



8.0 Character, Creativity and Collaboration

8.1 Context - Landmarks and features

Landmarks and destination development features such as parks, schools, local shopping centres and heritage sites can provide significant contributions to local identity and character.

These types of features are notably absent from the study area, and with the exception of 'Poletown' those that are present are almost exclusively along SH2 and towards or beyond northern edge of the study area.

The ranges and hills to the west and east of Carterton provide a dominant landform feature for view-shafts along east-west aligned streets. The topography of the town is however almost uniformly flat, with only small localised areas of gently undulating landform.



Existing (orange) and possible future (yellow) viewshafts



Community Identity – Schools and local parks along with other landmarks can make a significant positive contribution to local identity.



8.1 Natural Heritage

Historically much of the Carterton area was covered in dense bush, which like many other New Zealand areas was felled and/or burnt to make way for farming and agricultural use. Notable species of flora and fauna that would have been present are indicated by the Fensham Reserve remnant.

Fensham Reserve contains approximately 9ha of primary forest, and 3ha of wetland, plus regenerating forest and shrublands. The primary forest is on mainly flat land that includes occasional wetland areas, not dissimilar to parts of Carterton.

Species include:

- ☐ Kahikatea-tarata-titoki-black beech forest with totara, matai, rimu, kowhai and hinau on alluvial plain and hill slope.
- ☐ Kahikatea-totara-matai forest with kanuka, hinau, pokaka and black beech on alluvial plain.
- ☐ Manuka-kanuka-rewarewa regenerating forest and shrublands with mingimingi (*Cyathodes juniperina* and *Leucopogon fasciculatus*), five finger, kamahi and emergent black beech on hill slope.
- ☐ Black beech forest on hill slope.
- ☐ Manuka/rush-sedge shrublands and wetland with kahikatea totara and mahoe on alluvial plains.



Retaining established vegetation can add to the character of new development, as in this Tauranga example of mature totara trees.

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8.2 Built Environment - Land Use and Development

The southern portion of Carterton is made up of a disparate mixture of uses, isolated into localised pockets. Land uses present include urban low (2000m² plus) density and low-medium (500-2000m²) density residential pockets, rural-residential, rural, industrial, and commercial land use. By far the dominant use in respect of cover is rural and rural-residential type use, meaning the area has a quite rural or at least rural-residential type feel, with many paddocks but little actual productive agricultural use present. Residential use is mostly typified by older classic New Zealand urban residential development primarily along the state highway, the northern end of the study area, and the relatively isolated Charles, Frederick, and Philip Streets area – historically known as ‘Pole-Town’. However significant areas of newer lower density residential development are present through the study area. The character of these areas is significantly different to the older areas – and is discussed in more detail on the following page.

Other land uses are much more limited, but include some dispersed commercial use (commercial services, hotels, auto dismantlers and the like) along SH2, and a small number of industrial premises and the town’s wastewater plant at the southern extremity of the study area. There are few notable singular land use features in this part of Carterton. The majority of local parks, schools and other features being in the northern part of the urban area. Significant though in respect of local identity are South End Park on Brooklyn Road, ‘Pole-Town’, and associated heritage sites, and the rail corridor.

Density of Built Development

Density of development plays an important role in the existing identity and character of the southern part of Carterton. Relatively large section sizes, remaining dominance of grazing paddocks coupled with a general lack of boundary fencing and tall trees mean that this area features only a low level of development density, and in places retains a character almost more rural than rural-residential. An increasing exception to this is in the larger lot subdivisions appearing through the area, but particularly in the south. Although at 2000m² these are distinctly larger than most ‘residential’ type lots, the density is such that with an open and flat landform and relative lack of established vegetation this residential development is very visually dominant and in many ways more akin to residential the ‘residential’ than ‘rural’ development. Examples of this type of development, with a clear ‘residential’ look and feel, albeit with larger sections, can be seen on photos 4 and 7, and in another more northern development in photo 6.

Built Heritage Features

Built heritage features and heritage sites can be very important contributors to local identity and where possible should be integrated into new development. Where no physical structure or feature remains plaques or other marker/interpretive material can be used to identify and provide information about the location and its significance.

