

HISTORIC PLACES

MANAWATŪ - HOROWHENUA

Newsletter of Historic Places
Manawatu—Horowhenua

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The Voice of Heritage

The current government is introducing major changes to New Zealand's planning laws to speed up housing development in our cities. There are concerns in the heritage sector that "character" may be lost in the process – that is, the consistent historic streetscape of a neighbourhood may be crowded out with inappropriately scaled buildings. These proposed laws promise transformations of our cityscapes.

So here is a short guide to the changes afoot.

The **National Policy Statement on Urban Development** (aka **NPS-UD**).

This was passed into law in August 2020 as part of the Resource Management Act. In theory it hopes to ensure well-planned, well-functioning future urban areas. In practice it requires local councils to identify future growth areas by 2023. District plans must make room for housing growth both 'up' and 'out', and not necessarily constrain growth.

Cities must intensify housing in central areas or close to transport opportunities or where there is high demand. At present this applies only to Tier 1 cities: Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, and Christchurch, where intensification / housing must be **at least six stories high**. (Palmerston North is classed along with Whangarei, Rotorua, Napier-Hastings, New Plymouth, Nelson, Dunedin and Queenstown as a Tier 2 city).

The **RMA (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act** was passed into law on the 14th December with immediate effect. Its aim is to reinforce the National Policy Statement on Urban Development by speeding up the planning process and setting specifications for urban development.

The Act instructs Councils of Tier 1 cities to immediately amend district plans to allow **up to 3 buildings of 3 storeys on every residential site** (aka Medium Density Development Standards). The Act also permits buildings to be constructed higher and closer together without a resource consent being needed. The specifications in this act are known as Medium Density Residential Standards – MDRS.

There are few exemptions and this does not include effects on existing property owners' sun, views or privacy. It also does not include the "character" of a neighbourhood as a criterion.

Most importantly, Tier 2 urban areas may be required to implement the medium density standards if the Minister of Housing and Minister for the Environment consider there is acute housing need. Rotorua has already chosen to do so.

Natural and Built Environment Bill

The bill is still in the consultation phase but likely to be passed by the next General Election in 2023. This is the philosophical replacement to the Resource Management Act. It requires national planning for the environment including climate change, cultural heritage, urban areas and housing supply. This is to ensure consistency across multiple territorial authorities. A major change is that planning is to be done at a regional level by a regional planning committee. This already occurs with the natural environment which is handled by regional councils but built environment has up to now been handled by local territorial authorities – city and district councils. Historic Places Aotearoa is arguing for built heritage to receive greater consideration in this broadly worded bill.

So, watch this space. The government has clearly stated that notwithstanding the loss of amenity for some due to housing intensification, this will be counterbalanced by the greater benefits for most in our communities.

CIVIC AWARD FOR PROFESSOR EMERITUS MARGARET TENNANT



Margaret Tennant and Lesley Courtney with a copy of the Heritage Trust Calendar

It is our great pleasure to congratulate long-standing committee member, Professor Emeritus Margaret Tennant, on receiving a 2021 Palmerston North Civic Award, one of six honoured this year. Her citation reads:

During decades as a professional historian and in retirement as a “born-again local historian”, Margaret Tennant has championed the accessibility and study of local history, encouraging and advising regional researchers and writers as they explore the histories and heritage of [Manawatū](#).

Margaret has served as minutes secretary for Historic Places [Manawatū](#) -Horowhenua [continuously] from 1992, authoring the Heritage Walk booklet, Women's Places.

In 2003 she became the inaugural chairperson of the Palmerston North Heritage Trust. Through the Trust in 2005 Margaret initiated the Manawatu Journal of History. She's been on its committee since 2015.

She obtained funding for transcribing [Manawatū](#) Heritage's oral histories and instigated the local historian and local history publication of the year awards along with the annual Heritage Trust calendar. She also promoted this year's Telling our stories symposium.

In time for Palmy's 150th year, Margaret initiated, sought funding for, managed, co-edited and contributed to 2020's City at the Centre, the first major history publication of Palmerston North in 50 years.

A member since 2004 of the Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand / Aotearoa, and a executive committee member since 2013, Margaret has edited its publication, Phanzine, since 2016.

Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand – Te Apārangi in 2009 she served on its academy executive and council for six years and has been on its branch committee since 2016.

Margaret has been a long-standing supporter of and contributor to the Te Manawa Museum Society and a committee member since 2019.

It's particularly apt that our foremost local historian is presented a Civic Award in Palmerston North's sesquicentennial year.

