

**Before Independent Resource
Management Hearings
Commissioner Alistair Aburn
appointed by Masterton
District Council**

In the matter of

A resource consent application
pursuant to section 88 of the
Resource Management Act 1991

By

Masterton District Council c/-
Russell Hooper Consulting

To

Masterton District Council
(Consent Authority)

**Application for Land Use Consent for the demolition of the Masterton Town Hall, 64
Chapel Street, Masterton**

Section 42A Report
Prepared by Honor Clark
Consultant Planner
For Masterton District Council



Executive summary

The applicant, Masterton District Council (MDC), is seeking land use consent to demolish the Masterton Town Hall at 64 Chapel Street, Masterton. For the purposes of this report, reference to the 'Masterton Town Hall' includes all three buildings on the site: the Town Hall, the Municipal Building, and the Civil Defence Building; expect where separation of the buildings for assessment is appropriate.

The proposal is a Discretionary Activity under the relevant Wairarapa Combined District Plan provisions.

The application has been subject to Public Notification under section 95A of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and a total of 59 submissions have been received.

The conclusion and recommendation drawn from the assessment of effects on the environment (within the context of the relevant provisions of the District Plan and the decision-making framework of the RMA) are, that overall, the effects of the proposal are no more than minor and that, on balance, the proposal is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Wairarapa Combined District Plan. The proposal can therefore be granted consent with appropriate consent conditions imposed under sections 108 and 220 of RMA to ensure effects of the activity are able to be avoided or remedied or mitigated, as much as is practicable in this instance.

INTRODUCTION

- [1] My name is Honor Clark, Consultant Planner for the Masterton District Council (MDC or Council). I hold a Bachelor of Resource and Environmental Planning with Honours from Massey University. I have 28 years' experience as a Resource Management Planner, formally working at Dunedin and Wellington City Council's, Tonkin and Taylor Environmental Consultancy, and for the past 16 years as a Consultant Planner, providing a variety of resource management related services to local bodies and private clients. I regularly provide planning expertise and assistance to MDC.
- [2] I am familiar with the site and Masterton Town Hall, having grown up in the Wairarapa and using the building while in the school choir, watching my children perform there, visiting the Council offices and attending functions in the Frank Cody Lounge. I have recently undertaken a site visit, including a walk-through of the interior of the building.
- [3] Under section 42A(1AA) of the RMA a local authority may commission a consultant to prepare a report before a hearing on any matter described in section 39(1) of the RMA, including an application for resource consent.
- [4] This section 42A RMA report provides background information and a recommendation on the resource consent application made by MDC for land use consent for the demolition of the Masterton Town Hall at 64 Chapel Street, Masterton.
- [5] This report adopts the information provided in the application, the relevant parts of which will be referred to where appropriate, in accordance with section 42A(1B)(b) of the RMA.

- [6] This report is structured as follows:
- An overview and summary of the proposal, the site and locality
 - Reasons for the application
 - Process, Notification and summary of submissions received
 - Matters requiring assessment under the RMA (and other statutory requirements)
 - An evaluation of the proposal against the relevant objectives and policies of the Operative and Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan (WCDP)
 - WCDP analysis, including assessment of environmental effects
 - Statutory considerations, particularly the purpose and principles of the RMA
 - Conclusion and Recommendations, including recommended conditions
 - Appendices

THE PROPOSAL

- [7] An application for resource consent has been made under section 88 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) for the demolition of the Masterton Town Hall. The proposal is outlined in the application material prepared by Russell Hooper Consulting, on behalf of the applicant MDC, dated 29 November 2024.

- [8] The application documentation includes an assessment of environmental effects, and the following documents as appendices:
- Structural Report by LGE Consulting dated 27 September 2016, and Peer Review by Dunning Thornton Consultants dated 6 January 2017
 - Heritage Effects Assessment by WSP dated 28 November 2024
 - Structural Options Report by Dunning Thornton Consultants dated 13/11/2024
 - Fit for Purpose Assessment by Silverwood Architects dated 12/11/2024
 - Cost Plan Report by RPS Group dated 19 November 2024
 - Demand Analysis Masterton Civic Centre by Horwath HTL dated 9 November 2020
 - Market Demand and Financial Analysis by Horwath HTL dated 12 April 2019
 - Archaeological Assessment by Geometria dated 15 August 2024.

- [9] The following background reports and information are also referenced in the application:
- Masterton District Council Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2024-2025
 - Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda
 - MDC LTP 2024-2034 Supporting Information – Town Hall, Library and Archive
 - MDC LTP 2024-2034 Consultation Document
 - Bulk and Massing Studies – Masterton Town Hall Site
 - Heritage Significance Report
 - Demolition Report (Demo of Town Hall and Retention of Municipal Buildings)
 - Structural Sketches SK1-SK9
 - Asbestos Demolition Survey and Lead Paint Sampling Report

- Geotechnical Seismic Assessment – Site Investigation, Masterton Municipal Building and Town Hall.

- [10] Following the MDC resolution on the LTP on 5 June 2024 (quoted on page 3 of the application), the proposal is to demolish the Masterton Town Hall in its entirety, including the Municipal Building facade. This is to allow for a new Town Hall to be built on the same site, including a multi-purpose space for performances and functions, at a budget of no more than \$25 million in years 1 to 4 (July 2024 to July 2028) of the LTP.
- [11] Although the application states that the design phase for a replacement building is underway, details of this have not been included with the application. The proposal will therefore, should it be approved, leave the site vacant for the time-being.
- [12] The application states that the applicant intends to recycle as much material as possible from the existing Town Hall building, with key elements such as the steel-framed windows preserved and integrated into the new structure.
- [13] The demolition is to be carried out in full compliance with the relevant permitted activity standards relating to noise, dust, and duration and a Site Management Plan will be prepared to manage these matters, along with associated traffic.

THE SITE AND LOCALITY

- [14] The site at 64 Chapel Street, Masterton is legally described as Section 104 Town of Masterton, and held within Record of Title WN343/105. The Record of Title (RT) comprises a total area of 2,883m². The site is owned by MDC. There are no interests registered on the Record of Title that affect the assessment of the proposal.
- [15] The site is located on the northern side of Chapel Street or State Highway Two (SH2), with frontage also onto Lincoln Road and Perry Street (where the traffic is now rerouted via Cole Street), as illustrated in Figure 1 on page 5 of the application document.
- [16] Although appearing as one large structure, the site contains three separate buildings as clearly illustrated in Figure 2 on page 6 of the application, being the:
- Masterton Town Hall Building – a large rectangular building originally of unreinforced masonry (URM) constructed in 1915 and set back off Perry Street;
 - MDC Municipal Building – a large two-storey building also constructed of URM walls in 1915 set to the corner of Chapel Street and Perry Street (in its original route), and effectively wrapping around two sides of the Town Hall; and
 - Civil Defence Building – a two-storey structure, constructed in 1984/1985 fronting Chapel Street and designed as an extension of the Municipal Building, being of similar proportions vertically, with similar window spacings and set to the street on the same building line.

- [17] The 1942 earthquakes resulted in structural damage, particularly to the Municipal Building, as described on page 9 of the LGE Structural Report in Appendix A. The photograph is Figure 7 of the LGE Report shows damage to the decorative parapets, with brick sections having fallen onto Chapel Street. As a result of this damage, substantial strengthening / refurbishment and extension work was undertaken in the 1950's, as outlined on pages 9-14 of the LGE Report, and summarised below as including:
- Lifting the entire roof of the Town Hall 5.2m, extending the rear of the hall to form the current stage area, erecting internal elevated seating, and constructing a new projector room;
 - Constructing a new reinforced 'skin' concrete façade on the Chapel and Perry Street URM frontages with internal structural steel elements; and
 - Roofing and flooring installed in some areas to span the void between the buildings.
- [18] The Municipal Buildings (including the Town Hall) re-opened on 5 March 1954, as marked by the plaque on the front of the building. Between 1954 and now few other changes have been made to the Town Hall, with some minor changes to the staging area and the removal of internal URM walls on the ground floor foyer area. The Municipal Building has had ongoing alterations, particularly to the ground floor. Notably, internal sections of URM wall have been removed to accommodate refurbishments, and extensions in the 1970's.
- [19] The Masterton Town Hall has been identified as an earthquake risk and has been vacant since 2016. The Masterton Town Hall has an Earthquake Prone Building (EPB) notice dated 26/08/2018 with repair required by 26/02/2026¹. The Town Hall Building has been determined to be 10-20% of New Build Standard (NBS) for buildings of Importance Level 3 (IL3). The statutory requirement is greater than 34% for IL3. The Municipal Building has been determined to be 20-30% NBS (IL2).
- [20] Since 2016 Masterton has not had a town hall and the MDC offices and meeting rooms (previously housed within the Municipal Building) have been accommodated in Waiata House to the northwest of the Masterton Town Hall and in a Queen Street site.
- [21] Carparking is provided on the northeast end of the site and across neighbouring RT 82753 and RT 582593, which contains Waiata House.
- [22] The site is zoned Urban – Commercial under the Operative Wairarapa Combined District Plan (WCDP) 2011. The building is listed as heritage item Hm055 "District Building" within Appendix 1.7 Heritage Items of the Operative WCDP. SH2, adjoining the site, is classified as a "Strategic Road" in the roading hierarchy and covered by Designation Dm151 with New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA) as Requiring Authority. No other special management areas or notations apply to the site or building in the Operative WCDP.