The Carterton district is located in the Wairarapa between Greytown and Masterton and has an area of 1,145 square kilometres. Carterton was established



in 1857 to house workers building the road between Greytown and Masterton. Historically the settlement was known as Twelve-Mile Bush, reflective of the distance from Masterton, and the presence of significant stands of native bush in the area.

There are relatively few heritage buildings and sites in the structure plan area, most such sites being in the more developed northern half of the town. However there are a small number of note.

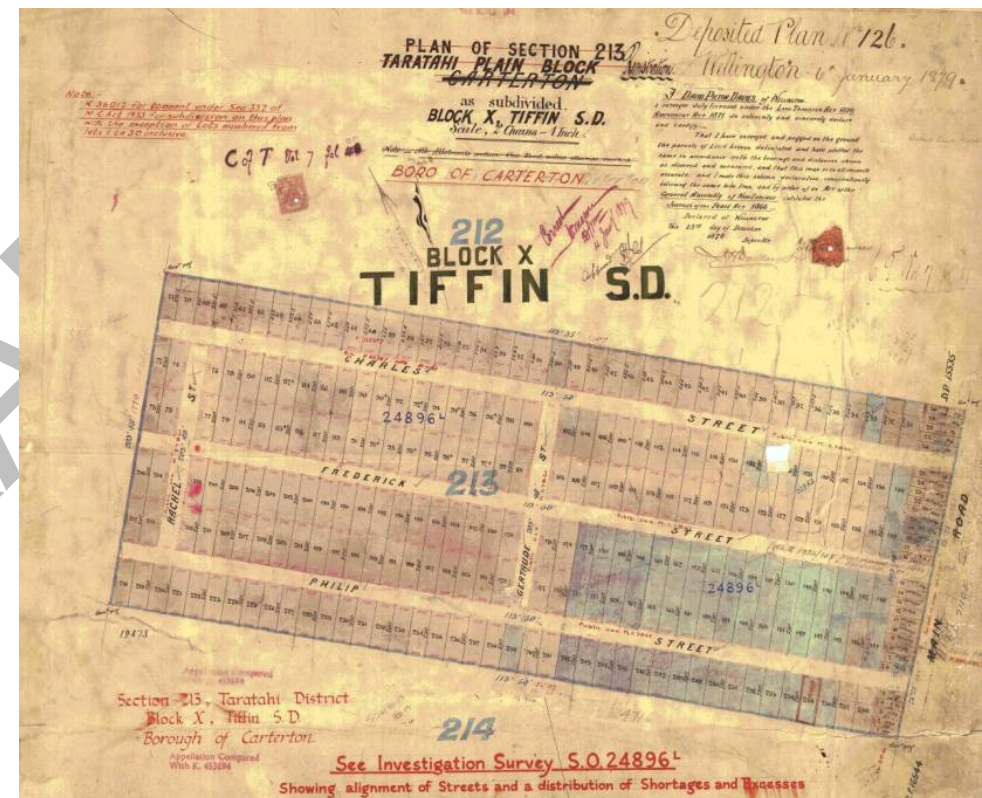
A historic church was located on Portland Road near SH2, but was relocated northwards to Howard Street despite vociferous objections from its Polish parish community centred in Pole-Town. The Church is still used, and a historic homestead is present on Portland Road. No Maori archaeological or culturally significant sites have been identified within the structure plan area.

In 1877 about 280 Polish Immigrants migrated to NZ and were assigned by the government to Carterton around Frederick and Charles Street. Polish families have been resident in the District since the late 1870's.

Maori Settlement

The first Maori to settle in the Wairarapa were of the Rangitane. One of the most influential Maori elders in the district in earlier years was Major Paraone (Brown) Tunuiorangi, who created the Puanani Marae at the bottom of Lincoln Road. This contained the meeting house, Nukutaimemeha, which was eventually moved to Masterton. Famously, Tunuiorangi was appointed to lead

the Maori Contingent to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. He was accorded a rare audience with the Queen.



The survey plan of what came to be known as 'Poletown' or 'Scandy Alley', deposited 06 January 1879



8.3 Streetscape, and Building Typology

Streetscape in the southern half of Carterton is dominated by two built features – on street ‘public’ features such as road carriageway and footpath-berms/street trees, and the style and scale of adjacent building – primarily residential in nature. As is evident in photos 1 and 2 carriageways in older areas (generally the northern and eastern portions of Carterton South) are typically straight, relatively wide with low levels of traffic, and bounded by wide grass berms and sealed footpaths. The berms are typically kerb and channelled with street trees present. Dwellings are diverse but typically single-story wooden villas and/or bungalows on large urban sections of 700 to 1000m². A mixture of front fence and boundary treatments are evident. These features are quite reflective of the age of these areas, and could be found in many smaller provincial New Zealand towns.

