

Te Tai o Poutini Plan - Built Form Character Assessment of the West Coast Main Centres

1. Hokitika

Hokitika is characterised by wide open streets and large mountainous vistas. It is made up of a low built form with the most obvious landmark being Westland Milk Products. Due to the wide streets and low built form the CBD is sunny and dominated by tourist shops, eateries and local supply stores. Retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants are encouraged within the CBD in a way that enhances the heritage values of the town.

1.1 Residential

The residential is made up of three main character areas – Hokitika, Kaniere and Blue Spur/Three Mile.

1.2 Hokitika Residential Character Area

Hokitika residential areas are characterised by wide open streets and large mountainous vistas made up of a low built form. The most obvious landmark is Westland Milk Products.

Hokitika provides a range of housing stock, with the earliest residential housing recorded in the area constructed between 1900 – 1909.

Built form is based on a grid with a range of site sizes. Some infill has occurred but houses are generally single story.





1.2.1 Natural Character Elements

The area has mainly flat topography gently sloping toward the Hokitika River with Whitcombe Terrace, Bonar Drive and Seaview being atop a glacial terrace, vistas of the mountains, wide grassy berms in front of houses, vegetation is generally low to maximise solar access.

Open Space

Cass Square is the major park in the town, with Westland High School, Lazar Park, Wadeson Island and Hokitika Racecourse also providing significant open spaces. Large grass berms and wide streets enhance the open space along with the Hokitika flood bank.

Green Structure

Within the residential areas, most trees are domestic fruit and ornamental trees of low stature, with few large trees within the environment. The wide grassy berms generally separate footpaths from the road or footpaths from private properties.

1.2.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The land use is predominantly residential. A high number of residential dwellings are being rented on a night by night basis as air b'n'bs by absentee land owners within the residential mixed zone. A small number of non residential activities exist such as corner stores and home occupations, but these are small in scale and predominantly accommodation type activities which fit well within the residential character.

Street Pattern

The town was laid out on a grid pattern, with a high level of connectivity.

Density/Height

Generally 600-1000m² sections with only a small amount of infill has occurred. A large number of properties exceed 1000 m² in size, which is a fairly unique feature of the town. Most houses are single story, and built well back from the street.

Residential Age, Type and Style

Hokitika represents a range of house styles and ages from the early 1900s to the early 21st century. The town gradually built outwards from the centre, with some newer streets and housing towards Westland Milk Products. The majority of permanent material homes have been built since 1960s and appear in an ad hoc assemblage throughout the town as opposed to obvious subdivisions. Iconic buildings include heritage buildings such as government house, churches, former bank buildings and Carnegie Building.

1.3 Kaniere Character Area

Kaniere is defined as the area east of Town Belt East. Currently a small settlement zone in the Westland District Plan, the Kaniere area has effectively become a suburb of Hokitika, with more residential growth occurring around the settlement. The housing is mixed – some older mid 20th Century housing of the original settlement, with newer residential dwellings on the periphery. The settlement is largely connected now to Hokitika, with frequent pockets of residential development between Westland Milk Products and the older areas of the Kaniere settlement. Subdivision is active in this area with development along existing roads along the river, the highway and inland towards Blue Spur.



1.3.1 Natural Character Elements

The area has generally flat topography, vistas of the mountains, older areas have well established gardens but more recent development has remnant exotic farm trees and patches of bush.

1.3.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

Predominantly residential though with a more rural flavour than Hokitika Character Area. A small number of non residential activities exist such as a beauty salon and B&Bs, but these are small in scale and predominantly accommodation type activities which fit well within the residential/settlement character.

Street Pattern

The settlement was centred on a cross roads, but ribbon development has now occurred along the surrounding highway and rural road network. With the exception of the highway, streets are narrower than in Hokitika – being often rural roads that have become residential. The older parts of the township have urban elements such as kerb and channel and footpaths, but these are absent from the newer areas.