¹ The Building Act 2004 was amended on 26 November 2024 with the Building (Earthquake-prone Building Deadlines and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024 (2024 No 49), which has extended this deadline by 4 years.

- [23] As reference material for assessments of heritage buildings and items listed in the Operative WCDP, the Council Planning Department refer to information compiled by local heritage expert David Kernohan, called “Registered Heritage Items”. Interestingly, the extract on the District Building (which includes the Town Hall) in this reference material, refers to “Exterior only”, see below. However, the information “Exterior only” was not transposed to the listing in the Operative WCDP in Appendix 1.7.

64 Chapel Street, District Building (Exterior only)



The first Town Hall was in Lincoln Road (then called Hall Street) near the rear of the Post Office. It burnt down in the early 1880s, and a private hall in Queen Street, the Theatre Royal, was used as the Town Hall. In the mid to late 1890s, the Masterton Trust Lands Trust built a new Town Hall in Lincoln Road. This building was later referred to as the "Opera House".

"The site now occupied by the District Buildings had been donated to the Borough by the Trust Lands Trust for a library, and a two-storied building, incorporating both the library and the municipal offices was built on the site. This building was moved further south on the site and the replacement Municipal Buildings, incorporating the Town Hall, was opened in 1916.

"Damaged in the earthquake of 1942, the building was strengthened and clad in concrete over brickwork. The roof of the auditorium was raised in 1947. All roof embellishment was removed. A further extension was carried out in the 1970s. Internally, the principal hall is a fine space of unusual proportion. The building has some historic and townscape value because of its status.

- [24] The site is zoned Town Centre in the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan (notified on 11 October 2023). The building is listed as heritage item Hm046 “District Building” within Schedule 1 – Heritage Buildings and Items of the Proposed WCDP. SH2 has a One Network Framework (ONF) classification as “Main Steets” and a ‘roll-over’ Designation NZTA-M-01. The site also has a specific control of an “Active Street Frontage” on the Chapel Street, Lincoln Road and Perry Street frontages and is affected by the “State Highway Noise Boundary” Precinct over parts of the site off the same road frontages. The site is also identified in a “Flood Hazard Area Inundation Area – Low Hazard”, and a “Possible Liquefaction Prone Area” in the Hazards and Risks overlays of the Proposed WCDP. No other special management areas or notations apply to the site or building in the Proposed WCDP.
- [25] As part of the Proposed WCDP development, an assessment of the heritage values of all Operative WCDP heritage items, buildings and precincts was undertaken by David Kernohan in 2022. Below is the extract from the Proposed WCDP “Section 32 RMA Evaluation Topic Report – Historic Heritage” (October 2023) on Hm055 “District Building”, and it recommended that the building be included as a listed building in the Proposed WCDP.

Hm 055 District Building
64 Chapel Street, Masterton (Pt Sec 104 Town of Masterton)



The first Town Hall was in Lincoln Road (then called Hall Street). It burnt down in the early 1880s, and a private hall in Queen Street, the Theatre Royal, was used as the Town Hall. In the mid to late 1890s, the Masterton Trust Lands Trust built a new Town Hall in Lincoln Road. This building was later referred to as the "Opera House".

"The site now occupied by the District Buildings had been donated to the Borough by the Trust Lands Trust for a library, and a two-storied building, incorporating both the library and the municipal offices.

This building was moved further south on the site and the replacement Municipal Buildings, incorporating the Town Hall, was opened in 1916. Damaged in the earthquake of 1942, the building was strengthened and clad in concrete over brickwork. The roof of the auditorium was raised in 1947. All roof embellishment was removed. A further major extension was carried out quite politely in the 1970s. Internally the hall is a fine space if of unusual proportion. The building has value because of its status but is largely denuded of much of its once decorative elegance

Evaluation

Value	Assessment	Value	Assessment
Historic values	X	Surroundings	X
Physical values	X	Rarity	
Social values	X	Representativeness	
Tangata whenua values		Other	Group C

Recommendation
Include

plus Town Square value as part of group??

- [26] The building is not listed on Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga’s National Heritage building list as a Category 1 or 2 listing.

REASONS FOR THE APPLICATION

- [27] The application provides an assessment against the Operative and Proposed WCDP. I generally concur with this assessment and provide a summary below.
- [28] The application highlights that the proposal has two aspects when assessing it; the physical demolition of the buildings, and that the demolition is of a listed heritage building or item.

Operative WCDP (2011)

- [29] The demolition of buildings is subject to the District Wide permitted activity standards in Section 21 of the Operative WCDP. The following rules are relevant to the physical demolition:

21.1 Permitted Activities

The following are permitted activities, provided they comply with the relevant standards for permitted activities specified below and within underlying Environmental Zones and Management Areas.

21.1.12 Dust and Odour

- (a) *The generation of airborne contaminants meets the following standard:*
 - (i) *No nuisance at or beyond the boundary of the site to the extent it causes an adverse effect. This standard applies to contaminants which are not*

subject to a discharge consent and which are temporary or intermittent in nature, including:

- (1) Dust;*
- (2) Offensive or objectionable odour.*

21.1.13 Noise

(c) Construction Noise

- (i) Construction noise shall be measured and assessed in accordance with NZS6803:1999 “Acoustics – Construction Noise” and shall not exceed the noise limits set out in Table 2 of that Standard for the timeframes stated.*
- (ii) Provided that the provisions of the standard related to the duration of construction events and the more or less stringent noise limits applicable in such circumstances shall apply.*

21.1.16 Temporary Activities

- (a) Activities ancillary to or incidental to building and construction shall be:
 - (i) Limited either to the duration of the project or for a period not exceeding 12 months, whichever is the lesser;*
 - (ii) Within construction noise limits set out in 21.1.13.**
- (c) All material and debris from demolished, or partly demolished buildings shall be removed from a site within 2 months of the demolition being completed.*

[30] On the basis that, as stated in the application, the demolition activity will be carried out in compliance with these relevant standards, land use consent is not required under the Operative WCDP.

[31] The matter relating to demolishing a heritage building falls under the Proposed WCDP (as assessed below). Having said that, it is noted that the following Discretionary Activity Rule of the Operative WCDP would have applied to the proposal anyway had the Proposed WCDP provisions relating to historic heritage not been given immediate legal effect:

21.6 Discretionary Activities

The following are Discretionary Activities:

- (f) Any alteration, addition, relocation, reconstruction, partial demolition or total demolition not complying with the permitted activity standards for any heritage item listed in Appendix 1.7 Heritage Items, except for the relocation and demolition of a Category 1 item under Rule 21.7(a).*


Proposed WCDP (notified 11 October 2023)

[32] The Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan was publicly notified on 11 October 2023, with the submission period ending on 19 December 2023, and the further submissions period closing on 29 March 2024. Hearings are currently being held on the Proposed WCDP and will continue through to mid-2025. The hearings stream relating to the Heritage Chapter was completed in December 2024, but decisions on the Proposed WCDP will not be released until all the hearings are completed.

- [33] Under section 86B(3) of the RMA, rules in proposed plans on the following matters have immediate legal effect:
- a. *Protects or relates to water, air, or soil (for soil conservation)*
 - b. *Protects areas of significant indigenous vegetation*
 - c. *Protects areas of significant habitats of indigenous fauna*
 - d. *Protects historic heritage*
 - e. *Provides for or relates to aquaculture activities.*

[34] Therefore, the rules related to protecting historic heritage under the Proposed WCDP have been given immediate legal effect and this is shown by the red gavel symbol in the Plan.

[35] The only rule of the Proposed WCDP which has legal effect that is relevant to the proposal is Historic Heritage Rule HH-R7, as below:

HH-R7 	Demolition of any heritage <i>building</i> or item listed in SCHED1 Heritage Buildings and Items
All zones	1. Activity status: Discretionary

[36] The proposal is therefore a Discretionary Activity under the Proposed WCDP for the demolition of a listed heritage building (Hm046).

[37] The Town Centre Zone (TCZ) of the Proposed District Plan also has a specific rule relating to the demolition or removal of buildings and structures on an “active street frontage”. As described in paragraph 24 above, the Perry and Chapel Street and Lincoln Road frontages of the site all have an active street frontage depicted on the planning maps.

TCZ-R2	Demolition or removal of <i>buildings</i> and <i>structures</i>
	1. Activity status: Permitted a. On an active street frontage, where the demolition or removal of a <i>building</i> : i. is required to avoid imminent threat to life and/or property;
	ii. is required for the purpose of constructing a new <i>building</i> , or <i>additions</i> or <i>alterations</i> to an existing <i>building</i> ; iii. enables the creation of <i>public space</i> or private <i>outdoor living space</i> ; or b. The demolition or removal involves a <i>structure</i> ; or c. The demolition or removal activity is not located on an active street frontage. Note: Refer to TEMP-R1 for permitted activity standards for activities <i>ancillary</i> to or incidental to construction and demolition.
	2. Activity status: Discretionary Where: a. Compliance is not achieved with TCZ-R2(1).

