930 there was no road access to Russell and all visitors and goods came and left by sea. Nonetheless by the late 19th century, Russell was becoming a town for the retired.





## **2. Placemaking context in Kororāreka Russell**

The Operative Far North District Plan 2009 is a planning document that manages land use and subdivision in the district. Kororāreka Russell town is therefore subject to the ordinance in the Operative Plan which is given effect by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). This document determines whether a resource consent is required for development.

Each land parcel in Russell is subject to a different combination of zoning and overlay controls. Therefore, each project needs to be considered individually when the project's exact physical location is known after a detailed design process to see whether resource consent is required; and whether the proposed placemaking initiative can achieve the objectives of the zone and overlay. Generally, however, most of the land in Kororāreka Russell is in the Russell Township Zone, and properties around Cass Street, York Street and The Strand are zoned for commercial uses. The pink line on the below map indicates the boundary of the Russell Township Basin and Gateway Area, and the black hashed line indicates the boundary of the Russell Heritage Precinct.

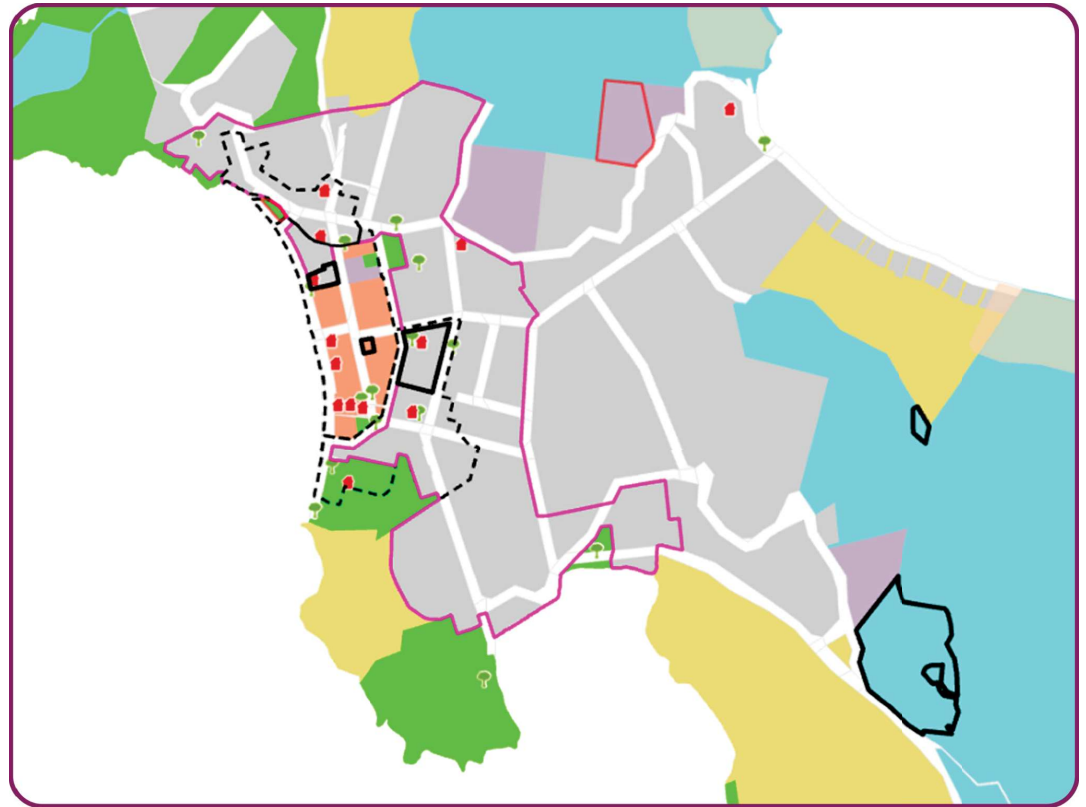
Council is currently undertaking a review of the Operative Far North District Plan 2009, and the Proposed District Plan<sup>4</sup> will come into effect in 2026. When this change happens, the land currently zoned Commercial will become Mixed Use except for 1 Walker Passage, Russell which is proposed to become zoned 'Maori Purpose – Rural'. It is important to note, when there is a change proposed to a heritage control, that change comes into effect immediately. Therefore, any project proposed in the Russell Heritage Precinct must comply with the proposed heritage provisions now.

---

<sup>4</sup> Any proposed rules may change due to submissions and appeals.

Some other planning features of note on and around The Strand are:

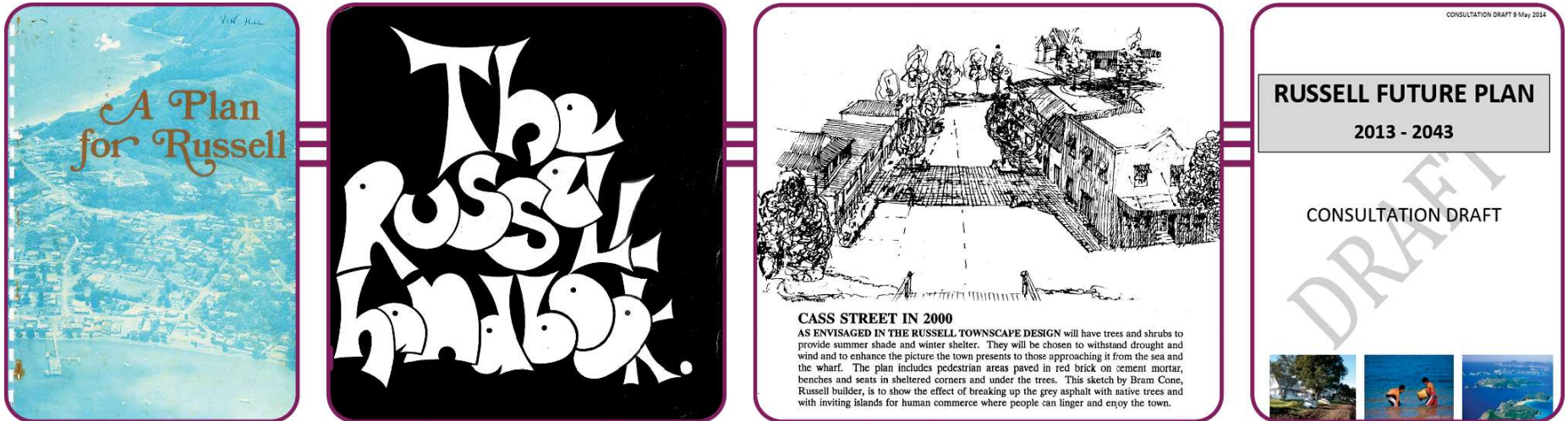
- The ocean to the west of the Strand (Title NA399/137) is revested in the Crown Sec 5 Foreshore and Seabed Endowment Revesting Act 1991.
- The park at 6 York Street is an FNDC Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 but is zoned Commercial.
- The properties at 1, 13, 21, 27 and 37 The Strand are identified as individually significant Heritage Sites.
- The properties at 4 York Street and 37 The Strand containing Notable Trees.
- All properties along the Strand will be subject to some or all of the four Natural Hazards and Risks overlays in the new District Plan: Coastal Flood (Zone 1: 50 Year Scenario), Coastal Flood (Zone 2: 100 Year Scenario), Coastal Flood (Zone 3: 100 Year + Rapid Sea Level Rise Scenario) and River Flood (Zone 1: 50 Year Scenario).



**Excerpt: Operative Far North District Plan 2009 Zoning for Kororāreka Russell**

## Previous Placemaking Work

With a focus on The Strand and waterfront, our Placemaking Plan brings previous placemaking work dating from 1977<sup>5</sup> together with current legislative requirements and over 1300 thoughts from those here today.



Common threads through all the documents include:

preserving the scenic beauty, sites of significance and charming ambiance of heritage architecture	"creatively integrating the new with the old"	balancing local environmental, social, cultural and economic wellbeing	securing existing maritime facilities and supporting tourism	agreed ways of working well together
--	---	--	--	--------------------------------------

<sup>5</sup> A summary of these is attached as Appendix 2.

Previous documents often involved significant community engagement and input. They also frequently focused on similar actions: traffic management, wayfinding, shared use, improving amenity values, bringing history alive, enhancing infrastructure, containing development and complying with legislative requirements. This plan builds on that information in the context of what people told us is most important now.

In 2024, locals shared over 880 submissions and 1300 ideas. These were prioritised by 394 locals (49.4% of the usually resident population<sup>6</sup>) who were thinking not just of themselves but of the unique mix of people who live here part and full-time, those who visit the area and future generations. They were also thinking about the place itself:

The mix of Māori purpose, conservation, commercial, maritime, residential and public uses	Preservation of unique historic and scenic features	Pedestrian access and safety	Existing infrastructure such as seats and picnic tables	Climate adaptation and being in a flood zone	The need to create opportunities for young people
---	---	------------------------------	---	--	---

---

<sup>6</sup> There were 798 usual residents in the 2023 Census (up from 762 in 2018). Census night population was 1011, down from 1023 in 2018 (so 213 visitors). 64.2% of the usually population were born in Aotearoa New Zealand, and their median age is 61 years. The number of those aged under 64 years fell between censuses. 84.6% of usual residents identify as European, with 23.3% of the population being of Māori descent.