In newer areas (generally the southern-most end of the Carterton South area) some of these features are still evident, such as the wide streets, kerb and channel and wide grass berms. However a number of differences are very noticeable, as can be seen in photos 4, 5, and 6 (opposite). Carriageways typically feature shorter straight lengths and in most cases provide no through connections to other streets, with most ending in cul-de-sacs. As a result these read as less ‘pockets’ of development which are as a result cohesive or integrated, and it is easy to lose one’s bearings in these areas.





In many new greenfield subdivision streets no front fences or barriers are evident, footpaths are only present on one side, section sizes are larger (approximately 1000m² to 2000m²) dwellings though generally still single-storey are more substantial and visually dominant, gardens and vegetation less established, and areas of generally unbroken usually private open space a notable feature (lack of side boundary fences). In many ways these dwellings are not dissimilar to those that might be expected in rural residential type development, (notably the fence in photo 5 appears to be trying to replicate this) but on much smaller lots. A sense of openness and space, again not dissimilar to rural residential development, is created by the relative lack of fencing and common presence of adjacent pasture areas.



Existing fence types and road/driveway formations give a rural feel to parts of Carterton South

Maintaining a semi-rural feel in areas of low density development

The maintenance of a semi-rural 'feel' or character was an important desire for landowners and the wider community generally. This presents a particular challenge to the draft structure plan, and for future development. At 2000m² lots, new development is much more likely to have an urban character than a rural one, as is clearly evidenced by a number of existing subdivisions in Carterton such as Daffodil Grove and Endelave Way in the south, and Kenwyn Drive and Carrington Drive in the northern part of town.

While low-density can certainly be achieved at 2000m² lots, a semi-rural feel requires the inclusion of development features that are particularly rural in character, and the elimination of features more typically found in urban areas.

As referred to earlier, the most significant areas of land that will remain in Council control will lie within the road reserve. Significantly it is also this area that will be most experienced by the local community and they move around the area, and will be viewed from many habitable room inside and outdoor living areas outside on respective private properties. Attention has been given to trying to retain a road corridor environment with characteristics more rural than urban, while still providing essential services. Photos 4, 6 and 7 show how even at 2000m² these developments appear urban, simply because the presence of kerb and channel provides a visual cue that this environment is urban. Comparing photo 4 and 5 is an interesting exercise in that while 4 appears urban, 5 appears much less so. Both photos are of the same street, the difference being that the property shown in photo 5 has a rural style boundary fence and the kerb and channel is out of shot

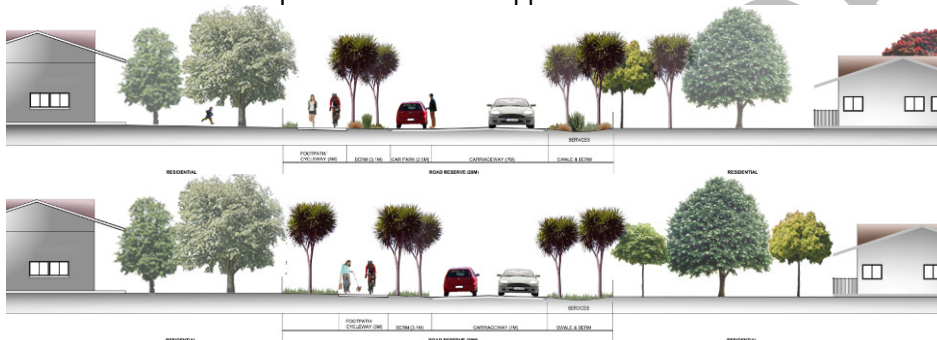


on the photo. Taking this to an extreme, even the street shown in photo 2 has something of a small-town almost rural feel, simply because of the extensive grassed berms, when in fact this is very much an urban medium density street.