- [38] It has not been demonstrated within the application that the Town Hall building requires demolition to avoid imminent threat to life or property under i. above, and I don't think this is necessarily the case. It may be argued however, as the demolition of the building is required for the purpose of constructing a new building, that ii. above, does apply to the proposal. As the plans for a new building have not been provided, I would take a precautionary approach, in that the proposal may also require consent under Rule TCZ-R2 of the Proposed WCDP as a Discretionary Activity.
- [39] There are other TCZ rules relating to construction and alterations of buildings on active street frontages, covering such things as minimum glass percentages, and the width of buildings across the frontage. These rules will affect any new building on the site and are unable to be assessed at this stage.
- [40] All of the rules of the TCZ referred to here do not have immediate legal effect.
- [41] Similarly, the rules of the Proposed WCDP relating to noise, dust and temporary activities within the General District Wide Matters section do not have legal effect. It is noted that the permitted activity standards relating to these matters are generally the same as those in the Operative WCDP. Regardless, it is intended that the proposal will comply with any of these District Wide provisions.

Weighting of the Proposed and Operative WCDP

- [42] Given that the relevant Proposed WCDP Rule HH-R7 has been given immediate legal effect and there are no Proposed WCDP submissions specifically relating to the rule or listed heritage building Hm046, substantial weight must be given to the Proposed WCDP Historic Heritage provisions.
- [43] With respect to the weighting of the objectives and policies of the Operative and Proposed WCDP, the applicant has on page 21 of the application stated:

The weighting of objectives and policies is not prescribed in the RMA and need to be assessed on a case by case basis. Given that the PWCDP rules have immediate effect there is an argument that the objectives and policies that drive the rules that have legal effect (PWCDP) should be considered to have higher weight than the OWCDP objectives and policies.

However, the policies and objectives of the OWCDP and PWCDP do not conflict with each other and can be considered together with equal weight.

- [44] I believe that the objectives and policies of the Proposed WCDP should be given greater weight than those of the Operative WCDP for the reason given above. However, I have also provided an assessment against the Operative WCDP objectives and policies for completeness.

Activity Status

- [45] Overall, the proposal has been considered as a Discretionary Activity. This aligns with the activity status as assessed in the application.

APPLICATION PROCESS TO DATE

- [46] Pre-application discussions were held between the applicant and Council Planning staff to ensure sufficient information was being provided to satisfy the requirements of section 88 of the RMA.
- [47] The application was formally lodged with Council on 11 December 2024.
- [48] The applicant requested that the application be publicly notified under section 95A(3) of the RMA, stated on page 37 of the application document.
- [49] Council has appointed Independent Resource Management Hearings Commissioner Alistair Aburn pursuant to section 34A of the RMA to determine the application.

NOTIFICATION AND SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

- [50] The application was publicly notified by Masterton District Council (MDC) in accordance with section 95A of the RMA on 20 December 2024. A copy of the application was also served on:
- local iwi authorities - Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā, Rangitāne O Wairarapa, and Ngati Kahungunu Ki Wairarapa Taiwhenua;
 - Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC);
 - Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga; and
 - New Zealand Transport Authority Waka Kotahi (NZTA).
- [51] The submission period closed at 4pm, Monday 10 February 2025. Fifty-nine (59) submissions were received within this time frame. One additional submission was received after the closure period and was not accepted by MDC as a late submission. The party was advised of this. It is noted this submission did not raise any additional matters that have not already been raised in other submissions.
- [52] Of the total 59 submissions received, 27 submissions oppose the application, and 23 support the application. The remaining 9 submissions oppose or support part of the proposal. Currently 18 submitters have stated they wish to be heard at a hearing, with an additional 10 submissions stating they may wish to present a joint case at a hearing.
- [53] The submissions are summarised in the following table (in order as received by MDC). The information in the table includes the submitters name; their stance on the application; whether they wish to be heard or not in respect of their submission or if this is not stated (NS); the matters raised by them and the decision they wish the Council to make, or the relief sought. MDC can confirm prior to the hearing whether the submitters who have not indicated whether they wish to be heard or heard with others who have a similar submission to consider presenting a joint case (CJC), actually wish to be heard.

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
1	Katrina Cosgrove	Oppose part of proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain façade, not demolish – attractive & historic part of Masterton • Election promise to save it = Decline the consent
2	Mark Rogers	Oppose part of proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Façade is attractive for visitors, landmark to 'locals' = Grant the consent with conditions
3	Penny Bicknell	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition of Town Hall = Grant the consent
4	Jeremy Bicknell	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition of Town Hall = Grant the consent
5	Carl McMahon	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially difficult times, hardship in the community – cost to ratepayers, money better spent on getting water sorted • Use resources in Wairarapa e.g. Carterton events centre = Decline the consent
6	William McGavin	Support whole proposal	Yes CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New purpose-built facility of value to citizens of Masterton, under MDC control = Grant the consent with 2 conditions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build be programmed to commence within 2 years of consent being granted, no reallocation of funds 2. New Town Hall be constructed on same site with memorabilia of old Town Hall
7	Robert Notley	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not necessary to demolish now – Earthquake (EQ) prone building deadline extended 4 years • Unnecessary spend – more important infrastructure projects require funding = Decline the consent
8	Toby Mills	Support whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully support all aspects of the application • MDC has completed numerous consultations • Cost of repairing building is un-affordable • Demolish quickly & replace – stop ongoing debate and division in the community = Grant the consent
9	Prudence Hamill	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition of Masterton Town Hall = Grant the consent

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
10	Graham Dick	Support part of proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support demolition of existing Town Hall & municipal building, while maintaining façade (Option 2B) • Construction within existing façade will retain heritage values e.g. Hastings & Hamilton = Grant the consent with conditions
11	Prue Miller	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolishing the Town Hall = Grant the consent
12	Rodney Miller	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolishing the Town Hall = Grant the consent
13	Stephen Butcher (Bachelor of Architecture)	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial form of the building – solid and embracing • Space suited to adaption & growth – architecture in its finest form • “a work of form and function, of eloquent engineering & architecture worthy of our enduring admiration” = Decline the consent
14	David Borman	Support whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full proposal = Grant the consent
15	Deborah Cunliffe	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial – question timing when outstanding Council projects e.g. water and road issues • Aesthetic – “current town hall is our point of difference” • Historical – link to history is untenable, irreversible = Decline the consent
16	Graham Workman	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition of Town Hall & Civic building – make a green space until new Town Hall is ready for construction = Grant the consent
17	Susan Notley	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not necessary to demolish now – EQ prone building deadline extended 4 years • Unnecessary spend – more important infrastructure projects require funding = Decline the consent
18	Stacey Miller	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolishing the Town Hall = Grant the consent

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
19	Sidney Hayes	Support & oppose part of proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolish the Town Hall, Municipal building and façade • No need to re-build – no Town Hall for last 8 years • Financial cost underestimated – on-going liability for ratepayers = Grant the consent with conditions
20	Nick Miller	Support whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building upkeep is costing ratepayers money, yet not useable • Strengthening cost can blow out easily • Building has earthquake prone status with a time limit • Need to demolish and build a new Town Hall = Grant the consent
21	Alan & Jenny Sadler	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building has EQ prone status with time limit for restoration • Delays costing ratepayers • If not granted left with ‘white elephant’ that is not fit for purpose • Strengthening costs could rapidly escalate = Grant the consent
22	Geoffrey Cops	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only affordable solution is total demolition to allow replacements to be built on same site = Grant the consent
23	Jan-Wendy Houston	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No urgency – Government’s EQs extension allows more time • More important things to be sorted, i.e. water • Strongly against total demolition, wants façade retained – few historic buildings left and forms a precinct of historic buildings with Times-Age & Public Trust buildings • In future, if desired by majority of residents, a new Town Hall can be built behind façade = Decline the consent
24	Richard Dalberg	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to demolish & rebuild – “now or never” = Grant the consent
25	Matthew Paku	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Knock down & rebuild” = Grant the consent
26	Noel Cohen	Oppose whole proposal	No CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 – decommission project until new water infrastructure requirements are costed = Decline the consent

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
27	Jennifer Cohen	Oppose whole proposal	No CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 – decommission project until new water infrastructure requirements are costed = Decline the consent
28	Peter Debney	Support whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolish to build a functional facility • Delays a burden to ratepayers with accumulating costs to maintain buildings, insurance, security • Risk if earthquake should occur = Grant the consent
29	Jenna Snelgrove	Support whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly support approval • Town Hall often heart of a community – meeting immediate and long-term needs of Masterton community = Grant the consent
30	Bob Francis	Support whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No details given = Grant the consent
31	Philip Carman	Oppose whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defer demolition to 26/2/2030 as provided under Building (Earthquake Prone Building Deadlines...) Amendment Act • Revisit considering budgeted figure for replacement & Heritage Effects Assessment • Peer reviews of engineering reports indicate viable and affordable options ignored = Decline the consent
32	Adam Philps	Support whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree with points made in proposal • Where possible & feasible, reference to old building be incorporated into new design • Reference mana whenua = Grant the consent
33	Masterton Ratepayers & Residents Assn (MRRRA) (Lyn Riley – President)	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial implications & lack of cost transparency – high risk of exceeding budget, no current costings, no thorough assessment of external funding options (such as heritage grants) or info on operating costs. Request an independent cost-benefit analysis to compare cost of demolition & new construction verses retention & repurposing; exploration of alternative redevelopment options; full financial transparency; & pursuit of external funding • Community engagement & process – rushed, over holiday period. No need for urgency with