Density/Height

Generally more residential size sections (800-1000m2 +) than rural residential, though some larger sections and active farmland are also present. Most houses are single story. This Zone allows for a much more intensive built environment than it is currently being used for.

Residential Age, Type and Style

Kanieri represents a range of house styles and ages from the mid 1900s to the present.

1.4 Blue Spur/Three Mile Character Area

The Blue Spur/Three Mile Character Area represents the rural-residential edge of Hokitika and have more recent 21st Century housing. Site sizes are generally around a 5000m2, with large single level houses. The areas retain elements of rural character such as an absence of kerb and channel or street lights. Blue Spur lies in a series of valleys east and inland from Hokitika township. Three Mile is further along the Kumara Junction Highway, and is rural residential development inland from the highway.

Blue Spur



Three Mile



1.4.1 Natural Character Elements

These are rural character areas, with vistas of mountains and/or coast with a mosaic of native bush, farm trees, streams and wetlands. Shelter belts are often maintained as screening for the houses from the road.

1.4.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

Rural residential. Because of the rural zoning, rural industrial type activities exist alongside more residential activities, and the potential for conflicting landuses and reverse sensitivity issues is significant as the rural zone does not anticipate clusters of dwellings within the rural environment.

Street Pattern

These areas have been laid out along existing rural roads with cul de sacs heading inland to access new development sites.

Density/Height

Sites are around 5000m² -1 hectare with large single story houses set back from the road.

Residential Age, Type and Style

These are recent development areas with most houses built in the 2010-2019 period. The roads are rural – with no footpaths, streetlights or kerb and channel. Houses have on site wastewater systems and generally their own water supply. Public water supply is provided to Brickfield Road and to the first property on Cement Lead Road only.

2. Westport

Westport is low built form with a backdrop of bush clad mountains. It has a large number of older dwellings from the early 20th century. It has a number of residential communities with small corner shops and pocket parks within the wider residential area. The streets are relatively wide, and the built form is generally low, with established gardens and street trees in older parts of the residential area. The township as a whole has a heritage character – reflecting its strong history and the retention of historic buildings. The main commercial area is centred on a strip alongside the Buller River, with a number of important heritage buildings. The residential area lies mainly to the northeast of the town centre and extends toward the Orowaitai Lagoon. The town features a working port with associated industrial activities. Leading into town along the highway is a light commercial area with more two story development and some yard based activities before reaching the town centre proper.

2.1 Residential

The residential area is made up of three main character areas – Westport, Carters Beach, and Westport – Fairdown rural residential.

2.2 Westport Residential Character Area

Westport residential areas are characterised by wide open streets with a backdrop of bush clad mountains and a generally low built form. The town is built on a grid with a range of site sizes. All ages of housing is found in the residential areas and some infill has occurred, but the majority of the housing was constructed between 1910 and 1919.





2.2.1 Natural Character Elements

Generally flat topography, vistas of the mountains, wide grassy berms in front of houses, vegetation is generally low but with well established gardens and street trees in some locations. The Buller River and Orawaiti Lagoon on the northern side of the town provides significant amenity for the area. There has been a community initiative to connect parts of the port and river with a walkway through the wetlands to the tip head.

Open Space

There are a number of parks in the residential areas – Victoria Square and George Craddock Memorial Park providing sportsfields and a bowling club, the more natural Macdonald Park as well as some smaller neighbourhood reserves and the large Kilkenny Park next to Buller High School.

Green Structure

Within the residential areas, most trees are domestic fruit and ornamental trees of low stature. There are well established gardens and trees in areas with older houses, and walkway connections around the lagoons and Buller River. Some older streets also have street trees. The wide grassy berms generally separate footpaths from the road. Rain gardens and roadside landscape treatments are also in place in some locations.

2.2.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The area is predominantly residential. A small number of non residential activities exist such as corner stores, churches and home occupations, but these are small in scale and predominantly accommodation type activities which fit well within the residential character.