(Civic Award citation)

TE MOTU O POUTOA

Rangitāne and the Palmerston North City Council are partway into a co-operative project to enhance this site, perhaps better known to most Palmerstonians as Anzac Park or Porkchop Hill across the river from Hokowhitu. Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua were one of the stakeholders consulted last year on possibilities for Te Motu o Poutoa and recently attended a very damp rainy-day tour of the site. A document for its development should be going up to the Council in February next year.



te motu o poutoa before 1961

This long-standing Rangitāne fortified pā site (“the island of Poutoa”) was established by Poutoa about four hundred years ago for its strategic views up and down the Manawatu River and across Rangitāne gardens on the river flats. In the 1850s and 1860s with the arrival of European settlers it was under the governance of rangitira, Te Hirawanui Kaimokopuna, marked by carved posts – pou, with village settlements below.

In 1864 the site was sold as part of the Te Ahu a Tūranga block to the NZ government and has since ended up in Palmerston North

City Council care. The current finger of land that is the park is a shadow of the pā site's former self. From 1962-63, the ridge was lowered 20 metres to form the plateau that exists today and in 1964-65 the car park and look-out were created. The Palmerston North Astronomical Society observatory was built at one end in 1971. Much of the pā's integrity and archaeological heritage has been destroyed.

Consultation to showcase the extensive history of the site began early in 2021. There is now a list of ideas which need to be consolidated by reality. A major factor is the cliff face requires a set-back of 35 metres which given the site's narrowness will mean any buildings must be placed well back and can only be small-scale [some stakeholders have proposed a marae, café or hotel]. One end of the site also has a precarious walkway down to the Fitzherbert bridge which offers possibilities. Rangitāne desire is to make the most of this prestigious and prominent iwi site from the recent past.



te motu o poutoa today



The location of whare sites are marked by numbered red icons.

Manawatu River Accord Whare

The Mina McKenzie Memorial lecture this year, sponsored by the Manawātū Museum Society, focused on the first ten years of the Manawātū River Accord. The presenters were from the several iwi linked to the river on both the eastern and western side of the Tararua Ranges.

The lecture discussed the latest co-operative venture by the iwi as part of the Accord, a set of eight whare (educational kiosks) along the Manawātū, talking of iwi history, their connection to the awa / river and their hopes for its future. You may wish to visit - starting on the eastern side there are whare at Norsewood and Pāhiatua, then:

Te Waha o te Kurī Whare - Ferry Reserve
(Woodville entrance to the Manawātū Gorge)

On the western side there are:

Hokowhitu Whare – in Waterloo Park Reserve, Hokowhitu, Palmerston North [this has ornate Cortensteel bargeboards well worth the viewing]

Puketōtara Whare – at Te Rangimārie Marae, Rangiotū

Poutu Whare – at the Poutu Marae, Foxton Shannon Road, Shannon

Two other whare are also under development

Te Ngau o Tapa Te Whata Whare – Kitchener Park, Feilding

Te Pou o Papangaio Whare – Foxton

You can view all the whare at the website address:



Hokowhitu Whare, Waterloo Park Reserve



Detail of the Cortensteel bargeboards 3

Chairwoman's Annual Report for 2020 – 2021

Preservation

This year in particular has been one for submissions on local heritage.

Submission on All Saints Church: In mid-2020 HPMH made a submission about plans for All Saints Church, Palmerston North. While our committee was in favour of the earthquake-strengthening we could not reach agreement on the modern extension across the heritage facade given it was the congregation's choice. In December the church applied for resource consent for the work. However they stated they would only earthquake-strengthen the building if granted the modern extension. The church's planning application was heard by an independent commission. In March the commission announced they rejected both the earthquake-strengthening and extension, stating All Saints Church needed to re-think their proposal. We await the church's response.

Submission about future governance of Caccia-Birch: The Palmerston North City Council has proposed managing Caccia-Birch directly on the grounds this would bring financial savings and best enable its future development. Our submission concentrated on which governance structure which would provide best care of the historic elements, house and gardens, of this Category I listed estate settling in favour of the existing Trust Board arrangement. Despite 75% of submissions being for the status quo, the Council has chosen to take control of the property from July next year. We wish to thank the members who responded to our request to make a submission on the proposal. The Council has indicated it wishes heritage groups to still be involved as volunteers and we are awaiting a letter to this effect.

Submission on a proposed Massey University Oval Heritage Area: The university plans to legally protect the area centred around the Oval, the heart of the original 1930s Agricultural College. We were of course in favour though the proposal is mainly about retaining the Oval as a green space with any new buildings to be in a heritage-appropriate style. Lesser elements such as sculptures and landscaping need not reflect the 1930s style of the space.