### 3. Placemaking at Far North District Council

*“Placemaking is an approach where people work together to make places better, not only for themselves but for others and for the place itself.” Placemaking Aotearoa, Why Placemaking?*

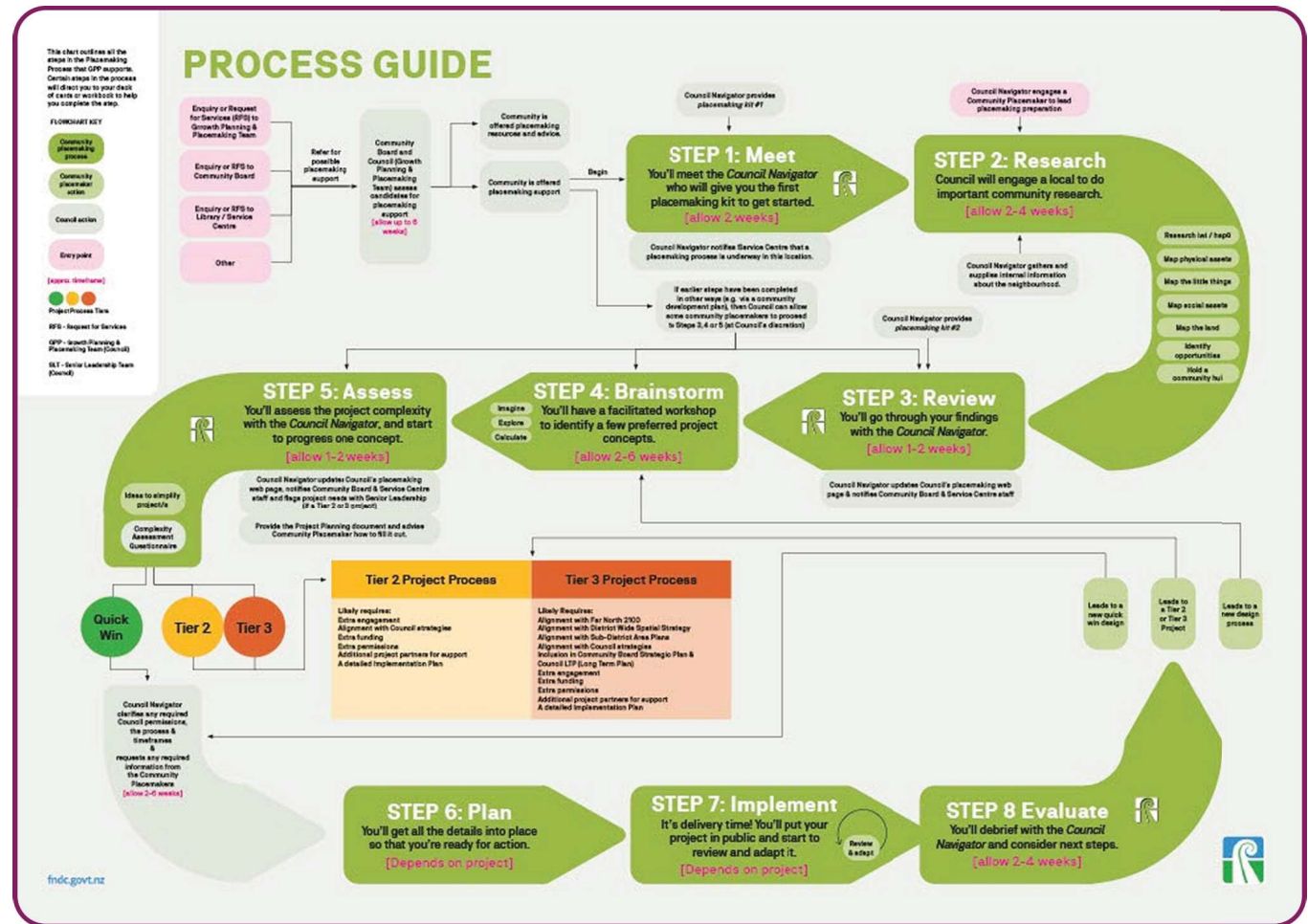
The Far North District Council's aronga/mission is “He ara Tāmata” which means Creating Great Places. Therefore, in 2023, Far North District Council created the Growth Planning and Placemaking Team to give effect to this mission.

Placemaking is not a destination, it's a process. When Council is participating in a placemaking initiative, it is so that Council can ensure that the ideas of an individual or a group – who want to improve the public realm for the benefit of their community – are supported by that whole community to make a change to a public space.

Placemaking begins at a specific public space. When that space is owned by Council, that usually means there are a range of other approvals that might be required before the initiative championed by the community can be built or installed, such as:

- The local Community Board or Council may need to approve the project,
- There may be a range of safety considerations relating to safe use and ongoing maintenance, particularly if children will be playing on or near the public space,
- A resource consent may be required,
- Depending on the project's scale, Council may need to consider whether the project aligns with its strategic vision,
- There may be other government agencies who have an interest in the land, for example if there are environmental hazards, heritage controls, or the projects abuts a highway,
- There also may be conditions relating to funding.

A best practice placemaking process guide (P19), developed by placemaking consultant Ryan Reynolds, was used for this project to assist the Kororāreka Russell community to step through the placemaking process. This placemaking plan document, which captures the eleven initiatives which resulted from the below process, is documenting the engagement process and is a non-statutory document which will be used by the Community Board in future to allocate grant funding for placemaking.





## **Chapter 2: Placemaking process**

Placemaking in Kororāreka Russell was already well underway before the current placemaking process at Far North District Council was developed. This means, with Council's support, our placemaking in Kororāreka Russell is based on ideas put forward by the community to improve The Strand in 2021, as well as those included in earlier documents. Our placemaking activities have used Far North District Council's placemaking process guide as a road map and the placemaking projects are funded by an original grant from 2021 - good things take time!

### **Step 1**

### **Meet (February 2024)**

Our Placemaking Project Steering Group was formed in early 2024, with a clear mandate to build on previous ideas and confirm priority projects to make happen. Taking a “community-led, Council-supported” approach, the group included representatives from the major community groups in Kororāreka, including Mana Whenua:

- Deb Rewiri – Kororāreka Marae, Russell Wharf Trust
- Bob Drey – Russell Protection Society
- Tim Grant – Russell Wharf Trust, Resilient Russell (passed away 15 May 2024)
- Helen Ough Dealy – Russell Museum
- Marsha Davis – Kororāreka Marae, Museum
- David McKenzie – Russell Protection Society, Russell Landcare
- Jane Hindle – Russell-Opua Subdivision Representative, Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board
- Manuela Gmuer-Hornell – Former Community Board Member

The focus for this group was to establish the kind of placemaking the community wanted to see and to make sure that the widest range of community members were engaged in deciding what this was, particularly the quieter voices. The Steering Group role has been very much about guiding the overall project to completion in ways that ensured fair process and wide engagement, helped define desired outcomes from community input, and progressed identified projects.

In terms of actual placemaking, the role of our Steering Group is to hold the overall vision and budget. Noting that placemaking is an ongoing activity and not only confined to this project, specific decisions were made by the working groups and these were only questioned if they had potential to compromise the overall outcomes as prioritised by locals, or if there wasn't adequate time or financial budgets available. Once decisions on projects were reached, Working Groups involving stakeholders, i.e. businesses, residents and other relevant parties, depending on the project, would take over and determine the actual outcomes and implementation.

Our Steering Group and Working Groups have also been advised by Council with regard to technical requirements and Council practices and strategies. Council have also provided coordination support and resourced independent contractors to support the process, particularly in terms of community engagement, data collation, and design.





## Step 2

## Research and engagement (April-May 2024)

Drawing on the existing knowledge and guided by the Steering Group, this phase of placemaking here in Kororāreka Russell, used five ways of engaging with the community and gathering up to date information:

- Pop-up shop
- Survey
- Russell Noticeboard Facebook group
- Website
- Media and other communications.

These methods worked together, with slightly different (but similar) thoughts and ideas emerging from each.

People told us how much they love and want to look after the beauty, view, charm and ambiance of the area as well as pedestrian access and the casual social interaction that happens there.

Many people talked about how much they appreciated the opportunity to be involved and they also shared over 1300 ideas for improvements in 880 submissions!<sup>7</sup>



---

<sup>7</sup> Ideas from the pop-up shop, survey and Facebook comments attracted similar thoughts but in different quantities, suggesting that the different methods gathered ideas from different population groups and that, together, the methods attracted a wider range of perspectives than from any one method alone.



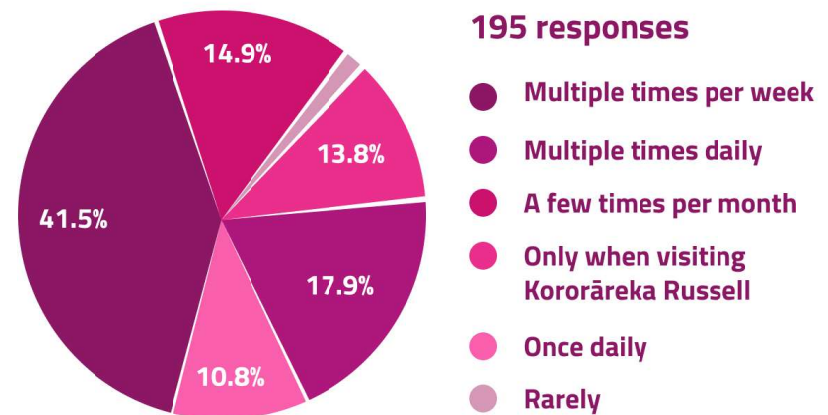
*It was one of the best examples of public participation that I've seen in a long, long time.*

*The fact that it was set up almost like someone's living room and that you could have a seat and chairs and sit around and talk, I thought was great... a lot of people came in just to read what other people had said and that sparked their own idea.*

The most talked about ideas for action were focused on reducing vehicle access to The Strand; adding more play spaces; including more attractions, history and culture; improving the appearance, accessibility and utility of public spaces and increasing seating, all while “not fundamentally changing” the area and “maintaining our unique charm”. People are also keen to involve local artists and use natural materials.

*Make sure our artists are engaged in any and all design.  
A set of stairs along the beach but make them look natural...*

## How often do you go to The Strand?



## 2. Survey

Our survey was open for three weeks and was mainly completed by residents, many of whom have enjoyed The Strand for decades and who visit The Strand several times a week or more.

198 people, mostly aged 40 and over, talked about how much they enjoy and value the area and most offered numerous specific ideas for improvements.

*Pedestrians only and traffic free! More regular plantings and better maintenance of the garden area around the Town Hall. More heritage seating on waterfront & picnic tables in Town Hall reserve. Better & more regular maintenance of the grassy verges near the beach.*

*...Erosion protection for the bank, maybe even reclaim some of it someday so there is more bank to sit on and enjoy. A less road-looking road but allowing vehicle access for residents and those that aren't great on their feet and still wish to enjoy the waterfront. Maybe some paved areas, colourful plant boxes, more of the historical characters and installations. Recycling bins. Reminders to keep dogs on leash...*

Many people talked about how maintenance, restoration and improvements should enhance the natural beauty, “vibe”, charm and amenity value that already exists. The most popular ideas to make the area “even better” were improved traffic management, increased seating, more play spaces and more attractions, history, culture and wayfinding. In the short term, people would like to reduce vehicles on The Strand; increase seating; add more play spaces and improve the appearance, accessibility and utility of public spaces.



### 3. 'Russell Noticeboard' Facebook Group comments

Over 120 comments were recorded about placemaking during the time the pop-up shop was open, attracting over 700 likes. These comments were often strident, with locals clearly demonstrating their love for The Strand and waterfront area and most people seeing room for both improvements and looking after what is already there, as long as it does not adversely affect the existing beauty and ambiance.

*Please don't mess with the Strand! OK, keep the cars out but no more diluting the old world charm. It would be nice if the bank down to the beach was tidied up so it isn't just a weed whacked job. Curbing/footpath??? Nice steps down the beach in intervals along the beach, nice planting along the area.*

The most numerous comments and likes focused on more opportunities for play; improved appearance, accessibility and utility of public spaces; reducing the presence of vehicles on The Strand; and more seating. People were very interested in creating more family, child and youth-centred spaces in the area and were keen to see local stories and histories represented in interactive and fun ways. Only 13 posts (with 12 likes) wanted no changes at all. Several people encouraged people to embrace the opportunity while others posted their appreciation of being part of informing the project.