Street Pattern

The town was laid out on a grid pattern, with a high level of connectivity.

Density/Height

Generally 500-1000m² sections with only a small amount of infill having occurred. A mix of single story and in some locations two story houses.

Residential Age, Type and Style

Westport represents a range of house styles and ages from the early 1900s to the early 21st century but the majority of housing is early to mid 20th Century. The town gradually built outwards from the centre, with some newer streets and housing off SH67 on the eastern side of the residential area.

2.3 Carters Beach Residential Character Area

Carters Beach is a small seaside suburb with a mix of housing developed mostly from the 1950s onwards. The settlement is based around Cook Street and Marine Parade with some connecting streets and cul de sacs. Some two story houses feature, particularly on Marine Parade to take advantage of the sea views.





2.3.1 Natural Character Elements

Generally flat topography, seaside feel with proximity to the ocean. Vegetation is generally low and open but with some well established gardens .

The Carters Beach Domain is a large open space between Marine Parade and the beachfront.

2.3.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The area is predominantly residential. On Marine Parade and Cape Foulwind Road a small number of non-residential activities exist such as a holiday park, motel, B&B and café/general store, but these are small in scale and fit well within the residential character. The suburb is small with a high level of pedestrian connectivity.

Density/Height

Generally 800-1000m² sections with a mix of single story and in some locations two story houses.

2.4 Westport – Fairdown Rural Residential

The Westport – Fairdown Rural Residential Area is typified generally by more recent 21st Century housing. Site sizes are generally around a hectare, with large single level houses. The areas retain elements of rural character such as an absence of kerb and channel or street lights.

There are three main localities where this development has occurred: around Snodgrass/Utopia Roads and the Orowaiti Lagoon, inland from SH67 to Fairdown and in the terrace on the west side of the Buller River around Alma Road.

Alma Road Area



Snodgrass/Utopia Road





2.4.1 Natural Character Elements

Seaside feel with proximity to the ocean (Snodgrass Road/Utopia Road) and bush living/rural environment (Caledonian Road/Powerhouse Road, Alma Road).

The Orowaitai Lagoon is a key feature in the Snodgrass/Utopia Road area and the backdrop of the bush clad mountains in the Caledonian Road/Powerhouse Road areas.

2.4.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

Are a mix of rural and rural residential. Because of the rural zoning, the potential for conflicting landuses and reverse sensitivity issues exists as the rural zone does not anticipate clusters of dwellings within the rural environment.

Street Pattern

These areas have been laid out along existing rural roads with shared driveways heading inland to access new development sites.

Density/Height

Sites are around 5000m² -1 hectare with large single story houses set back from the road.

Residential Age, Type and Style

These are recent development areas with most houses built in the 2010-2019 period. The roads are rural – with no footpaths, streetlights or kerb and channel. Houses have on site wastewater systems and provide their own water supply.

3. Greymouth

Greymouth is the largest settlement on the West Coast. Situated at the mouth of the Mawhera/Grey River the town has grown along the coast, the railway line, and the river inland. The town is the business hub for the coast and has regional facilities such as Grey Base Hospital. The town is set in a backdrop of bush clad hills and has grown along the coastal plan and across the Mawhera/Grey River from the core town centre around Mawhera Quay. The town features a working port and associated industrial areas lying between the town centre and the port. Over time the industrial and commercial demand in the centre has shrunk, resulting in large numbers of vacant buildings and empty site. The recent CBD redevelopment plan has identified a significant opportunity to introduce residential living closer to the CBD and for some mixed commercial/industrial land to be rezoned for mixed use.

3.1 Residential

The residential area is made up of four character areas, as well as the proposed area for rezoning to residential of Greymouth Brownfields.

3.2 Greymouth Central, Blaketown and Cobden

These three suburbs represent the older housing stock in the Greymouth area. The earliest housing was constructed in the early 1900s and the majority was built before 1940.