Submission to Palmerston North 10 Year Annual Plan: Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua has endorsed the Council's strong heritage orientation that will be built into their many future activities such as parks & recreation projects. We also supported Hoffman Kiln Trust's request for Council funding of \$35,000 a year over the next three years to preserve and make the structure publicly accessible.

The UCOL workshops have received a Category II classification by Heritage NZ to match its other half, the former Palmerston North Technical School building across the road on Princess St. Unfortunately Heritage NZ now only classifies one or two places a year in this area, and we are informed only when the place is publicly notified. As they point out, classification does not ensure protection, this is to be found in local government District Plans.

Opiki Bridge: three months past we approached Heritage NZ to discuss a way forward for this Category I listed structure given the ownership issues [still in private family ownership] and environmental constraints [regular flooding of the area]. Organizing an engineers' assessment appears to be the way forward, which will require a seeding grant from ourselves. There has been no progress at this point due to staff availability at their end and of course Covid-19.

Promotion

Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua published two newsletters in December 2020 and August 2021 for our members.

The Chairwoman also took a guided walk of Cuba Street as part of Palmerston North Local History Week. The street had a diverse mix of clubs, hotels and small businesses in particular car and motorcycle shops.

In April 2021 we hosted a **bus-trip to historic Otaki**. It was an excellent visit to the former Otaki Children's Health Camp and introduction to heritage of Otaki Main Settlement. The trip was advertised also among U3A members but regrettably we still had low numbers attending [a dozen people]. As many of the bus-trippers were from our own committee this means we will seriously question bus-trips as an activity we provide for our members. Would an afternoon tea out at a venue be of greater interest?

David Chapple and Don Irvine from our committee also serve on the **Hoffman Kiln Trust**, working to preserve this Category I industrial structure. The Trust is to be congratulated for recently receiving a grant of \$50,000 from Awapuni Rotary. This will be used to refurbish a shed on-site for public displays about the kiln's heritage including objects from the site. HPMH has re-iterated our pledge to help pay for display pan-

els in the proposed 'museum' (costs likely to be several thousand dollars). In the interim we have granted \$335 for the reprint of their Hoffman kiln brochure.

Future challenges

Earthquake strengthening: the government's national EQUIP fund to assist owners with earthquake strengthening has now ended. Six businesses from Feilding took up the opportunity. Unfortunately this has come too late for Horowhenua District which has just formally served notice on commercial building owners in their region that their properties must be brought up to code in the next two years. Only a few of Horowhenua's historic commercial buildings have been listed on the District Scheme making it difficult to apply for heritage funds.

Natural & Built Environments Act: this replacement for the Resource Management Act will wind its way through Parliament over the next five years. It will set regulations for land use and environmental planning trying to bring some consistency nation-wide. The first "exposure draft" from the government testing public opinion strongly emphasizes care of the natural environment but barely mentions the worth of built heritage [perhaps because this will expedite the construction of new housing].

Historic Places Aotearoa has produced an extensive and excellent critique on the Exposure Draft. At their request we made a submission to the government using a draft supplied by HPA. The leadership of Historic Places Aotearoa is strongly politically orientated. One advantage of membership with HPA is that it brings the expertise in high-level 'planning speak' that smaller committees such as ourselves lack.

Projects for the coming year:

Review of the Palmerston North District Plan: this is our opportunity to include new and hitherto unconsidered places in the register. The Plan offers the greatest legal protection for heritage places and acknowledges buildings which are of importance at the local level. Your nominations for potential places will be welcomed.

Hoffman Kiln: we look forward to the fit-out of a display area at the site and assistance with display panels.

The new schools' history curriculum: this is due to begin in 2022. Historic Places has not yet been approached by desperate primary school teachers, though some are aware of our resources. At this point we are choosing to wait and see.

SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER Note from the Treasurer Bill Bendall

A reminder that subscriptions for the year 2021/22 are due in the amount of \$20.00 single or \$25 family. Please pay to TSB account 15 3977 0028377 00 with your name as reference.

I have a locked letter box at 8 Manuka St, Hokowhitu, so cash in an envelope would be an option, if that is easier. If you are not sure whether you have already paid, please give me ring on 3544945 or email junbil@xtra.co.nz

HISTORIC PLACES MANAWATU-HOROWHENUA COMMITTEE

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Committee: Don Irvine, David Chapple, Ian Robertson, Margaret Tennant, Pauline Knuckey.