*Hey everybody...stop and listen. Regarding the current Placemaking dialogue... It is about POSITIVE input into innovative and POSITIVE ideas FOR our village. DO IT.*

*An amazing job you all. It was good to hear positive results from the people who I spoke to.*

## 4. Website

Our temporary website 'Kororāreka Kōrero' ([kororarekakorero.nz](http://kororarekakorero.nz)) was established during this period and has been updated throughout the project. It hosts information on the process to date, what people asked for and priority projects as well as more general information about what placemaking is and a history of placemaking-like activities in Kororāreka Russell.

The website has also been linked to surveys and traffic monitoring devices and is the main collection of information about the placemaking project in the public domain.

## 5. Media and other communications

Our research and engagement phase was also supported by a number of other media. These include articles published in Russell Lights Ngā Marama o Kororāreka and an article by Far North District Council as well as direct email engagement with emails to those who had participated in the survey or who had asked to go on the mailing list (around 450 people), a community email group (800 members) and various announcements by members of the Steering Group. Posters were also put up in many different shops around town, including in the pop-up shop itself.



## Step 3

## Review (May-June 2024)

<b>798</b> usual residents	<b>880</b> submissions	<b>1303</b> ideas	<b>11</b> priority themes	<b>10</b> guiding principles
-------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------------

Experts were engaged to collate the data gathered from locals, develop guiding principles, ensure improvements could be woven together in cohesive ways, and to make stronger connections with related projects.

*More presence and visibility of Te Ao Māori as determined by Mana Whenua - ngā hapū o Kororāreka*

Our Steering Group used this information to design an activation weekend for locals to begin to refine the top ideas and make plans for action!

### Overall: Most talked about from pop-up shop, survey and Facebook.

<b>1</b>	Improved traffic management on The Strand (398) including vehicles removed (227) and vehicles restricted (171)	<b>7</b>	Paths for pedestrians, cyclists, scooters (83)
<b>2</b>	Play spaces, parks and games (296)	<b>8</b>	Upgrading, fixing, maintaining drains, grassed areas, signage, CCTV (72)
<b>3</b>	More casual seating (194)	<b>9</b>	Cleaner and tidier (68)
<b>4</b>	Landscaping and access to the beach (158)	<b>10</b>	Do nothing except maintenance (60)
<b>5</b>	Picnic tables, BBQ, hangi (145)	<b>11</b>	Erosion protection (51)
<b>6</b>	More attractions, history, culture and wayfinding (94)		

Our Steering Group also adopted a set of underpinning principles to guide the project as a whole.

### Guiding Principles

Including Mana Whenua	Offering manaakitanga & hospitality	Building kotahitanga & working together	Respecting & enhancing existing charm	Improving access for various ages & abilities
Sharing stories & histories	Being creative, fun & generative	Having little negative impact on the natural environment	Complementing local businesses	Working within existing rules & regulations

## Step 4

## Brainstorm (June 2024)

50+

people

11

key projects confirmed

10

hours

4

pou blessed

2

chalk games complete!

Our activation weekend shared findings from the engagement stage (Steps 2 and 3), and created space for these to be further developed.

We re-used the large map from the pop-up shop; printed guiding principles and inspirational images; made an early prototype of signposting, designs for perspex picnic table cloths and a trial pavement game; as well as providing space to talk, write and draw ideas and designs.

The weekend also celebrated Mana Whenua stories, including a blessing of newly installed pou at Te Hikuwai.



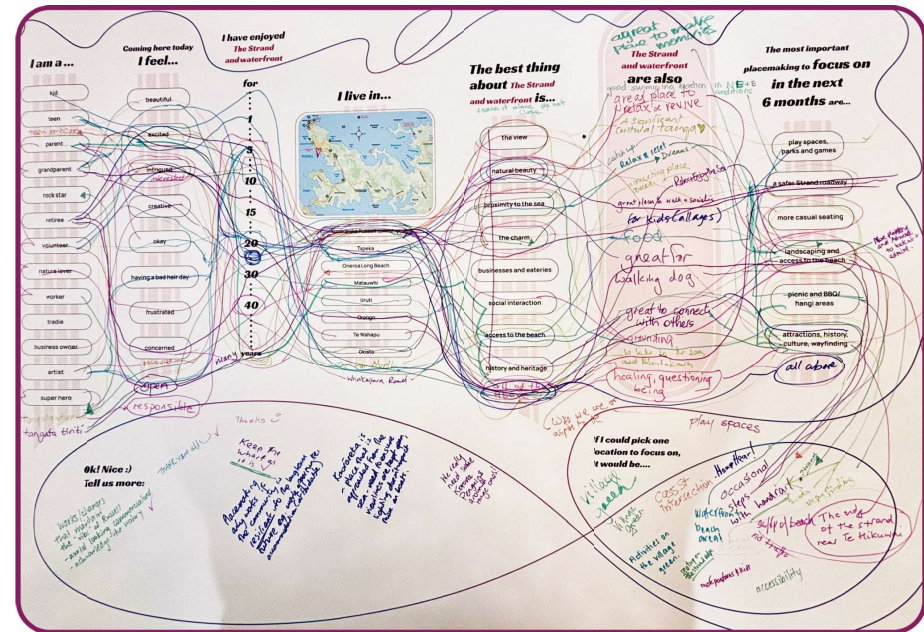


## Activation weekend

Our activation weekend was attended mainly by locals, many of whom have enjoyed The Strand and waterfront for decades. People were excited to be there and around 50 people dropped in over the two days.

Projects identified in the earlier engagement were confirmed and 11 were further developed, ready for an online voting process to identify priorities. We also installed some initial temporary play-focused placemaking on the pavement by the Town hall.

Conversations and designs highlighted a need for a cohesive overall design so that activities complemented and enhanced not only one another but the existing character too.



## Step 5

### Assess (July-August 2024)

<b>456</b> People helped assess projects	<b>394</b> online votes	<b>56</b> primary school tamariki	<b>7</b> day care children and their mums	<b>44</b> People interested in joining projects
---	----------------------------	--------------------------------------	--	--

To make sure the project was achievable, we assessed projects in two stages.

First, we ran an online voting process to identify priorities and 2 workshops for tamariki to contribute. Then projects were assessed for their feasibility so a work programme could be created, priorities developed and potential collaborators identified. Some priorities, for example, could potentially be part of existing work programmes, while others had to meet certain regulatory requirements which could take some time.

## 1. Voting

338 people voted online, with a further 55 voting at the Russell Museum. 56 children took part in a workshop at school and 7 day car children and their mums gave their views too.

Voting was in 2 parts:

- **Part One** focused on enhancing the waterfront, and
- **Part Two** focused on creating a safer Strand.

### Part One: Enhancing the waterfront:

Ten projects were included. All of these came out of the activation weekend. Voters were asked to choose their favourite four ideas only and number them 1 to 4 in order of preference. Tallied votes revealed clear priorities for action.

Rank	Project	Rank	Project
1	Natural steps with rails for beach access (202) <sup>8</sup>	6	Additional or new pontoon with water play feature e.g. slide (118)
2	Add more public seats along The Strand (183)	7	Explore options for drinking fountain (87)
3	Play trail along The Strand (145)	8	Identify stories & how to tell them (longer term project) (79)
4	Additional picnic tables, rubbish bins in various locations (140)	9	Review existing signage, commission new signage (77)
5	Commission landscape plan for Village Green (128)	10	BBQ and/or Hangi area – explore options for a location (52)

---

<sup>8</sup> Erosion featured highly with 51 votes



## Part Two: Creating a safer Strand:

Four options for creating a safer Strand were presented. All of these came out of the activation weekend and all but one were trials for a six month period. The remaining option was for the status quo.

<b>Trial options</b>	<b>Overall/Tangata Whenua</b>
<b>Option 1 – All of The Strand as a shared space</b> Pedestrians have priority. Traffic is allowed with a maximum of 10kph. Road paraphernalia is removed or reduced (like Whangarei town centre or High Street, Auckland). The road is designed to discourage drivers from driving on The Strand and drive slowly if they do so.	<b>15% / 21%</b>
<b>Option 2 – Pedestrian zone for all Strand but access for essential vehicles.</b> All of The Strand is closed to traffic other than emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles, disability permit holders, Strand residents and businesses only. 10kph speed limit.	<b>45% / 36%</b>
<b>Option 3 – Pedestrian zone for middle Strand only from Cass Street to Pitt Street.</b> As above, pedestrian zone with essential vehicles. 10 kph speed limit. Shared zone for north and south Strand.	<b>19% / 5%</b>
<b>Status Quo</b> Vehicles and pedestrians continue to use The Strand throughout the year, with a speed limit of 20kmh	<b>21% / 38%</b>

Tallied votes did not reveal a clear (majority) option to trial so the Steering Group recommended that the Council approve a decision to allow a trial of both options, pedestrian and shared space. People could then see how each option would work.

## 2. Feasibility and viability

The projects to focus on first were those that most people wanted, that could comply with regulations relatively easily and were within reach of the allocated budget. Our Steering Group felt that increasing seating, adding play elements and improving beach access satisfied all of these requirements.

In terms of testing how The Strand could be made safer through a temporary change in traffic management, the answer was less clear. First our Steering Group felt they needed a majority to have a mandate to proceed. Although the highest proportion of votes was for Option 2, this was not a majority. However, by combining the result for Option 2 with the result for Option 3, a compromise could be made. This compromise was to pedestrianise the south Strand and made the north Strand a shared space.

This option was tabled at the Community Board before being approved at a full Council meeting in September 2024.

Short term:	Medium term:	Longer term:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Strand traffic management trial (6 months, extended to 9 months)</li><li>• Adding more seats along The Strand</li><li>• A play trail along The Strand</li><li>• Natural steps with rails for beach access</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional picnic tables and rubbish bins</li><li>• Additional pontoon with water play feature</li><li>• Commission a landscape plan for the Village Green</li><li>• Explore options for drinking fountain</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review signage and commission new signage</li><li>• Identify stories and how to tell them</li><li>• Explore options for BBQ/Hangi area</li></ul>



## **Chapter 3: Prioritised projects**

Funded projects	Investment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Strand traffic management trial (6 months, extended to 9 months)</li><li>• Ambassadors to assist the trial during peak period</li><li>• Adding more seats along The Strand</li><li>• A play trail along The Strand</li><li>• Natural steps with rails for beach access</li></ul>	<p>\$34,500</p> <p>\$5,500</p> <p>\$25, 000</p> <p>\$7, 500</p> <p>\$20, 000</p>
Total	\$92, 500

### **Step 6**

### **Planning (September 2024 - April 2025)**

Planning for the four initial projects used a working group approach. Four working groups were established to focus on the projects prioritised for short term development. These groups consisted of people from the local community and relevant experts. Each group included members of the Steering Group and a local designer, who worked on all of the first four projects. The designer also developed an overall plan to ensure individual projects contribute cohesively to the waterfront area.