These suburbs are laid out in the typical grid pattern of early New Zealand. Houses are typically one story though some two story dwellings exist. The suburbs have the backdrop of the bush clad mountains behind Greymouth and on side roads feature the typical grass berms separating the footpath from the road that is seen across the older suburbs on the West Coast. Some streets have street trees. Despite the relatively permissive rules, there are only a small number of non residential activities in these suburbs – churches and the occasional small shop or home occupation.

Greymouth Central





Blaketown



Cobden



3.2.1 Natural Character Elements

The suburbs are generally characterised by flat topography, occupying the flood plain and sandspit area (Blaketown) of the Mawhera/Grey River. The vistas of the bush clad mountains as a backdrop dominate, even in the coastal areas. The open feel of the suburbs is accentuated by the wide grassy berms and low vegetation – while there are established gardens, suburban trees are generally low growing and gardens open to retain solar access.

Open Space

There is a range of open space spread through the suburbs with the coastal reserves, as well as sportsfields such as Blaketown's Messenger Park, Victoria Park and Jelliman Park in Cobden as well as wetlands and rivers such as Sawyers Creek weaving through central Greymouth, the wetland complexes at Victoria Park and beside the Mawhera/Grey River at Cobden. The Port Elizabeth Walkway from Cobden and the West Coast Wilderness Trail from the Greymouth floodwall to the south are key recreational assets allowing people to access the wider environment.

Green Structure

Within the residential areas, most trees are domestic fruit and ornamental trees of low stature, with few large trees within the environment. The wide grassy berms generally separate footpaths from the road or footpaths from private properties.

3.2.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

Is predominantly residential. Only a small number of non residential activities exist such as corner stores and home occupations, and these are small in scale and predominantly accommodation type activities which fit well within the residential character.

Street Pattern

These early residential areas were laid out on a grid pattern, with a high level of connectivity within the suburbs, though Cobden and Blaketown are quite physically separate from the rest of Greymouth as the Mawhera/Grey River and the Port lagoon separate these areas from the rest of the town.

Density/Height

Generally 500-1000m² sections with only a small amount of infill having occurred. Most houses are single story, and built well back from the street.

Residential Age, Type and Style

These older parts of Greymouth represents a range of house styles and ages from the early 1900s to the mid 20th century. The town gradually built outwards from the centre, with the more modern housing found closer to the hills. There is an area of typical 1950s/60s state housing in Cobden.

3.3 Greymouth Beach Suburbs – Karoro, Paroa, South Beach, Gladstone



3.3.1 Natural Character Elements

The suburbs are generally characterised by flat topography, occupying the coastal strip between the bush clad hills and the sea. This area is fairly narrow at Karoro but widens at Paroa. The coastal hills form a backdrop but this is less dominant than in the older suburbs, and these areas have a more coastal character.

The natural environment is more dominant in these suburbs with rivers and coastal wetlands and lagoons weaving through the area. Within the residential areas there are established gardens and a more treed landscape than in the older suburbs and the roads lack footpaths.

3.3.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The areas are largely residential but with a number of accommodation activities.

The State Highway affects the land use and built form – with the small number of commercial activities (local stores, accommodation and the Regional Council offices) located on the main highway.

Residential access is generally from lanes parallel with the highway or cul de sacs to avoid access problems. Topography is the other driver of road form, as closer to the hills the suburbs steepen.

Density/Height

Sites are around 800-1000m² with a mix of single and two story houses.

Residential Age, Type and Style

The suburbs provide a range of housing stock, with the earliest residential housing recorded in the area constructed between 1910 - 1919. The majority of the residential housing stock in Karoro was constructed in the 1970s, Gladstone in the 1990s and Paroa since 2000.

3.4 Mawhera/Grey River settlements – Kaiata & Kaiata Park, Dobson and Taylorville





3.4.1 Natural Character Elements

The settlements are generally characterised by flat topography, lying in the Mawhera/Grey valley on terraces above the river. The landscape is dominated by bush clad hills on one side with the river on the other.