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
				<p>deadline for compliance of EQ prone buildings until 2031</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Option 3 – decommissioning & mothballing the buildings • Cultural & Heritage value – high heritage significance (confirmed by Heritage Significance Report), key part of Masterton’s history & identity. E.g. of Hastings where buildings successfully preserved & restored • Environmental & sustainability considerations – demolition will have significant waste, repurposing aligns with sustainable practice • Economic & social impact – no business case that new Town Hall will have sufficient economic benefit, burden of debt, effect on other competing businesses, cumulative effect of rates rises on financial well-being of community <p>= Decline the consent</p>
34	Kimberley Owen	Oppose part of proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppose demolition of façade • Historical significance – very few buildings of this age in Masterton, or style in NZ; part of collection of historic buildings in the area, landmark <p>= Grant the consent with condition that the façade remains</p>
35	Tracey Owen	Oppose whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building has high architectural and aesthetic value (as per Heritage Architects report) • Historic value – present location since 1916; part of collection of historic buildings in the area considered a heritage precinct; landmark; rarity in NZ • WCDP encourages conservation and protection of historic heritage • No urgency – Government’s EQs extension allows remedial work to 2031 • Feasible to re-use the façade to a new Town Hall building • New build costs underestimated – need to know real cost to see if new Town Hall is viable • Council want to extend Waiata House into existing site of Town Hall <p>= Decline the consent</p>
36	Lynda Feringa	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall and Municipal buildings have high heritage significance (refer to WSP report) – strengthen and protect buildings <p>= Decline the consent</p>

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
37	Peter McNeur	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition provides certainty for future of site • Preserve some materials and incorporate in new development = Grant the consent
38	Sylvia Morgan	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lovely heritage building – special part of Masterton, many special memories using the building including prior to 1943 earthquake • Keep façade and build new Town Hall behind so heritage continues – “aren’t many grand Town Halls around NZ, & we should keep ours” = Decline the consent
39	Shannon Owen	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep façade and build new Town Hall behind to keep Masterton’s history, re-use old materials – losing our heritage = Decline the consent
40	James Owen	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep façade and build new Town Hall behind it as Wairarapa College have done • Façade is great looking & in keeping with other buildings close by like the Wairarapa Times Age & Public Trust buildings = Decline the consent
41	Dennis Riley	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 – decommission project until new water infrastructure requirements are costed and made available to the public • No urgency – Government’s EQs extension allows remedial work to 2031 • Limited heritage structures remaining in Masterton = Decline the consent
42	Lyn Riley	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 – decommission project • Financial implications – burden on ratepayers, high risk of exceeding budget, no recent cost-benefit analysis, no review of external funding options or info on operating costs. Request cost-benefit analysis, exploration of alternative redevelopment options, full financial transparency & pursuit of external funding sources • Consultation process & lack of transparency – rushed, over holiday period. No need for urgency with deadline for compliance of EQ prone buildings until 2031. Cost-benefit analysis needed • Cultural & Heritage preservation – significant cultural & heritage asset to Masterton. Other towns have successfully retained heritage

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
				buildings through public-private funding initiatives = Decline the consent
43	Marilyn Palmer	Support part of proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Option 2B to retain façade only – so few beautiful buildings left in Masterton and compliments the Times Age structure = Grant the consent with conditions that cost estimate of \$3.6 million met
44	Ian & Diane Grant	Oppose whole proposal	Yes CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need to rush – Government’s EQs buildings compliance extended from 2027 to 2031 • EQ risk of Town Hall possibly exaggerated • Façade & non-EQ risk area should be retained • Masterton doesn’t need another hall or auditorium – proper use of the Stadium & Carterton & Greytown existing facilities = Decline the consent
45	Natalia Vidyakina	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 – no urgency with legislation changing • Need more transparency • Building significant icon for the town – heritage listed, historical building • Questions financial impact on ratepayers • Questions funding arrangements = Decline the consent
46	Bruce Davidson	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No urgency owing to legislative changes • Consider historical significance • Financial impact on town • Questions funding arrangements & costings on alternatives • More transparency from Council needed = Decline the consent
47	Willam Davies	Oppose whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Option 3 • Suggest Council sell buildings for alternative use i.e. Hotel / accommodation / offices = Decline the consent
48	Sharyn Yeo	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell land & buildings – haven’t missed having a Town Hall & can’t afford a new one, let someone else develop the land = Decline the consent
49	Robyn Prior	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question status of “earthquake prone’ building • Financial implications – timing; other priorities of Council projects i.e. water; question actual costs of demolition

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of heritage buildings – so many heritage buildings already demolished, part of heritage precinct with Public Trust building & Times Age building • No urgency = Decline the consent
50	Amanda & Greg Morgan	Oppose whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rush – extended time for EQ strengthening • Heritage value of façade – ‘demolition, once done, can’t be undone’ • More information & firm plan on new Town Hall needed = Decline the consent
51	Dr Amanda Lynn	Oppose whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain protected heritage building & strengthen to 80% NBS, refurbished or repurposed & work governed by an Independent Heritage Board • Archaeological site • Supports concerns raised in MRRRA submission (#33) = Decline the consent
52	Dorothy Booth	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports whole application • Agrees with Council decision in 2021 to build a modern civic facility = Grant the consent
53	Susan Southey	Oppose whole proposal	CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Option 3 until community can afford it – questions costs for water matters & upgrading infrastructure = Decline the consent
54	Margaret Feringa	Support whole proposal	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSP commissioned by MDC – buildings in proposed WCDP and have ‘high historical significance’ but not listed by Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga = Grant the consent
55	Leonard Lamb	Oppose whole proposal	Yes CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Town Hall put back to full use not demolish’ = Decline the consent
56	Simon Byrne	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage – parts of building have significant heritage value & should be preserved • Options need to be better explored – Town Hall does not need to be re-built on that site = Decline the consent

#	Submitter	Stance	Heard	Matters raised / relief sought
57	Leslie Wright	Oppose whole proposal	NS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial implications – fixed income, uncertainty with water costs and rates rises, put project on hold = Decline the consent
58	Hewitt Harrison	Support & Oppose part of proposal	Yes CJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposes demolition of all three buildings – questions rationale, & costing increases = Grant the consent with condition that the façade of the Municipal Building be retained & incorporated into a new Town Hall building Or Reject the application
59	Jeannie Cozens	Oppose whole proposal	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effects on historic heritage values – refers to HH-P9 of the proposed WCDP; demolition would have significant effects on surrounding heritage buildings including the Wairarapa Times Age & Public Trust building; important to the wider community; high rarity value (WSP Heritage Assessment) Feasibility of adaptive re-use – options not readily evaluated Cost of maintenance or repair – based on high-level estimates, uncertainty of water costs & priorities Building safety Supports Option 3 = Decline the consent

[54] The issues or matters raised in submissions have been grouped into the following headings to assist assessment:

- Heritage value – “high” heritage significance according to the WSP Heritage Effects Assessment; important relationship with other heritage buildings (Wairarapa Times Age building and Public Trust building); rarity of the building i.e. few buildings of this age left in Masterton or style in NZ
- Architectural and aesthetic value – spatial form of the building, a “landmark” to visitors and locals
- Proposed WCDP provisions – HH-P9
- Economic effects – competing financial priorities of Council and the timing when costs are unknown; financial burden on ratepayers; possible cost blow outs; question economic benefits of a new Town Hall; effects on competing businesses
- Social effects – Town Hall can be the ‘heart of a community’; question community well-being with on-going uncertainty & increasing rates

- Cultural effects – consideration of mana whenua
- Health and Safety – questioned level of NBS compliance; legislative changes; cost of compliance, insurance and security if buildings retained (including Option 3)
- Environmental and sustainability considerations – retrofit / repurpose verses demolition
- Process / community engagement – timing of notification, lack of transparency

[55] Although not a submission, it is noted that New Zealand Transport Authority Waka Kotahi (NZTA) responded to Council’s public notice within the submission period, with an email received by MDC on Monday, 10 February 2025. NZTA suggested changes to proposed condition 9 within the application (page 40) regarding the Site Management Plan. The changes have been discussed with the applicant. The email concludes: *“On the basis of the acceptance of the amended condition being part of the proposal, NZTA has no objections to the proposed development”*.