Our working groups made key decisions related to their projects and put forward requests with design work for consideration and approval by our Steering Group. Our Steering Group allocated placemaking funds and held the overarching coordination of placemaking activities. The planning phase moved at a different pace for each of the working groups, due to the variation in nature of activities they were focused on and, for all groups, planning and implementation was somewhat iterative.

# 1. The Strand traffic management trial

This working group developed a trial pedestrianisation along the South Strand, including the intersection plan on Cass Street. The trial saw access for vehicles restricted from Russell Fresh to Haratu, except for residents, emergency access and essential services from November 2024 to June 2025. The north side of The Strand became a shared road. This was later extended to September 2025 to allow for a decision on any permanent changes to be made as a result of the trial.

No permanent civil works were allowed, because the trial had to be temporary. Design and installation also had a very short timeframe of 10 weeks so everything could be in place by the Christmas Parade on 8 December. The key outcomes were to:

- Create a more pleasant, traffic free environment for people using the Strand by reducing or removing vehicles
- Improve safety for restaurant waiting staff serving alfresco diners food by reducing or removing the need to cross through traffic to reach patrons
- Remove or reduce the risk to children who access the beach by slowing down cars or removing traffic
- Avoid any major disruption to businesses and residents located on the Strand who need use the Strand for access
- Ensure that most of the community feel that the changes are positive or neutral.



Most of the planning was undertaken in late 2024 (October-December). The Traffic Management Group were aware that these changes had the potential to cause issues over the peak period, so reduce the risk of confusion, it was agreed to contract Ambassadors for a 10 day period to explain the changes to visitors, the purpose of the trial and to discourage people from turning left into the pedestrianised area.

**Investment: \$40, 000 (\$34,500 +\$5,500 for Ambassadors)**

## 2. Public Seating

This working group developed the public seating project. The existing seats were a mixture of styles and designs: 'Victorian', 'Modern', timber slat benches and slabs so, guided by an audit of existing street furniture and the initial overall design, key outcomes were to:

- Increase public seating
- Improve accessibility to seats
- Improve design cohesion of seats

This group spent considerable time planning, being careful to complement decisions of the other working groups, and not impede beach access, restrict play opportunities nor compromise the road trial, as well as ensure their work would be fully compliant with planning, building, heritage and health and safety rules. This meant the seating plan and implementation process was revised several times with seat positions and materials changing. In April 2025, a final design was agreed and the group proceeded to:

- Install five new slab seats with copper ends. Two of these new slab seats are positioned on the north Strand, past the Customs House; one to replace the 'Old Man's seat' on Cass Street which was rotten and was removed; one on the middle Strand near Butterfish; and one on the south Strand near Pompallier.
- Replace two existing, deteriorated benches on the wharf with three seats previously removed from outside the Duke of Marlborough.
- Remove one rotting slab from opposite Russell Fresh.
- Refurbish and renew remaining existing slab, bench and conventional seats.
- Remove one slab seat altogether near Seaside to open up access to the beach steps on that side and to improve access from the wharf to the Strand.
- Re-purpose if possible part of the original Old Man's Seat for a seat near the new play where.
- Upgrade several of the concrete slabs under existing seats in the middle Strand area by the Village Green and Marae to be safer and less obtrusive by placing soil around their edges, landscaping and grassing to blend into the existing verge.

**Investment: \$25, 000**



### 3. Play Trail

This working group developed the play trail project, guided by 'play experts' from Russell School. Key outcomes were to:

- Incorporate spaces for tamariki along the waterfront area
- Include tamariki in the design process
- Showcase and resource local talent, trades, businesses and volunteers

Inspired by the chalk paint games developed as part of the activation weekend, the play experts wanted to see painted 'dancing footsteps' and an oversized board game as well as a play whare, swings and a 'treasure box and hunt' using natural materials and to "not have anything you can find in a school playground".

The group used this input to plan a staged approach that:

- Refreshed the original chalk paint games
- Added a 'tuna and ladders' game complete with a spinning wheel 'dice'
- Created a bespoke publicly accessible play whare
- Linked everything together with painted dancing footsteps

Planning for a toy library and treasure hunt was also initiated but not developed in detail. Planning took place from November 2024 - January 2025.

**Investment: \$7, 500**

## 4. Beach Access

The purpose of this working group was to explore improving access to the beach, especially for those with limited mobility and at certain areas along the waterfront where erosion is an issue. This was recognised as not being a small change but seen as essential before permanent things could happen on the grassy bank. Natural materials were favoured, with a handrail on one side to match the wharf steps. Key outcomes were to:

- Improve accessibility to the beach
- Reduce erosion

Initial planning (pre Christmas 2024) identified four suitable locations:

1. Opposite Pitt Street intersection.
2. Opposite the Town Hall pathway.
3. Opposite the former Verandah café.
4. Opposite the pathway from Clendon Cottage (Pompallier).

However, these locations were, by their nature, places of high erosion which in and of itself, was causing access issues in the first place.

The planning phase also confirmed that, for any structure on the waterfront, not only is a Resource Consent required, but also an archaeological assessment. Further, given access to the beach also involved the tidal area, Regional Council Resource Consent was also required.

The issue then became where to start: address the erosion problems or attempt a short-term temporary fix to provide access until the next cyclone or storm event arrived. The Steering Group decided to commit funds towards a Coastal Process Assessment, a pre-requisite for any Resource Consent application to the Northland Regional Council along with the Kororāreka Russell Wharf Trust, Far North Holdings and the Far North District Council. This report was delivered just before Christmas, and indicated (unsurprisingly) that action was required.

A further detailed design would be required to tailor a hybrid solution to suit the tidal patterns of Kororāreka Bay, so it was decided to pause any effort to create beach access until further information was to hand.

This was fortunate as Cyclone Tam would have washed any structures away, but it also highlighted that the erosion had to be tackled first which would potentially restore the gradient of the beach to enable access anyway.

**Investment: \$20, 000 (not yet spent)**

## 5. Other projects

Seven more placemaking outcomes were identified. These are currently unfunded and need to be costed to be progressed. For the medium term, these projects are:

- Additional picnic tables and rubbish bins
- Additional pontoon with water play feature
- Commission a landscape plan for the Village Green
- Explore options for drinking fountain

Identified longer term projects are:

- Review signage and commission new signage
- Identify stories and how to tell them
- Explore options for BBQ/Hangi area

**No investment allocated.**

## Step 7

# Implementation (December 2024 - May 2025)

## 1. The Strand traffic management

The trial was implemented before Christmas 2024, with the south Strand closed to all but essential traffic and the north Strand becoming a shared space. To achieve this, changes were made on Cass Street where planters, barrels and temporary rock gardens were installed to slow traffic. These were complemented by street signage and a painted whale tail on Cass Street as well as changes to various map apps to help direct traffic and slow traffic down.

With a focus on natural materials and an agreed colour palette, the trial focused on establishing the town square as an entranceway to the town for those arriving by boat. Drivers were discouraged from turning into Cass Street by signage, planters, gardens and a painted whale's tail on the road surface. The south Strand was marked as pedestrianised on various map apps too, which was particularly effective in reducing visitor traffic. Those who did drive into Cass Street were directed along the north side of The Strand. Both sides of The Strand received planted barrels to both slow any vehicles and continue the enhanced amenity value beyond the Cass Street area. True to the nature of a trial, some of the elements that were tested proved not to be suitable and several elements were altered as the trial progressed. These included:

- The removal of a rope barrier when it became clear there were issues, including a local operator not being able to remove and replace it, a restaurant owner seeing patrons turn away from it and general safety issues with it after dark. **The effect of this was that the trial became a shared space with signage to restrict traffic in one direction.**
- Repositioning of some planters and barrels to accommodate deliveries
- Improved signage
- Employment of 'ambassadors' over the busiest ten day period after Christmas





Data gathered shows that the amount of traffic on both the south and north Strand reduced significantly from the pre-trial period. As well, most comments (80%) gathered directly from both visitors and locals using the Strand over the summer were very positive, with a number of further suggestions to make the area even more user friendly and workable for locals, including businesses:

*The restricted traffic stretch is SO much more enjoyable with so few vehicles, I'd love it to stay like this. Visitors frequently express shock that the waterfront stretch from the boat ramp to the Marae is a public road.*

*Keep going. Do the same on the other side. Block off the road out the front of Seaside and only allow local residents to drive from the boat ramp to their homes on the other side.*

*I would move the planters and rocks from Cass Street. When a delivery truck arrives for the front supermarket the tour bus can't turn around. People can't get their vehicles to the end of the pier when loading or unloading a boat.*

*Wish the road was permanently blocked off (or having the barrels moved to block access during the trial). Love being able to wander*

*There is a need for a designated drop-off area at Russell Wharf, similar to what Paihia Wharf has. This would allow cars to park and unload passengers and gear for up to 30 minutes.*

*Change it back to how it was, the new system is hopeless, nowhere to park, can't drive safely as more people stand in the middle of the road.*



Feedback forms and surveys undertaken by the working group highlight improvements in the four assessment measures agreed by the group, with 80% rating the changes a 4 or 5/5 in the following categories:

- **AMENITY:** Voice recordings and survey responses about enjoyment or the amenity values placed on the Strand by locals and visitors
- **SAFETY:** Camera and traffic monitoring of pedestrian and vehicle numbers, sizes and speeds of vehicles
- **SPEED/QUANTITY:** Traffic monitoring of speeds from seasonally adjusted figures before and after
- **DISRUPTION:** Survey of residents as to whether they are happy.
- **COMMUNITY:** Overall community survey of how they feel about the changes.

A summary of data from the ambassadors and the Telram camera is in Appendix 3.

In April 2025, Far North District Council agreed to extend the trial to September 2025 so that a permanent solution could be agreed.



## 2. Public seating

Implementation of the seating plan began in April 2025. With installation support from Far North Holdings, the working group worked with willing locals and the Men's Shed to clean, repair, refurbish and add more public seating using natural, durable materials that are similar to those already used in other seats along the waterfront.

Starting with the cleaning and refurbishing of existing seats, the group added five new seats in various locations:

- One will replace the current “old man’s seat” on Cass Street. It will be higher than the current one too, so easier to use.
- One will go on the grass verge near Pompallier’s first gate.
- One between Butterfish and the “Arlidge” house
- One opposite the Customs House.
- One at the north end of the Strand by the swing opposite the boundary of numbers 43 & 45.