If new development was to make use of a more rural type of road formation, narrower carriageway and utilising swale drains (perhaps with concrete edging to prevent edge-breaks) and strategically located street trees (perhaps clumped rather than uniformly spaced) a more rural feel could be obtained.

Carterton's status as the Daffodil Capital of New Zealand was self proclaimed, but once the decision was taken in 1996 the entire community got behind Council's efforts to make the title. Suitably located mass plantings of daffodils could assist in reinforcing this identity, and also contribute to a semi-rural feel.

The indicative cross-sections below (with low-level native plantings or just grass verge) provide some indication as to how this could be achieved. The full set of cross-sections is provided in Part C Appendices.



Similar character is demonstrated by the following photos of existing developments elsewhere, (below).



(Clockwise) Swale drain being used in a major arterial 4-lane carriageway link in Tauranga (Pyes Pa), semi-rural feel in low density residential development through retention of shelterbelts and re-vegetating a stream, walkway along the stream in the same development, a swale drain in Carterton.



8.4 Creativity

Much of Carterton's character, identity and the elements that reinforce a 'sense of place' in area relate to creative elements in the public realm. A particularly good example is the range of intriguing letterboxes and gate/entrance features that exist. Several of these exist in Carterton South, while others exist in other parts of the town and the District. Several examples are given on the page opposite.

Often urban design based developed seek to enhance or create a character or identity through imposition of a character, often through a design framework or code. Much of Carterton's identity however is the result of quite unique and disparate pieces of public art – without a common theme. It is likely that any attempt to 'create' this through a design code will be counter productive.

For these reasons it is recommended that with respect to public art, the full ambit of creative expression is encouraged.



Revegetation and planting around stormwater drainage in medium density residential development can achieve a 'semi-rural' feel.



Often some of the most memorable public art makes use of 'everyday' items, such as these Carterton 'letterboxes'.

Turning to the public realm and public facilities. The introduction of pieces of public art at every corner by Council, while creative, may not give a result consistent with the present character, or the semi-rural low density character sought by many residents. It is suggested rather that items of public art be encouraged at areas of public open space, as a feature of that space. The introduction of such feature would also contribute to a 'sense of place' at those locations. To further emphasise this, again a diverse range of creative expression should be encouraged.



This piece of public art at Millennium Square (above) is instantly recognisable and contributes to a sense of place, as does the figure from Gladsome (below left). Public art can take a variation of forms such as this example from Katikati (below right), and in some new subdivisions could be included with the street itself.





8.5 Collaboration

Collaboration, or community involvement is an important principle of good urban design. The development of this structure plan has incorporated consultation with both landowners and the wider community in order to understand that character and identity, facilities, and alignment of roads through the area. In many cases the evolution of the structure plan from the three alternatives suggested in August 2008 to the draft structure recommended in this report has been in response to the feedback received in consultation.

In the most recent meetings with landowners within the structure plan area, there has been a general, if not unanimous, support for the concept of the structure plan and the location and alignments of the roads, recreation open space areas, and the retention of a semi-rural feel as portrayed in the road-type cross sections contained in Appendix three of this report.

As this structure plan will naturally be reliant on actual development being progressed by landowners, there is ample future opportunity for those landowners to shape those respective developments as they fit, so long as the overall principles of the draft structure plan framework are achieved.

It is recommended that any further development of character themes, or public art be done in conjunction with further consultation of the community. It is also recommended that any public art proposed for developments within the structure plan area make use of advice or other inputs from a local artist or artists.

8.6 Sense of 'Place'

Sense of place and identity is often reinforced by an easily identifiable feature, such as a piece of public art, a park or school, or small group of local shops. In many towns across New Zealand, a neighbourhood identifies with and shares the name of a park or school.

Although no schools or shops are recommended in the draft structure plan area, three parks are recommended. These are sufficiently spaced to allow a 'neighbourhood' to develop around them. It is recommended that these parks or areas of open space are appropriately named to allow a common identity to be associated with the locality. For example:

- ☐ Brooklyn Road – rename South End Park 'Brooklyn Park'
- ☐ Philip Street – 'Poletown Park'
- ☐ Road 5 – 'The Green'
- ☐ Brown Avenue – 'Carterton East Park'

These names as such are not necessarily recommended, but demonstrate how the neighbourhoods could focus around them as an identity node and become known as Brooklyn, The Green, Poletown and Carterton East.