MATTERS REQUIRING ASSESSMENT UNDER THE RMA

[56] Under section 104(1) of the Act the relevant matters requiring consideration when considering an application for resource consent and any submission received are as follows:

- (a) *any actual and potential effects on the environment of allowing the activity; and*
- (ab) *any measure proposed or agreed to by the applicant for the purpose of ensuring positive effects on the environment to offset or compensate for any adverse effects on the environment that will or may result from allowing the activity; and*
- (b) *any relevant provisions of—*
 - (i) *a national environmental standard:*
 - (ii) *other regulations:*
 - (iii) *a national policy statement:*
 - (iv) *a New Zealand coastal policy statement:*
 - (v) *a regional policy statement or proposed regional policy statement:*
 - (vi) *a plan or proposed plan; and*
- (c) *any other matter the consent authority considers relevant and reasonably necessary to determine the application.*

[57] This report firstly considers the matters in s104(1)(b), followed by any actual and potential effects in s104(1)(a). Any measures proposed by the applicant to address such effects, and the matters raised in the submissions are also considered.

National Environmental Standards

[58] The National Environment Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health (NES - CS) must be considered if a site has had or is

likely to have had an activity on the Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) undertaken on it.

- [59] The application, on page 22, provides information that the adjoining site (RT 82753), being the carpark in between the application site and Waiata House, contains underground fuel tanks associated with heating the Town Hall. This is listed in the Wellington Regional Council Selected Land Use Register (SLUR) as SN/06/069/02. This fuel storage falls under Hazardous Activities and Industries List category “A.2 – Chemical manufacture, formulation, or bulk storage”. It is proposed that these fuel tanks will be removed under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experience professional in accordance with the provisions of the NES-CS. Depending on the amount of soil disturbed this tank removal will either be a permitted or controlled activity under clauses 8 or 9 of the NES-CS. Approval for this work is not part of this application and consent will be sought for this at a later stage if required.
- [60] As assessed in the application, deferring consent (if required) for the tank removal will not impact the assessment of this application. It is not unusual to address NES-CS matters via a separate consent, and as the work is on a different site it is easily separated in this case. For now, I consider that no further investigation under the NES-CS is required.
- [61] There are no other National Environmental Standards requiring consideration.

Other Regulations

- [62] Apart from the provisions of the WCDPs, which include compliance with applicable New Zealand Standards, particularly NZS4404:2010 (Land Development and Subdivision Infrastructure) and NZS6803:1999 (Acoustics - Construction Noise), there are no other regulations considered applicable to the proposal.
- [63] The Archaeological Assessment prepared by Geometria included in Appendix H of the application recommends an Archaeological Authority to Modify or Destroy an Archaeological Site should be sought from New Zealand Heritage Pouhere Taonga. This is a matter that is addressed further in the assessment of effects section and can be covered by a condition or note in the consent, if granted.

National Policy Statements

- [64] There are no National Policy Statements considered relevant to the assessment of this proposal, including the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. This relates more to housing provision. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement is not relevant.

Wellington Regional Policy Statement (RPS)

- [65] The current operative RPS is the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (2013).
- [66] The application provides a brief analysis of the relevant objectives and policies of the RPS on pages 27-29. Considered of particular relevance to the proposal is Objective 15 and related Policies 21, 22 and 46: Managing effects on historic heritage values:

Historic Heritage

Policy 21: Identifying places, sites, and areas with significant historic heritage values- district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall identify places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of history and culture under one or more of the following criteria [not listed here]².

Policy 22:

District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or other methods that:

- (a) Protect the significant historic heritage values associated with places, sites and areas identified in accordance with policy 21, from inappropriate subdivision use, and development; and*
- (b) Avoid the destruction of unidentified archaeological sites and wahi tapu with significant historic heritage values.*

Policy 46:

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, a determination shall be made as to whether an activity may affect a place, site or area with historic heritage value, and in determining whether an activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- (a) the degree to which historic heritage values will be lost, damaged or destroyed;*
- (b) the irreversibility of adverse effects on heritage values;*
- (c) the opportunities to remedy or mitigate any previous damage to heritage values;*
- (d) the degree to which previous changes that have heritage value in their own right are respected and retained;*
- (e) the probability of damage to immediate or adjacent heritage values;*
- (f) the magnitude or scale of any effect on heritage values;*
- (g) the degree to which unique or special materials and/or craftsmanship are retained;*
- (h) whether the activity will lead to cumulative adverse effects on historic heritage; and*
- (i) whether the relationships between distinct elements of an historic place, site or area will be maintained.*

[67] The implementation of the RPS policies 21, 22 and 46 is addressed by the inclusion of identified heritage buildings and items in the operative and proposed WCDP's and requiring resource consent, as in this instance. The applicants' assessment concludes that demolition is the only reasonable option, and it is not therefore deemed inappropriate when assessed against the policies. It is noted that the policies refer to heritage values being lost, damaged or destroyed, and irreversibility of adverse effects on heritage values rather than a loss of a heritage building or item itself. Therefore, it is important to understand and evaluate the heritage values of the building, which is addressed further throughout this report. By way of a summary, it is considered that, with the recommendation provided and proposed conditions, the proposal, is not necessarily contrary to Policies 21, 22 or 46 of the RPS.

² Refer to Pages 102-103 of Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region (2013).

- [68] Also of particular relevance is RPS Objective 19 and related Policy 51: Minimising the risks and consequences of natural hazards:

Natural Hazards

Policy 51:

Minimising the risks and consequences of natural hazards

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review to a district or regional plan, the risk and consequences of natural hazards on people, communities, their property and infrastructure shall be minimised, and/or in determining whether an activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- (a) the frequency and magnitude of the range of natural hazards that may adversely affect the proposal or development, including residual risk;*
- (b) the potential for climate change and sea level rise to increase the frequency or magnitude of a hazard event;*
- (c) whether the location of the development will foreseeably require hazard mitigation works in the future;*
- (d) the potential for injury or loss of life, social disruption and emergency management and civil defence implications – such as access routes to and from the site;*
- (e) any risks and consequences beyond the development site;*
- (f) the impact of the proposed development on any natural features that act as a buffer, and where development should not interfere with their ability to reduce the risks of natural hazards;*
- (g) avoiding inappropriate subdivision and development in areas at high risk from natural hazards;*
- (h) the potential need for hazard adaptation and mitigation measures in moderate risk areas; and*
- (i) the need to locate habitable floor areas and access routes above the 1:100 year flood level, in identified flood hazard areas.*

- [69] The applicant's assessment against this policy refers to the sites' location within the Flood Hazard Area and rightly determines that the demolition will not increase the flood hazard. However, any future building will need to be designed to ensure the flood hazard is mitigated on the site, which I consider is achievable in this location.

- [70] The applicant's assessment against this policy fails to address the risk and consequences of an earthquake (a natural hazard), should the building not be demolished or at least upgraded to the required NBS. We only have to look at Christchurch example for the potential of injury or loss of life from sub-standard buildings. The demolition of the building would mitigate the earthquake risk associated with a sub-standard building, and therefore in this respect the proposal is considered to be consistent with this policy.

Wairarapa Combined District Plans (WCDP)

- [71] As addressed in paragraphs 27-45 of this report above, the proposal is assessed as a Discretionary Activity under the provisions of the Operative WCDP and Proposed WCDP. The District Plan Analysis section below addresses the relevant objectives and policies against the proposal. Due to the immediate effect of the

proposed WCDP Historic Heritage provisions, and the weight that can be afforded to these provisions, I have chosen to assess the Proposed WCDP first.

DISTRICT PLAN ANALYSIS

Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan (2023)

- [72] The following Strategic Direction objectives (O) and policies (P) of the Proposed WCDP are considered relevant to the proposal:

HC - Historic and Cultural Heritage

HC-01 Protection of heritage values

The cultural, spiritual, and/or historical values associated with historic heritage and sites and areas of significance to Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Ngāti Kahungūnu ki Wairarapa are recognised, protected and maintained.

UFD - Urban Form and Development

UFD-01 Urban form of the Wairarapa

Wairarapa's urban form is a series of connected urban areas located along the main transport routes which each support a local community.

UFD-05 Vibrant town centres

The Wairarapa contains vibrant and viable town centres that are the location for shopping, leisure, cultural, entertainment, and social interaction experiences and provide for the community's employment and economic needs.

- [73] The Historic and Cultural Heritage objective is implemented through the Historic Heritage section of the Plan. Additionally, Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Ngāti Kahungūnu ki Wairarapa iwi entities were included in the notification of the proposal and have not submitted on the application or provided any comment.

- [74] The Urban Form and Development objectives come through to the TCZ section of the Plan. I agree with the applicant's assessment that the demolition of the building will enable MDC to provide a more modern purpose-built civic centre that will have positive effects on the vibrancy of the town centre, as the building is currently not suitable for any use at all and has been sitting vacant since 2016.

- [75] The following Historic Heritage objectives (O) and policies (P) of the Proposed WCDP are relevant to considering the proposal, or partial demolition:

HH - Historic Heritage

HH-01 Recognising historic heritage

Historic heritage is recognised as important to the Wairarapa's identity.

HH-02 Protecting historic heritage

Historic heritage is protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

HH-P1 Identifying historic heritage

Identify, map and schedule buildings, items, and precincts with significant historic heritage values.