Access was improved for pedestrians and wheelchair users from the road to the wharf area on the north side of the waharoa and also to the beach steps on that side of the wharf which were blocked by a timber slab. Safety issues on several existing seats were addressed by landscaping the concrete slabs beneath them.

This work has added extra amenity for public enjoyment while enhancing the charm and ambience of the area which is such a unique feature of the historic village and its waterfront.

Council has agreed to take over ownership and maintenance of the seats into the future.

### **3. Play trail**

The implementation of the play trail happened in stages, with some ideas still in discussion (a ball library and a treasure trail).

#### **Chalk games**

Because local people (and not only children!) were enjoying the chalk games originally painted alongside the town hall in June 2024, a refresh of these was undertaken before Christmas 2025. This extended the life of a much loved addition to the area, brightened up the pathway from The Strand and provided an unobtrusive element of fun that complemented the traffic management trial. Chalk paint washes away over time so these games will need to be repainted regularly, refreshed in permanent paint or allowed to fade into memories.

#### **Swings**

An anonymous local donated and installed a series of swings in December 2024, after seeing the interest in having more play along the waterfront. These were removed by someone else a few weeks later, causing much discussion among locals who largely supported the swings. This discussion also highlighted the support for more play opportunities along the waterfront. The swings were replaced by the same local person in late February 2025.

#### **Tuna and Ladders game**

Designed and painted by a local artist, this human-sized game reflects the amazing migration journey tuna make travelling up to the Pacific from Kororāreka. The 'board' is complemented by a spinning 'dice' fixed to the wall of the hall and is located in close proximity to the refreshed 'chalk walk', using the same paints. Together these games create a small safe play zone near picnic and cafe tables in a way that contributes positively to the ambiance of the area. Large enough for children of all sizes to play, the game has been so well played that the chalk paint was already wearing off by the end of summer! As for the chalk games by the town hall, this game will also need to be repainted regularly, refreshed in permanent paint or allowed to fade into memories.



## Dancing Footsteps

Initially planned for after the road trial had finished, these steps were added in the late summer, while the road trial was still underway because the tamariki involved felt that waiting six months was “too long!”.

Using chalk paint with grit added, these child-sized footsteps in the same colour scheme as the Tuna and Ladders game were approved by the play experts and provide patterns to follow that lead into spins, twirls and a cha-cha, among other things. There are opportunities to play alone, as well as with a friend or partner and adding grit means the chalk paint complies with roading regulations but is still easy to remove.

The dancing footsteps were installed by the same local artist who painted the Tuna and ladders game and are easily removable, should The Strand not remain as a shared space. To last longer and be safe for vehicles, the dancing footsteps will need to be repainted in permanent paving paint.



## Play Whare

The play whare was built by a local volunteer from recycled and natural materials and positioned on a grassy area near Haratu to ensure plenty of open space for running and play. Gifted the name “Te Whare kohungahunga o Matariki”. The name echoes the whakatauki "Kia kaha te tuupato me te tiaki i ngaa koohungahunga kia tupu kaha ai kia tupu ora ai" (Be energetic in cautioning and looking after the young people so they grow up strong and healthy) and references Matariki - the life force that radiates and strengthens.

With no windows, the interior is dark enough to host a starry sky on its ceiling. Two painted feet link the play whare to the dancing footsteps on the road invite tamariki in.

The play whare was officially opened with an event on the eve of Children's Day 2025. Organised by members of the Play Trail working group, the official opening included fun activities for children and refreshments.

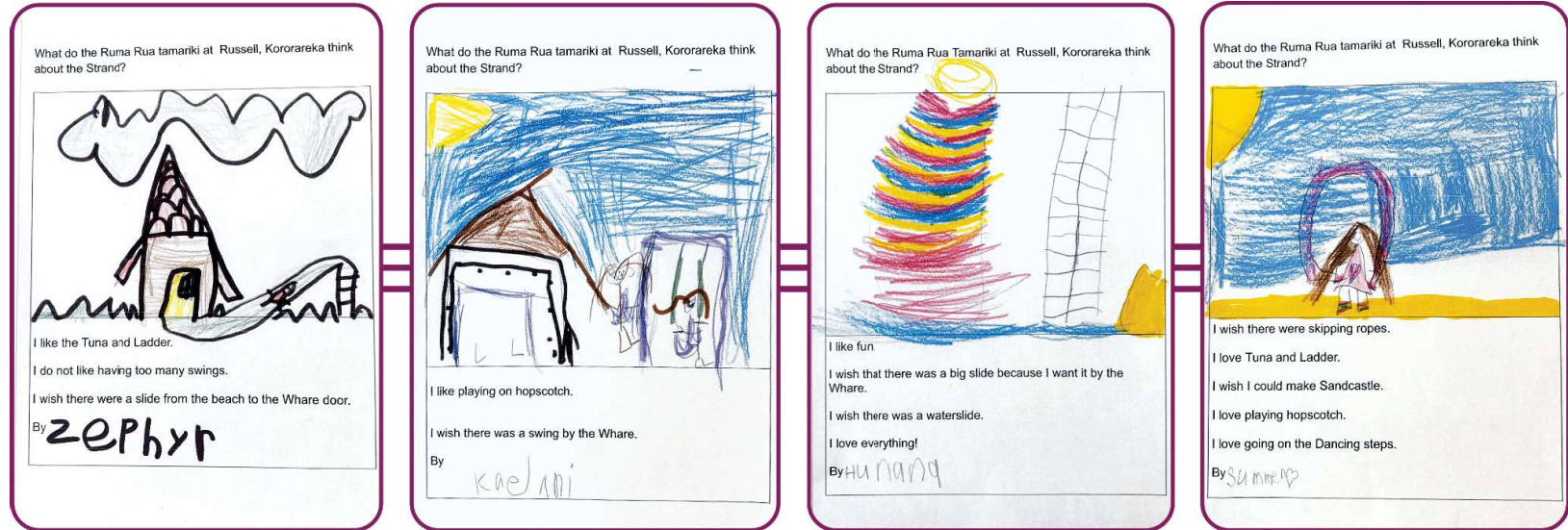
## Other play activities

The group has also explored a number of options for a treasure box and hunt and that (and other play ideas) may well be added to the play trail in time.

Feedback from Ruma Rua tamariki at Kororāreka School at the end of summer shared their appreciation ("awesome" was a familiar theme") for all the play trail elements. They also requested a larger hopscotch, the "twirly counter" for tuna and ladders fixed, steps to the beach and looking after the beach so it remains great for sandcastle building and swimming. Overall tamariki expressed a desire for more interactive, creative, and safe features to enhance The Strand's appeal for children and visitors. More aspirational changes from the tamariki are listed below. Those suggested by more than one person are in **bold**.

Playground enhancements	Waterfront improvements	Art and aesthetic features	Safety and maintenance	Unique features
<p><b>More swings</b></p> <p><b>A treehouse with a tyre swing</b></p> <p>A roundabout</p> <p>An obstacle course</p> <p><b>Adding elf houses into trees and a scavenger hunt to find them</b></p> <p>Painting chess boards on picnic tables</p> <p>Creating a race track</p>	<p><b>Installing more lights for improved visibility</b></p> <p><b>Bringing back the pontoon, possibly larger and adding a slide to it</b></p> <p>Providing public kayaks, skipping ropes and <b>drinking fountains</b></p> <p>A stand with names of birds you have to find</p>	<p>Adding paintings along the road</p> <p>Creating spaces for kids to draw with chalk on cement</p> <p>Rocks with treasure hunt themes on them</p> <p>A music wall where you can make your own music</p>	<p>Keeping large rocks by the road and wharf</p> <p>Removing rusty items from the beach to prevent injuries</p>	<p><b>A waterslide</b></p> <p><b>A slide from the beach to the play whare</b></p> <p>A swing to glide across the water and jump off</p>





Some of the feedback from tamariki.

## 4. Beach Access

No implementation of this work has started because of the need to address erosion issues. The allocated remaining funds for beach access are being held until we have a better understanding of what erosion mitigation steps will need to be taken. Clearly these funds will be insufficient for a project of this magnitude, but they may contribute towards specific costs, depending on the next steps.

In the meantime, the area near the cannon, opposite the Town Hall pathway, has been sandbagged as a short term protection. The roped off area has fallen into the beach, but remains to restrict access to the beach at this location. We are awaiting expert advice.

## Appendix 1: Summary of engagement findings

Topic	Summary description	# ideas Post its	# comments/ likes FB	# ideas 'even better' (rank)	# ideas 'small change'(rank)	Totals	Rank
Do nothing		16	13/12	11 (13)	8 (7)	60	11
More opportunities for fun and connection (n=126/22.2%)	Play spaces, parks, and games	55	24/182	37 (3)	10 (6)	296	1
	More attractions, history, culture and wayfinding	45	8/7	30 (4)	4 (14)	94	7
	Water and beach activities and amenities	27	1/0	8 (18)	1 (16)	37	15
	Events	16	2/4	4 (24)	1 (16)	27	18
Improve local infrastructure. (n=112/19.8%)	Pedestrian, bike, and scooter paths	30	5/37	5 (24)	6 (9)	83	8
	Better toilets and showers	16	3/15	4 (24)		38	14
	Drinking fountain	13		9 (17)	2 (15)	24	19
	Upgrade, fixing and maintaining local infrastructure	13	3/39	11 (13)	6 (9)	72	9
	Improved parking/enforcement	12		8 (18)	3 (14)	23	20
	Boating infrastructure (ramp, moorings, extended wharf)	11		6 (20)		17	24

Topic	Summary description	# ideas Post its	# comments/ likes FB	# ideas 'even better' (rank)	# ideas 'small change' (rank)	Totals	Rank
Make The Strand more beautiful, and retain the charm. (n=104/18.3%)	Cleaner, tidier public spaces	31		18 (8)	19 (3)	68	10
	Art	29		14 (10)	5 (12)	48	13
	Landscaping, gardening and hard landscaping for accessibility	23	10/104	15 (9)	6 (9)	158	5
	Making infrastructure more beautiful (pathways, building facades, re-paint wooden plinths etc.)	12		6 (20)		18	23
	Lighting	9	1/0	10 (16)		20	22
Cars. (n=93/16.4%)	Limit cars on The Strand (reduce speed, no cars in summer)	41	10/78	24 (6)	18 (4)	171	4
	Remove cars from The Strand (except for emergency, resident, and disability card-holding vehicles)	40	9/62	72 (1)	44 (1)	227	2
	Keep cars on The Strand, as is	12	3/5	11 (13)		31	16

Topic	Summary description	# ideas Post its	# comments/ likes FB	# ideas 'even better' (rank)	# ideas 'small change'(rank)	Totals	Rank
Improve outdoor public spaces to spend time. (n=69/5.1%)	More casual seating along The Strand	27	6/78	60 (2)	23 (2)	194	3
	More usable space on the Village green	11		11 (13)		22	21
	New public gathering areas	9	2/0	6 (20)	11 (5)	28	17
	Picnics, BBQ and hangi spaces	9	13/87	29 (5)	7 (8)	145	6
	Less business encroachment into public spaces		3/5	23 (7)		31	16
	Ban/limit dogs	8	1/2	6 (20)		17	24
	Make sure dogs are welcome	5		12 (12)	1 (16)	18	23
Nature and environmental protection. (n= 30/5.3%)	Erosion protection	18	7/12	14 (10)		51	12
	Protect the environment and stop pollution	12	2/0	4 (24)		18	23
	Random	16					
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>126/724</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>1303/724</b>	

## **Appendix 2: Short summaries of previous plans.**

Several approaches have been made in the past to create a placemaking narrative for Russell, with common threads about preserving the scenic beauty; “creative integration of the new with the old”; balance of local environmental, social, cultural and economic wellbeing; incorporation of the “maritime situation”; and inclusion of tourism documented since 1977. Most previous documents are guided by a set of principles and/or values that change over time but consistently feature agreed ways of working well together and key acknowledgements such as respecting heritage, enhancing existing ambiance and charm and preserving the natural environment. They also have a number of shared objectives, often focused on traffic management, wayfinding, shared use, improving amenity values, bringing history alive, enhancing infrastructure, containing development and complying with legislative requirements.