3.4.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The settlements are largely residential but with small businesses, including industrial activities reflecting the township nature of these areas. Because of their proximity to Greymouth they don't support local retail activities. The railway line and State Highway are key factors at Dobson and Kaiata, constraining access and land development options.

Density/Height

Sites are around 800-1000m² with mostly early-mid 20th Century single story houses.

3.5 Rural Residential – Rutherglen, Clifton Road, Marsden Road/Sawyers Creek, Stuart and Chapman Drive

These are rural residential areas where dwellings have been established tucked into the bush, or set back from the road in rural environments.



3.5.1 Natural Character Elements

The settlements are generally characterised by flat to gentle rolling topography, in the foothills behind the coastal strip and the Grey valley.

3.5.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

The surrounding land uses are rural and bush areas

These areas have been laid out along existing rural roads with shared driveways heading inland to access new development sites.

Some sites all bush on the property has been cleared for development, whereas others the houses are tucked into the existing landscape

Density/Height

Sites are around 5000m² -1 hectare with large single story houses set back from the road. Rutherglen Road properties are often larger than a hectare.

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4. Reefton

Reefton is town of around 500 houses in a flat valley within a wider backdrop of the bush clad mountains of the Victoria Forest Park. The majority of its housing was constructed in the early 20th century. The residential area is split by the Buller Road (SH39). The built form is generally low, with low or no fencing and roadside water tables rather than kerb and channel and no footpaths in many of the side streets. The township as a whole has a heritage character – reflecting its strong history and the retention of historic buildings.

The main commercial area is centred on Broadway (SH 7) between Bridge Street and Sinnamon Street running parallel with the Inangahua River. It has some individually important heritage buildings but the overall character of the group of commercial buildings is what gives it a very strong heritage feel.

The residential area lies mainly to the north of the town centre and extends west towards the racecourse and north down the Inangahua Valley. Leading into town along SH69 from Westport is a light industrial area around the railway station and some yard based activities before reaching the town proper.

4.1 Reefton Residential Character Area

Reefton residential areas are characterised by open streets with a backdrop of bush clad mountains and a generally low built form. The town is built on a grid with a range of site sizes. All ages of housing is found in the residential areas but little infill has occurred, but the majority of the housing was constructed between 1910 and 1919.

There are only a small number of non residential activities in the residential area – a number of churches and the occasional small shop or home occupation.



4.2.1 Natural Character Elements

Reefton residential area is generally characterised by flat topography, occupying the valley floor of the Inangahua River. The vistas of the bush clad mountains as a backdrop

dominate. The open feel of the suburbs is accentuated by the wide grassy berms and low vegetation – while there are established gardens and trees these are generally low growing and gardens open to retain solar access.

Open Space

There is a range of open space spread through and adjacent to the residential area with the Reefton Racecourse, New Zealand flag of lavender, and the War Memorial Park. The park alongside The Strand, has the swimming pool, picnic areas and walkways alongside the Inangahua River. The town is a centre for access to the wider recreational opportunities for walking and cycling in the Victoria Forest Park.

Green Structure

Within the residential areas, there are a mix of native trees and domestic fruit and ornamental trees of low stature, with few large trees within the environment. There are generally grass berms separating the road from private properties.

3.2.2 Built Character Elements

Landuse

Is predominantly residential. Only a small number of non residential activities exist such as churches, corner stores and home occupations, and these are small in scale and predominantly accommodation type activities which fit well within the residential character.

Street Pattern

These early residential areas were laid out on a grid pattern, with a high level of connectivity within residential area.

Density/Height

Generally 800-1000m² sections. Most houses are single story, and built well back from the street.

Residential Age, Type and Style

These older parts of Reefton represents a range of house styles and ages from the early 1900s to the mid 20th century. The town gradually built outwards from the centre, with the more modern housing found closer to the hills and down the Inangahua Valley.