HH-P2 Protection of historic heritage

Protect scheduled historic heritage buildings and items and schedules heritage precincts from inappropriate activities by:

- 1. Discouraging the demolition or relocation of scheduled historic heritage buildings and items; and*
- 2. Requiring activities on, in, or surrounding scheduled historic heritage buildings and items, or in heritage precincts, to avoid adverse effects on historic heritage values as much as possible.*

HH-P3 Appropriate activities

Enable the following activities relating to scheduled historic heritage buildings and items, where they retain historic heritage values and contribute to the ongoing function and use of the building or item:

- 1. Maintenance and repair;*
- 2. Seismic strengthening and building safety alterations; and*
- 3. Demolition of non-scheduled buildings within a heritage precinct.*

HH-P4 Additions, alterations, and partial demolition

Provide for additions and alterations to, and partial demolition of, scheduled historic heritage buildings and items where the work:

- 1. Promotes or enhances heritage values;*
- 2. Is compatible with the form, proportion, and materials of the scheduled historic heritage building or item;*
- 3. Does not result in significant loss of architectural features and details that contribute to the scheduled historic heritage building or item's heritage values;*
- 4. Supports the sustainable long-term use of the scheduled historic heritage building or item, including adaptive re-use; and*
- 5. Aligns with the guidance for heritage buildings and areas set out in the Residential Design Guide or Centres Design Guide as applicable.*

HH-P5 Earthquake strengthening, fire protection, and accessibility

Control earthquake strengthening, fire protection, and accessibility upgrades to scheduled historic heritage buildings and items so that works do not detract from heritage values by:

- 1. Protecting, as much as practicable, architectural and features and details that contribute to the heritage values of the heritage building or item;*
- 2. Retaining or reinstating original façade appearance as much as practicable, and*
- 3. Minimising the visual impact of additions on the scheduled heritage building or item.*

HH-P9 Demolition of heritage buildings and items

Discourage demolition of scheduled historic heritage buildings and items unless it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternatives, and having regard to the following matters:

- 1. Effects on heritage values;*
- 2. The importance attributed to the heritage item by the wider community;*
- 3. Feasibility of adaptive re-use;*

4. *Cost of maintenance or repair;*
5. *Building safety; and*
6. *Appropriateness, compatibility and appearance of any replacement building in relation to heritage values.*

[76] The HH-01 objective states that historic heritage is recognised as important to the identity of the Wairarapa. I believe this can be said about the link of heritage to most places. Historic heritage provides a link to the past and helps define a sense of place and belonging for communities. The history of Masterton and a timeline of buildings on the site (including previous town halls) is outlined in detail in the Heritage Effects Assessment (HEA) in Appendix 2 of the application, which is useful for setting the context.

[77] The building has been identified as historic heritage through its listing as a scheduled item. The above listed policies talk about the appropriateness of activities and lists activities that are considered appropriate in relation to heritage items (i.e. maintenance and repair, seismic strengthening and safety alterations, additions, alterations and partial demolition). However, total demolition is not captured as an appropriate activity. Then policy HH-P9 states that demolition of a heritage building or item would only be appropriate if there are no reasonable alternatives. It is the applicant's stance that there are no reasonable alternatives – a large part of the application addresses the alternatives investigated. The matters that policy HH-P9 states any demolition of scheduled building or items shall have regard to have also been individually addressed in detail by the applicant (on pages 32-36 of the application).

[78] It is noted however, that the HEA prepared by WSP on behalf of the applicant has an assessment that concludes (on page 76):

....full demolition goes against all of the relevant Historic Heritage Policies outlined in the PWCDP.

Full demolition has Significant Negative heritage impacts when evaluated against both statutory and non-statutory assessment criteria. These impacts are permanent and irreversible and cannot be substantively mitigated.

[79] Due to this assessment included in the application, and that Council does not have internal heritage experts that could be called upon to assist with the assessment or review of the HEA, an independent heritage expert has been commissioned by MDC to assist with the assessment of the heritage value of the building. Richard Knott Limited, based out of Auckland has undertaken this assessment and it is included in the form of a memo as Appendix 1 of this report.

[80] Specifically, Richard Knott's evidence:

- Includes a peer review of the WSP Heritage Effects Assessment (HEA);
- Considers the relevant policies of the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan, particularly HH-P9; and
- Provides an overall conclusion based on consideration of the HEA and other reports provided with the application.

[81] Importantly, with respect to assessing the matters under HH-P9, the Richard Knott memo provides, as summarised from the table within the assessment, the following information:

Demonstration of no reasonable alternatives to demolition

- This policy does not seek to prohibit demolition (as such demolition of a historic heritage building is identified as a discretionary activity in the PWCDP).
- Alternatives have been considered in the HEA and the other technical reports submitted as part of the application.

Effects on historic heritage values

- The demolition of the building would potentially take away historic heritage values of the site.
- Potential to include interpretive material in the new building when it is constructed.
- Applicant has outlined that it will look at the use of materials and features salvaged from the demolished buildings. This has potential to provide some mitigation of the effects of demolition.

Importance to the wider community

- No conclusive information on this in the application.

Feasibility of adaptive re-use

- Feasibility must include consideration of whether adaptive re-use is financially feasible and desirable (fit for purpose), in addition to whether adaptive re-use is technically feasible.
- Discusses options - concludes that Option 2b (façade retention) represents a feasible option for the adaptive re-use of the building.
- Concludes therefore that there are other feasible options for the adaptable re-use of the building which could result in better historic heritage outcomes than the total demolition of the building.

Cost of maintenance or repair

- The Dunning Thornton Consultants Structural Options Report confirms even if the building is not accessible to the public, the statutory obligations under Earthquake Prone Building Act would still require strengthening work. The cost of this is shown to be over \$6m.
- In addition, there would likely be ongoing costs to maintain the building. These costs would not assist with delivering the new fit for purpose facilities that the Council is looking for.

Building safety

- As noted in the HEA, the options illustrate that building safety can be achieved.

Appropriate, compatibility and appearance of replacement building

- A replacement building has not been designed in detail.
- There is the potential for this to include some salvaged material and to maintain an appropriate relationship to the close by heritage scheduled Ex-Public Trust Building.
- Conditions could be added to any consent granted for the demolition of the building to ensure this.

- [82] Mr Knott’s assessment concludes that there are reasonable alternatives to the total demolition proposal that will achieve better outcomes from a heritage perspective, thus maintaining the heritage value. The retention of the façade being his preferred method.
- [83] If the façade was to be retained, then the value of this, I believe, needs to be quantified better, i.e. does the heritage value of retaining the façade outweigh the actual cost of its retention? The “public good” component of the retention of the heritage value to the community needs to be considered. The heritage value of the building is assessed in more detail in the assessment of environmental effects section below.
- [84] Based on the Heritage Effects Assessment (HEA) in the application, and the Richard Knott assessment, it is difficult to see that the proposal as lodged is not contrary to the specific Historic Heritage objectives and policies of the Proposed WCDP, particularly HH-P9.
- [85] The following Town Centre Zone objectives (O) and policies (P) of the Proposed WCDP are considered relevant to the use of the building:

TCZ – Town Centre Zone

TCZ-01 Purpose of the Town Centre Zone

Town centres are the principal focal point of a community and provide vibrant areas where a range of appropriately scaled commercial, community, cultural, and recreational activities are enabled.

TCZ-02 Character and amenity values of the Town Centre Zone

Town centres are safe and attractive urban environments, containing well-designed structures that contribute positively to a sense of place, provide community focal points, and are low- to medium-density scale.

TCZ-05 Masterton town centre

Masterton’s town centre is the principal retail and servicing area of the Wairarapa and is the primary location for a wide range of retail and business service activities of varying scales.

TCZ-07 Active street frontages

The areas identified as active street frontages are attractive pedestrian-oriented focal points for Masterton and Carterton’s town centres.

TCZ-P1 Compatible use and development

Allow use and development that is compatible with the purpose, character, and amenity values of the Town Centre Zone, where:

- a. the activity services the needs of the local community;*
- b. the design and scale of any buildings enhances the streetscape; and*
- c. there is adequate existing and/or planned infrastructure to service the activity.*

Compatible activities may include the following (where they can meet the above criteria):

- a. Commercial activities, including retail, business services, and food and beverage activities;*
- b. Community facilities;*

- c. Entertainment activities;
- d. Educational facilities;
- e. Healthcare activities; and
- f. Visitor accommodation.

TCZ-P2 Incompatible use and development

Avoid activities that are incompatible with the purpose, character, and amenity values of the Town Centre Zone.

Incompatible activities include:

- a. Industrial activities;
- b. Primary production;
- c. Rural industry; and
- d. Drive-through activities on active street frontages and historic heritage precincts within the Town Centre Zone.

TCZ-P7 Masterton Town Centre

Within Masterton town centre:

- a. Recognise and protect the pedestrian environment of Masterton's town centre by maintaining active street frontage, including controlling the provision and form of verandas, the amount of display windows on shop frontages and limiting vehicle access across pedestrian routes.
- b.

- [86] The above listed objectives and policies look to provide town centres that are vibrant areas that provide for the community. Specifically, the Masterton town centre and active street frontages policies look to provide for retail and servicing areas that are people-orientated and pedestrian focused. In line with these, the application states:

Allowing demolition of the building, which will in turn allow the Masterton District Council to provide a purpose built Town Hall, will have positive effects on the function, vibrancy, and economics of the town centre sought by TCZ-01.