### **1977:**

A plan for Russell: The Russell Planning Study. Recognising the “unique place” Kororāreka Russell has in Aotearoa New Zealand’s past, this study provides a ‘Historical Synopsis’ and focuses on conservation of urban heritage. Both architectural and sociological aspects are considered, with the town already significantly shaped by tourism, part-time residents and an older demographic. Residents cite the climate and scenic beauty as reasons for living there, with historical features and character a “source of pride”. The challenge for development is the “creative integration of the new with the old”; balance of local environmental, social and economic wellbeing; incorporation of the “maritime situation”; and inclusion of tourism. Numerous policies, plans and design proposals are featured, including for Cass Street, the Village Green and Foreshore Reserve.



## 1980:

The Russell Handbook. A framework for Kororāreka Russell's future planning and management that was designed to be the action plan for the 1977 plan. Supporting the 'Application' section, 11 objectives are documented, supported by maps and various drawings that highlight priorities and extensive 'planting structures' for key 'identity areas'. Landscape and architectural values are articulated, highlighting a need for integration and cohesion between the various locations (including the foreshore), structural form and elements; and the Historic Protection Zone is explored, with a range of 'considerations' notes, including encouragement of "creative use of colour". A high level of detail is provided to inform application, especially with regard to changes to the built environment and landscaping.

## 1990:

Russell 2000 plans for Cass Street/Wharf area. The Russell 2000 Mandate was told that Russell "should remain a small, tree-clad, tranquil and historic village in a rural environment set in an area of great natural beauty" and that "the 'spirit' of Russell comes from the layers of history and from a pioneering spirit". Locals saw themselves as caretakers and guardians of this and the built environment heritage. The Vision 2000 was "to uphold, promote and maintain the core values which make Russell special and unique. These core values were history/heritage, village/small town/community, green/rural/scenic and real/genuine/honest. In July 1998 these values that Russell held to be true were deemed "totally consistent with those values expressed in the previous studies going back more than 20 years".

## 2014:

Russell Future Plan (2013-2043) What's it all about? (a consultation draft). The purpose of this plan was "to capture the aspirations and priorities of the wider Russell communities and act as a 'blueprint' for our future development". The plan identifies a vision, goals and proposed actions intended to help locals "engage more effectively with local government and other agencies as well as providing focus for actions we will lead for ourselves". The plan considers the environment (natural and built), people, culture and economy of Russell and the peninsula over a 30 year period.

## 2018:

Russell Community Plan 2018-2020<sup>9</sup>. Building on previous documents and community engagement, this community plan has a focus on preserving “the physical and cultural identity of Russell... so that our thriving and sustainable communities can reflect the unique values, heritage, culture and natural beauty of the Russell Peninsula and surrounds” as well as protecting “the current landscape setting and built environment so that these can be appreciated by locals, visitors and future generations alike” and caring “for each other and for the special character of our historic township”. It is guided by five principles and five community values. Goals focus on people, the built environment, natural environment and the local economy, with some partners and funding sources identified but not confirmed.

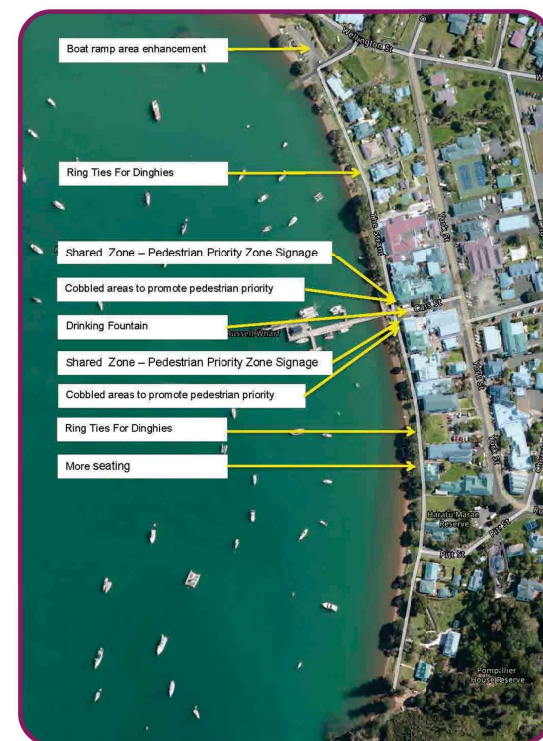
## 2021:

Barker & Associates Design plans: Issues & Opportunities Challenges [Draft design plan]. A collection of maps that identify existing features, amenities and commercial operations as well as highlighting the “sensitive coastal interface”, car dominated environment, domination of colonial heritage and limited representation of Māori history and heritage. Eight opportunities are described, five of which are directly relevant to The Strand and waterfront area and one of which (Cass Street) is explored in more detail as the “gateway to Russell”.

## 2022:

Russell Waterfront Placemaking Ideas from Public Consultation. [Image opposite]

RUSSELL WATERFRONT PLACEMAKING IDEAS FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION – 02.2022



<sup>9</sup> The working group for this plan acknowledged that Hapu Management Plans completed or currently underway by Ngati Kuta (Rawhiti), Te Kapotai (Waikare) and Ngati Manu (Karetu) would not be superseded or contradicted but, rather, enhanced when taken together with the Russell Community Plan.

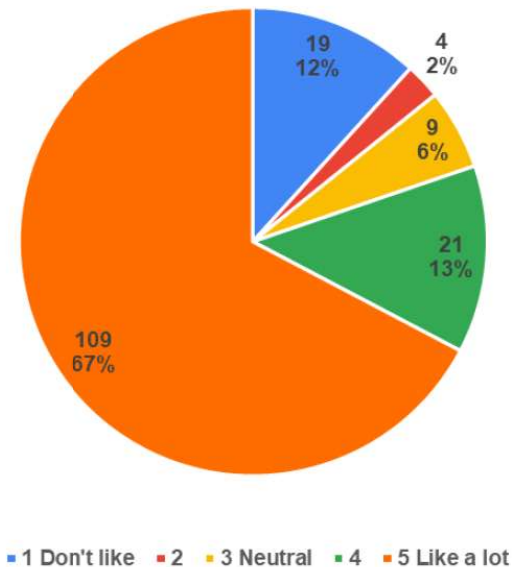
## Appendix 3: Traffic Management Trial data summaries.

This data from The Strand traffic management trial was gathered by the paid ambassadors over the peak summer period (28 December 2024 to 5 January 2025), from an online survey (late December 2024 to March 2025 inclusive), from a traffic counter (installed from 23 December 2024 to 24 March 2025), and from the Telraam camera between 17 and 24 March 2025.

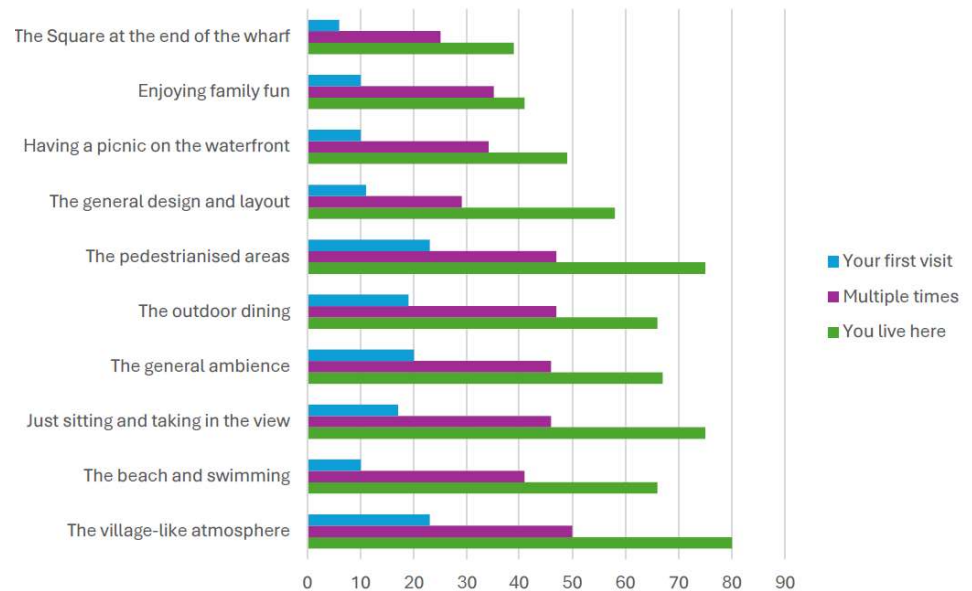
### Strand user feedback survey data

This survey focused on measuring 'amenity' and enjoyment of The Strand and waterfront. There were a total of 200 responses (locals and visitors), with around 80% very positive and 20% extremely negative.

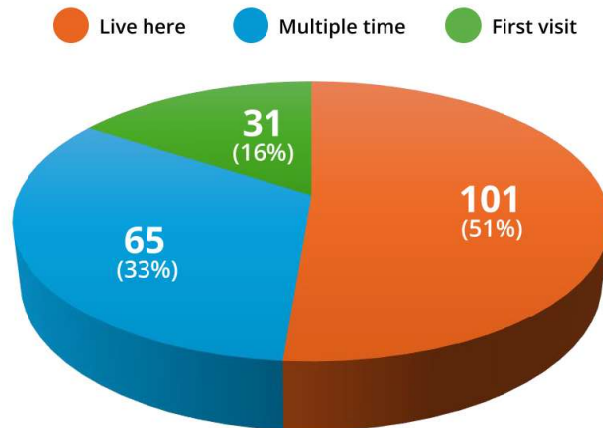
#### Overall responses



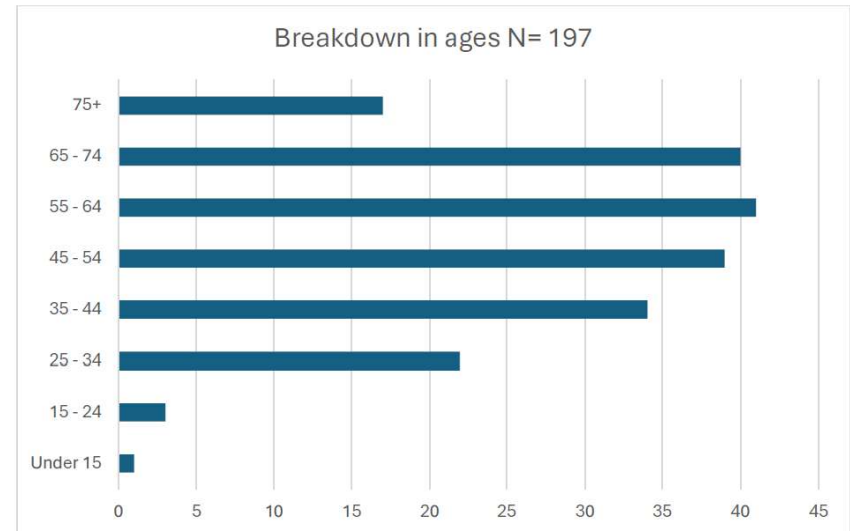
#### What people like



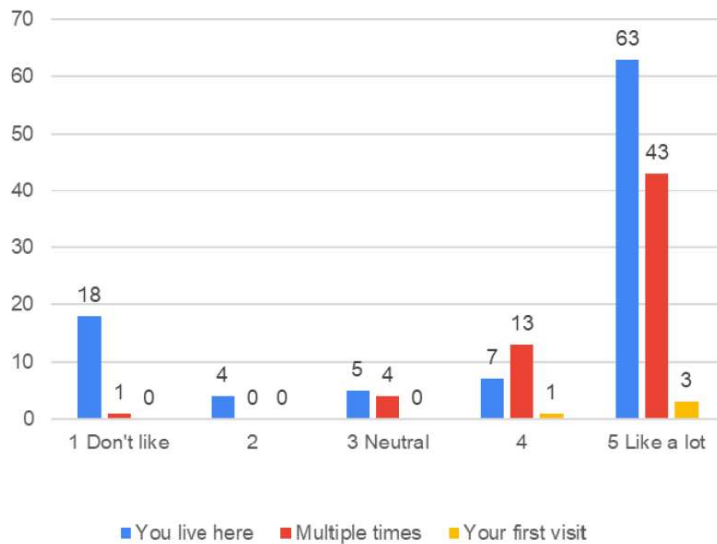
## Residence



## Age



## Views about changes



## Ambassador data

Voice recordings were gathered from 242 people using The Strand by the ambassadors. Over 50% of these were locals or regular visitors (57%). 84% of comments were positive, with 28% commenting specifically about the appearance of The Strand and waterfront, 18% talking positively about safety as a result of the pedestrianisation and 6% talking positively about the area being 'kid friendly'. Of the 16 % negative or neutral comments, 8% commented negatively about the signage and 2% talked negatively about parking.

## Traffic counts before and after

This data comes from a mix of the traffic counter (in **bold**), with a baseline from June 2024 (in ***bold italics***) and the Telraam camera. More detail from the Telraam camera follows.

### North Strand

Start	Finish	Pedestrians	2-wheelers	Cars	Heavy	Total	Night	Average	Max
<b><i>6 June 2024</i></b>	<b><i>13 June 2024</i></b>			<b>319</b>		<b>319</b>		<b>15.48</b>	<b>32.7</b>
<b>23 Dec 2024</b>	<b>30 Dec 2024</b>			<b>201</b>		<b>201</b>		<b>12.6</b>	<b>29.5</b>
<b>31 Dec 2024</b>	<b>6 Jan 2024</b>			<b>232</b>		<b>232</b>		<b>12.2</b>	<b>45.1</b>
10 Feb 2025	16 Feb 2025	6053	193	247	11	247	416		
17 Feb 2025	24 Mar 2025	5750	140	159	5	159	319		
24 Mar 2025	2 Mar 2025	5904	214	220	17	237	387		
3 Mar 2025	10 Mar 2025	6288	271	203	15	218	210		
10 Mar 2025	16 Mar 2025	5577	215	180	11	191	407		
17 Mar 2025	23 Mar 2025	4898	227	184	20	204	287		
24 Mar 2025	30 Mar 2025	4220	429	150	22	204	383		



## South Strand

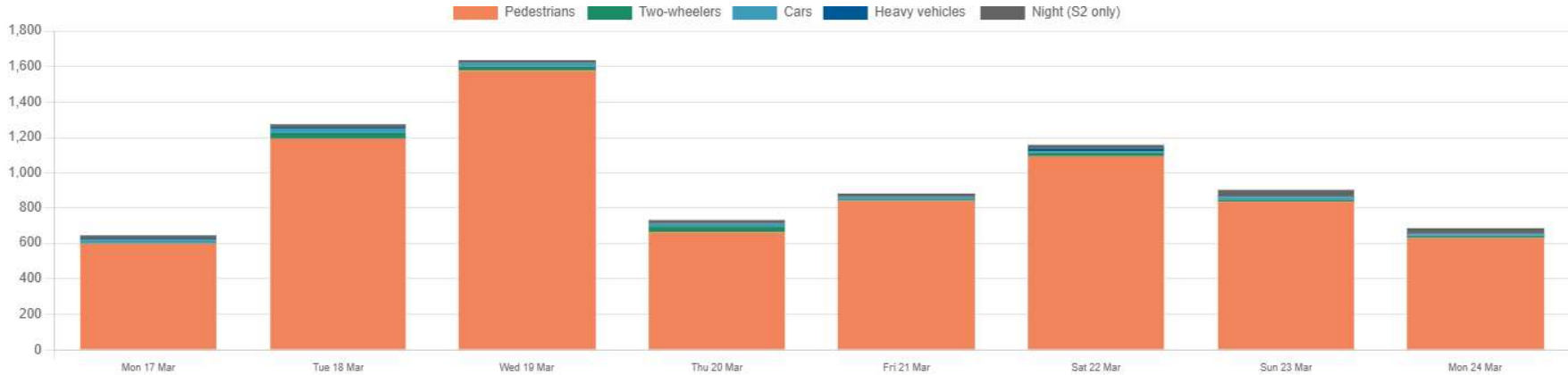
Start	Finish	Pedestrians	2-wheelers	Cars	Heavy	Total	Night	Average	Max
6 June 2024	13 June 2024			387		387		18.36	44
10 Mar 2025	16 Mar 2025	5482	156	63	50	113	200		
17 Mar 2025	23 Mar 2025	6797	131	107	42	149	146		
24 Mar 2025	30 Mar 2025	5003	76	66	57	133	235		

## Telraam camera data

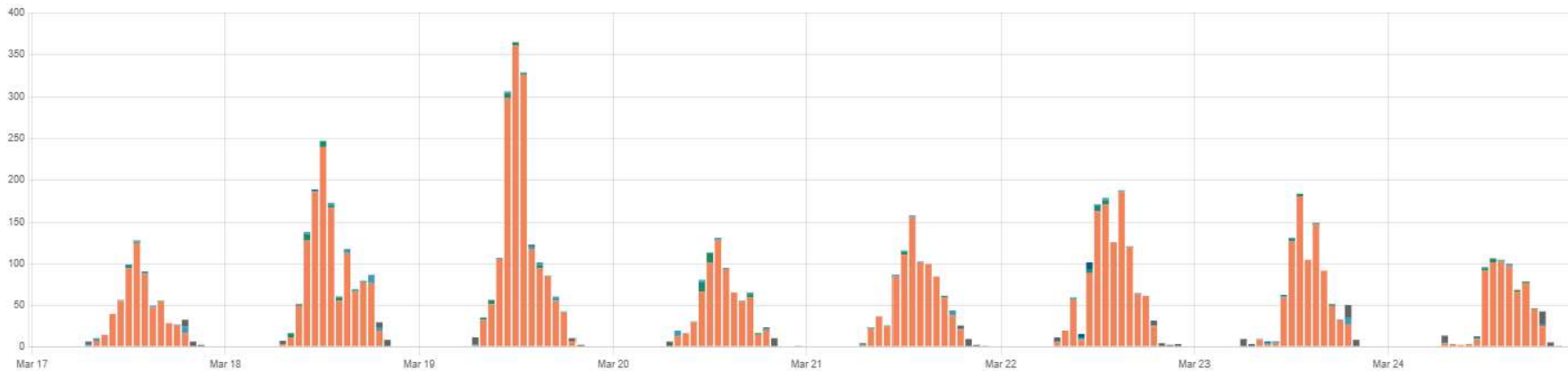
This data is for one week from 17 March 2025 to 24 March 2025 (slightly different dates to the data above).