- [87] I agree with this statement. A new purpose-built Town Hall will add to the vibrancy of the town centre. The current building, sitting vacant in such a prominent position within the town centre, and on an active street frontage (as prescribed under the Proposed WCDP), is certainly not contributing to this objective. In aiming to be consistent with this objective, the building should not lay idle any longer.

- [88] Any new building should be designed to comply with the active street frontage permitted activity standards and therefore be in line with TCZ-P7. It is noted that the current façade would not comply with the active street frontage standards of the Proposed WCDP. Thus, any new building design would give rise to the opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment along the Chapel Street and Lincoln Road frontage in particular and provide a link to the area of public space developed on the Perry Street frontage.

Operative Wairarapa Combined District Plan (WCDP)

- [89] The relevant Historic Heritage objective and policies of the Operative WCDP are listed below:

10.3.1 Objective HH1 – Historic Heritage Values

To recognise and protect the important historic heritage of the Wairarapa.

10.3.2 HH1 Policies

- (a) Identify significant historic heritage.
- (b) Avoid, remedy or mitigate the potential adverse effects of subdivision, development and use on historic heritage.
- (c) Ensure the important attributes of historic heritage is not disturbed, damaged or destroyed, by inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
- (d) Provide for the use of historic heritage where the activity is compatible with the identified historic attributes and qualities and there are no more than minor adverse effects on the historic heritage values.
- (f) Increase public awareness of historic values and their importance and encourage the community to support the protection and conservation of historic heritage.

[90] This objective and policies seek to protect historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. As realised in the application, the key word here is “inappropriate”. The application states:

Given that the building requires significant earthquake strengthening and even if this was carried out would not be fit for purpose - it is considered that the demolition is not inappropriate.

[91] Should it be determined that the proposal can be granted, it is therefore considered that the proposal could be said to not be inconsistent with this objective and policy.

[92] The objectives and policies for Subdivision, Land Development and Urban Growth are contained in Section 18 of the Operative WCDP, the relevant objectives and policies are listed below as:

18.3.1 Objective SLD1 – Effects of Subdivision & Land Development

To ensure subdivision and land development maintains and enhances the character, amenity, natural and visual qualities of the Wairarapa, and protects the efficient and effective operation of land uses and physical resources.

18.3.2 SLD1 Policies

- (a) Manage subdivision and land development in a manner that is appropriate for the character and qualities of the environmental zone in which it is located while recognising that such change may alter the character and qualities.
- (l) Ensure that subdivision and land development adjoining State Highways other arterial roads and the Wairarapa railway, avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the safe and efficient operation of the roading and networks.
- (m) Manage the intensity of development along strategic arterial roads to reduce the cumulative adverse effects on the safe and efficient functioning of such links, particularly from ribbon development.

[93] The above objectives and policies look to maintain and enhance character, amenity, natural and visual qualities and protecting the efficient and effective operation of land uses and physical resources. The demolition works can be carried out without adverse effects on the safe and efficient functioning of SH2 and will be managed through appropriate Site Management Plans. Any redevelopment of the site, following demolition, will be in accordance with the relevant permitted activity standards of the WCDP or require additional resource consents. These matters are addressed in other areas of this report.

[94] Although superseded by the Proposed WCDP Historic Heritage provisions, the Operative WCDP requires Discretionary Activities to be assessed against the relevant assessment criteria set out in Section 22 of the Plan. In this regard, the following listed matters provide a useful guide for historic heritage assessment and are considered elsewhere in this report, where appropriate:

22.1 Consents under District Wide Rules

These criteria are not exclusive, as other criteria may be considered when assessing a discretionary activity.

22.1.4 Historic Heritage (including archaeological sites) and Sites Significance to Tangata Whenua

- (i) The extent to which the heritage value, integrity and character of the site or item will be maintained or enhanced.*
- (ii) The effect of any removal, demolition, relocation, modification, addition or alteration on the historic values of the site or item.*
- (iii) The extent to which any proposed mitigation measures will protect or preserve the value and/or significance of the site or item.*
- (iv) The importance of the site or item in its locality and its contribution to the area's amenity and character.*
- (v) Where additions, alterations or the erection of new buildings are proposed, the extent to which the proposals are consistent with the original period style, design and construction of the buildings in the precinct or area.*
- (vi) The immediate or cumulative effects on local heritage of the alteration, addition or modification to the site or item.*
- (vii) Where the site or item is part of a group of similar features, any adverse effect on the integrity of the group.*
- (viii) The extent to which the alteration, addition or modification of a building reflects the architectural style, character and scale of the site.*
- (ix) The extent to which the alteration, addition or modification of a building preserves the typical character of building frontages in the street.*
- (x) Whether there are any adverse effects on the curtilage of the site.*
- (xi) The extent to which the site or item will be disturbed or modified as a result of the subdivision, use or development, including earthworks.*
- (xii) Site suitability, and the extent to which alternative sites or locations have been considered.*
- (xiii) Whether the subdivision, use or development can take place on the site without adversely affecting the site's significance.*
- (xiv) Consultation with tangata whenua where applications relate to, or may potentially affect, sites of significance to tangata whenua identified in Appendix 1.5, Appendix 1.6 or Appendix 1.7 of the Plan.*

- (xv) Consultation with the Historic Places Trust where applications relate to, or may potentially affect, heritage items identified in Appendix 1.7 of the Plan.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- [95] The actual and potential effects of the proposed activity on the environment have been grouped into the following matters, and assessed accordingly below:
- Effects on historic heritage
 - Amenity effects – aesthetic value, demolition effects on amenity (noise, vibration, dust)
 - Traffic effects
 - Economic effects
 - Social effects
 - Archaeological and Cultural effects
 - Effects from Natural Hazards

Effects on historic heritage

- [96] The potential for the proposal to result in adverse effects on historic heritage is the most pertinent matter in the assessment of the effects of this application. As outlined earlier in the District Plan Analysis section of this report, the proposed demolition of a listed heritage item is “discouraged” by the Proposed WCDP policies. Having said that, it should be noted that the proposal is still a discretionary activity (with the discretion to effectively say “yes” or “no”), not a prohibited activity (which you can’t even apply for), or a non-complying activity (which would require the application to navigate the “gateway test”) in the Proposed WCDP.
- [97] The Proposed WDCP HH-Historic Heritage chapter recognises that historic resources in themselves are important as they represent linkages to the past and provide insight to the way communities and settlements have developed. In the case of the Town Hall building, it provides a physical trace of past activity, and a continuous use of civic / service activity and buildings on the site from around 1879 (when the first town hall was built on the site). The 1915 construction, which provides the “bones” for the building today has obviously been substantially altered over the years, mainly as a result of damage from previous earthquakes and changes to make the building fit for purpose as a town hall and council offices. Looking at the photos of the original Municipal Building in the HEA (pages 24-28), it has to be said that it is a shame the building hasn’t been able to retain its original ornate features. Additions and remedial work on the building, including the concrete “skin” around the Perry Street and Chapel Street facades, have had a clear detrimental impact on the grandeur of the original building.
- [98] The HEA assessment included with the application assesses that the Masterton Town Hall building has ‘high’ heritage significance overall and demolition of the building will have significant adverse effects on heritage (i.e. more than minor effects). This is not disputed by the applicant. The HEA states (on page 76):

Fabric with the high significance includes the façade of the Municipal Buildings facing Chapel and Cole [Perry] streets, and the interior of the Town Hall. Together, the buildings are a landmark, and one of the few remaining historic anchors in the Masterton streetscape with which the community identifies.

- [99] Notwithstanding the conclusion of the HEA, as outlined in the paragraph above, the application argues that demolition (the proposal) is the only reasonable option and can be approved (see pages 23-24):

The fundamental aspect of this application is that in light of significant costs of earthquake strengthening, and the fact that the building is not fit for purpose, it is not rational for the applicants to carry out this strengthening work. Regrettably, the only reasonable option available to the applicants is for the building to be demolished.

In summary, it is concluded that despite adverse effects on heritage, the demolition is the applicants only reasonable option, and that the proposal is consistent with HH-P9 and can therefore be approved.