Pedestrians	Two-wheelers	Cars	Heavy vehicles	Night
<b>7426</b> 93.92%	<b>145</b> 1.83%	<b>113</b> 1.43%	<b>47</b> 0.59%	<b>176</b> 2.23%

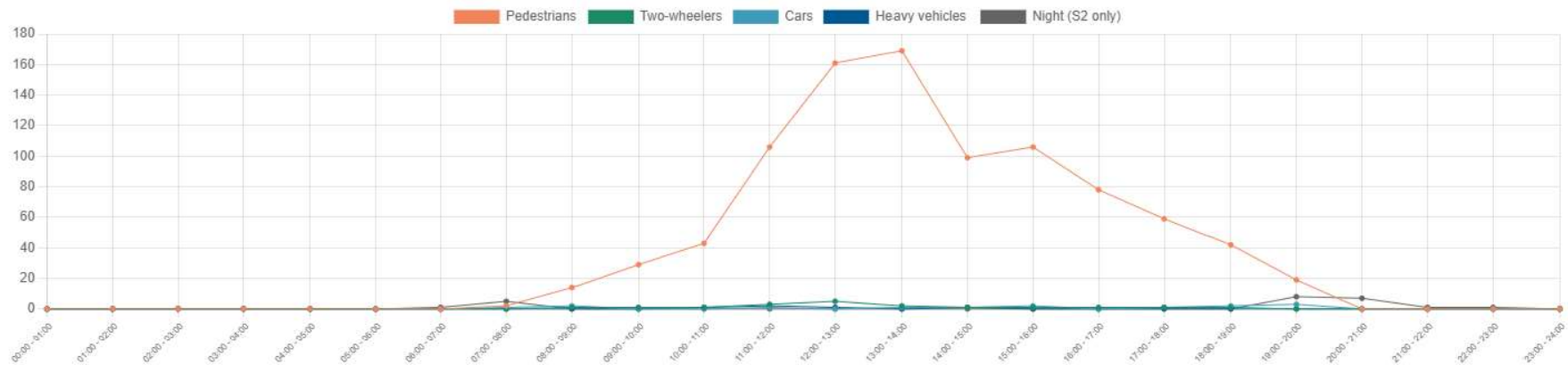
Daily overview



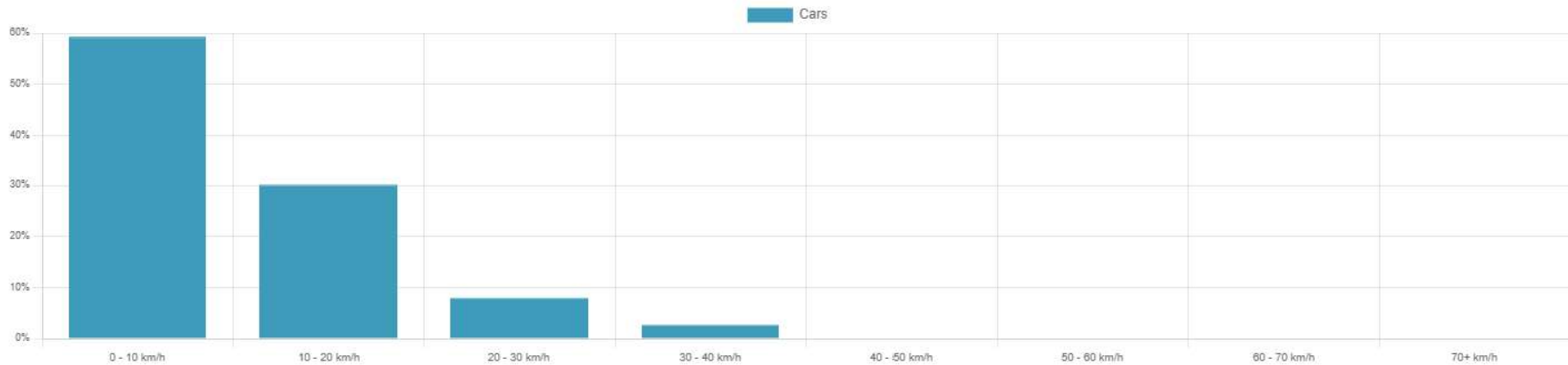
Overview in detail



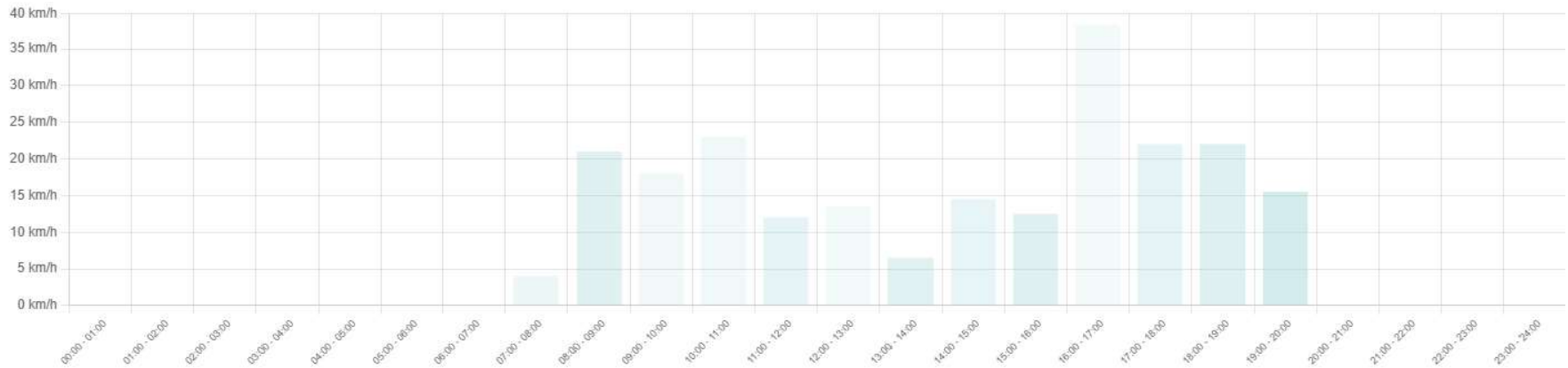
24 Hour average



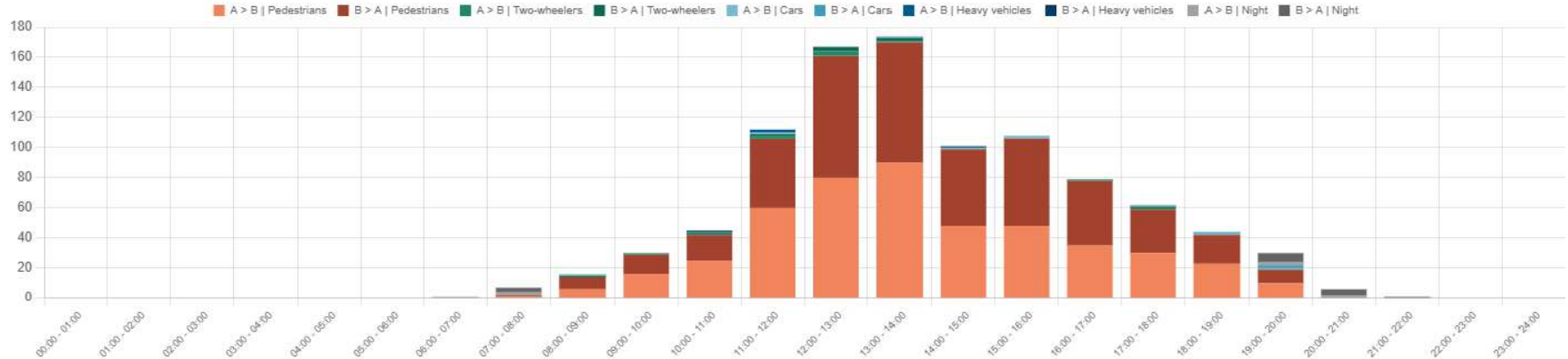
Speed of cars



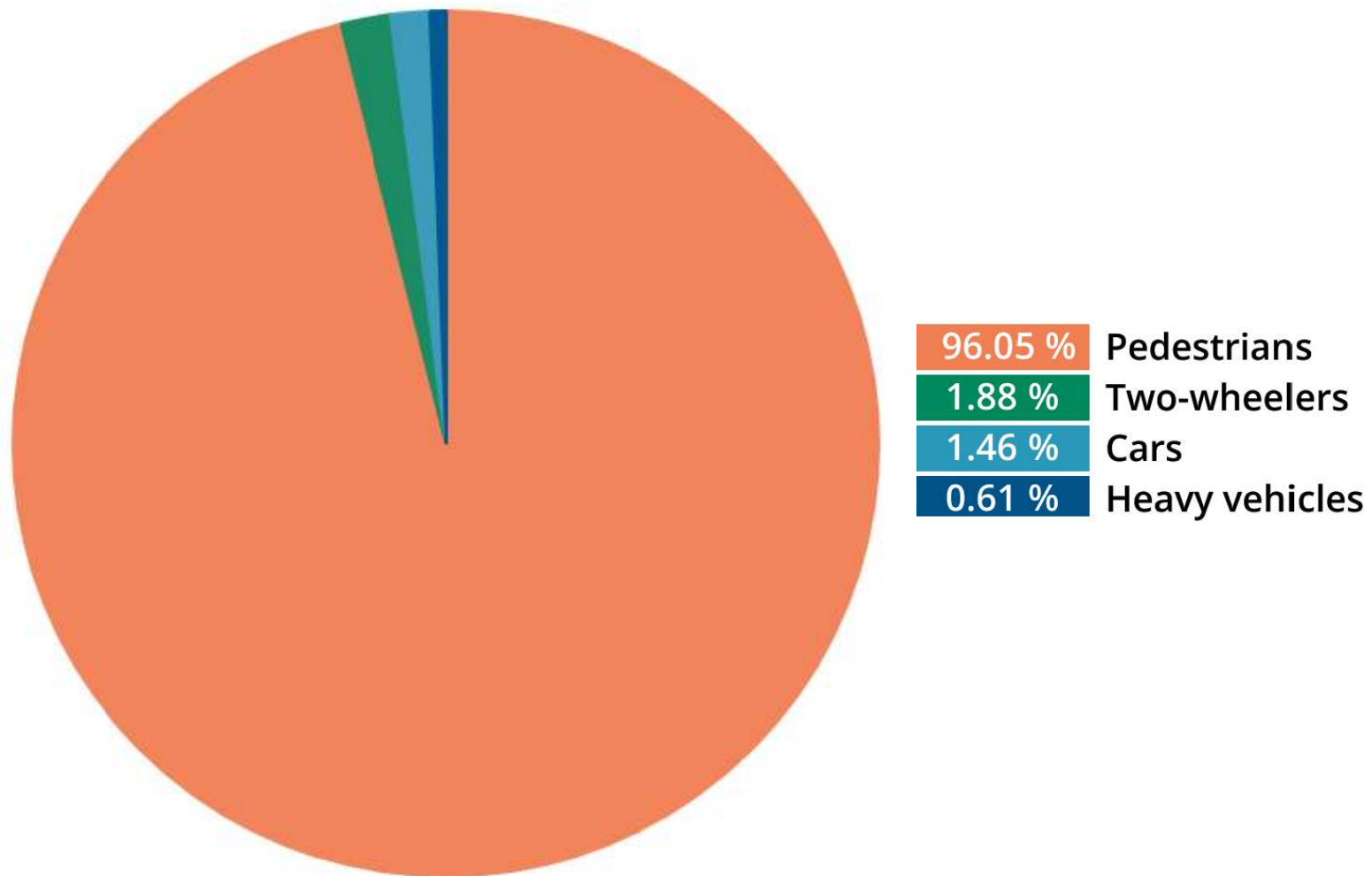
## Speed of cars by time of day



## 24 hour average per direction



## Modal split





**Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi.**

**With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive.**

Report created by Catalyse. It has been a pleasure and privilege to listen, learn, and collaborate with the Kororāreka community in 2024-2025.