- [100] Of the total of the 59 submissions received on this application, 16 submissions (#15 Deborah Cuncliffe, #33 MRRA, #34 Kimberley Owen, #35 Tracey Owen, #36 Lynda Feringa, #38 Sylvia Morgan, #41 Dennis Riley, #42 Lyn Riley, #43 Marilyn Palmer, #45 Natalia Vidyakina, #46 Bruce Davidson, #49 Robyn Prior, #51 Dr Amanda Lynn, #55 Leonard Lamb, #56 Simon Bryne, #59 Jeannie Cozens) want the consent to be declined citing the historical significance or the heritage value of the building as the reason or one of their reasons. The submissions either refer to the WSP HEA 'high' heritage value or use statements about the building such as 'it's a link to our history', and a 'landmark'. Of these above listed submissions, 4 submissions (#34, #35 #38, #43) suggest keeping the façade to retain the heritage value. An additional 10 submissions (#1 Katrina Cosgrove, #2 Mark Rogers, #10 Graham Dick, #23 Jan-Wendy Houston, #39 Shannon Owen, #40 James Owen, #44 Ian & Diane Grant, #50 Amanda & Greg Morgan, #58 Hewitt Harrison) seek the retention of the façade as their desired outcome.
- [101] In the context of the application, I consider this to be a very small number of submissions in opposition to the demolition of a heritage building that is said to have "high" heritage significance to the wider community.
- [102] The Richard Knott Limited assessment, included as Appendix 1 of this s42A Report, is useful in providing an independent view of the heritage value of the Town Hall. It addresses the relationship of the Town Hall building when viewing it with other listed buildings in the immediate area. This has been a matter raised in a number of submissions (#35, #42, #49, #59), particularly the notion that the Town Hall makes up part of a set or 'precinct' of buildings with the Wairarapa Times Age building and the Ex-Public Trust building especially. The Richard Knott assessment includes an evaluation of the Town Hall building within the context of the wider area and concludes that the building does not generally contribute to the value of other heritage buildings in particular the Wairarapa Times Age building which is a Category 2 NZ Heritage listing. Mr Knott has said that historically the Wairarapa Times Age Building and the Town Hall wouldn't have had a built relationship due to other buildings location in between. The plaza area is a later addition. Mr Knott does state that the Town Hall does have some value when viewed with the Ex-Public Trust building (situated across Chapel Street). This viewshaft has been assessed when looking the Town Hall façade together with the Ex-Public Trust along Chapel Street, and along Perry Street towards Chapel Street. This formulates Mr Knott's conclusion that the retention of the façade would maintain the historic heritage value. The review concludes that the heritage significance of the building in terms of its setting should be considered

as 'Moderate', not 'High' as stated in the HEA – please refer to the full Richard Knott assessment which concludes that the heritage values overall are still 'High'.

- [103] However, I do not consider that the value of the existing building in its context is sufficient enough of a reason to retain it or the façade. The cost of remediating the building and whether this is an option that is fit for purpose, is addressed in the economic effects section below.
- [104] It is noted here that the retention of the façade is not the proposal. It appears through the LTP consultation process that the demolition of the buildings and the retention of the Municipal Building façade was Council's earlier preferred option. Through the LTP process in 2024 however, it was deliberated and voted by Council that the façade also be demolished. The reasoning for this was mainly financial and this is therefore discussed under the economic effects section below.
- [105] Submissions (#41, #43, #59) also raise that heritage buildings are a rarity in Masterton, particularly buildings of this scale. Based on Mr Knott's assessment, and viewing Masterton's Town Centre as a whole, I consider that there are still a number of heritage buildings remaining, and the Proposed WCDP extensive heritage list is a reflection of this.
- [106] It is noted that none of the submissions requesting that the application be declined for heritage reasons have provided expert heritage assessments to strengthen their submissions. Additionally, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, who were served a copy of the application, have not submitted on the application. No heritage groups were submitters. Local iwi groups were also served a copy of the application and have not made a submission or provided any comments on the application either.
- [107] A number of submitters have raised the lack of information from Council about what a replacement building may be. In light of providing more certainty about the project as a whole, and particularly in relation to the last point of Proposed WCDP HH-P9, the *appropriateness, compatibility and appearance of any replacement building in relation to heritage values* is relevant. This might be something the applicant can provide more detail on at the hearing. From a timing perspective and ensuring the site isn't vacant for long, the submission by William McGavin (#6) suggests a condition that construction work commence within 2 years of consent being granted. This suggestion has been considered, and it is thought more appropriate to include a condition that requires construction to commence within 2 years of the demolition rather than 2 years of the consent being granted. This is still appropriate in minimising and mitigating adverse effects of demolishing the building. This matter is covered by suggested conditions of consent in the recommendation below.
- [108] To further minimise the adverse effects of demolition of a heritage building, the applicant has suggested that they will re-use materials in the new build where practical. The HEA also includes guidance on materials that may be able to be salvaged for re-use and that an inventory is completed. Reference material and memorabilia incorporated into the new build as also been suggested in submissions (#6, #32 Adam Philps, #37 Peter McNeur). If consent is granted, conditions relating to these matters can be included.

Visual Amenity Effects

- [109] Heritage buildings and items contribute to the character and amenity values of an area, as identified in introduction to the HH-Historic Heritage chapter of the Proposed WCDP. Amenity effects or amenity values are largely a function of the existing and potential environment. The existing Masterton Town Hall building obviously contributes to the existing town centre environment, if not for anything else, its location and scale alone.
- [110] The submission by Stephen Butcher, with a Bachelor of Architecture and Diploma in Building Surveying (#13) and submissions #15 and #35 discuss the spatial form and aesthetic value of the Town Hall. Submission #13 states that the building is “simplicity of form” and “solid and embracing”. Other submissions refer to it as “our point of difference”. The demolition of the building will change the amenity values of the area, representing a visual change. It has to be said however, that if the building can be removed as deemed having meet the criteria of a heritage building, then the effects of amenity values with to visual effects follow.
- [111] The physical demolition itself will meet the temporary activities provisions in terms of the length of time to undertake the demolition the building. On this basis is it considered any adverse visual effects of the actual demolition activity will be relatively short-term.

Other amenity effects

- [112] In addition to visual effects, construction and demolition activities can have potential adverse effects including noise, vibration and dust. As mentioned above, the demolition activity will meet the temporary activity provisions of the WCDP, which control the effects of construction activities. Therefore, it is considered that the demolition activity will have no greater impact than a permitted activity. A Site Management Plan (SMP) is also proposed to ensure that any effects on amenity are controlled which has been volunteered in the conditions and amended in the suggested set of conditions below. The adverse effects of demolition on amenity are considered to be no more than minor.

Traffic effects

- [113] Traffic from the demolition activity can have potential adverse effects on the surrounding road network without appropriate management. As referred to above, a SMP is proposed which will include traffic routes and other traffic matters. This will ensure that any effects of traffic are appropriately managed, and it will be prepared in consultation with NZTA Waka Kotahi due to the location of SH2 adjoining the site. Conditions of consent address the SMP and it is noted that NZTA Waka Kotahi have already provided comments on the draft SMP which have been incorporated into the suggested condition below. Therefore, with the implementation of the appropriate SMP, the adverse traffic effects of demolition are considered to be no more than minor.

Economic effects

- [114] Economic effects can include costs to the community, including opportunity costs of not doing something or doing something else. Economic effects can also be negative and/or positive.
- [115] Of the 27 submissions that oppose the application, 10 submissions (#5 Carl McMahon, #7 Robert Notley, #17 Susan Notley, #26 Noel Cohen, #27 Jennifer Cohen, #31 Philip Carman, #47 William Davies, #48 Sharyn Yeo, #53 Susan Southey, #57 Leslie Wright) relate solely to economic or financial reasons. Of particular concern to these submitters is the cost and timing of the proposal (more so the costs associated with constructing a replacement Town Hall) when the economic climate is tough and ratepayer funds are stretched over a number of competing demands. The uncertainty of the costs involved in the upcoming water reform was raised often, as was the concern of rising rates.
- [116] The application outlines that \$25 million dollars has been set aside for the project over the next four years in the LTP.³ The costs of alternative options investigated by the applicant have been made available as part of the application with the RPS Cost Plan Report included in Appendix E of the application. I note that it is relatively unusual for costings and evaluation of alternatives to be such detail in a resource consent application, but as this is a Council project (i.e. using public money), transparency is important. Additionally, the applicant has relied on financial reasons for total demolition being the only option for the building.
- [117] The retention of the façade has been raised as an option in a number of submissions, as referred to in paragraph 101 above. This is suggested in the Richard Knott assessment and was also the preferred option of Council for some time. The following extract is taken from the deliberation of MDC Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes, of 5 June 2024 on the LTP 2024-2034⁴ (refer to pages 22-24 for full Councillor discussion) which details the reasoning behind including the demolition of the façade in this proposal:

7.2 LONG TERM PLAN 2024-2034 DELIBERATIONS - TOWN HALL, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE

“The report providing Council with the analysis of submissions received on Big Decision One: Town Hall, Library and Archive as part of the consultation on the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan and to seek a decision on the matter for inclusion in the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan...”.

“..... a motion that included the preferred option for the town hall but with a major change – to reduce the cost to a maximum of \$25 million and not to retain the façade – and spoke to the motion. The current council who were voted in stood for building a town hall on the current site and the community had spoken through that process. Since then the economy had changed. The consultation feedback received had three recurring themes – the cost of the project, the timing in the current economy and the loss of heritage. The feedback was acknowledged... believed that the project could be delivered at a much lower cost. The contingency was very high due to the unknowns with an old building, trying to retain the façade and not working with

³ Refer to the Masterton District Council Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2024-2034.

⁴ Masterton District Council Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes, 5 June 2024 – LTP 2024-2034 deliberations
<https://www.mstn.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:2jr77ddv17q9sn6a3db/hierarchy/Documents/Council/Minutes%20and%20Agendas/Agenda%202024/Council%20Meetings/26%20June%20-%20Agenda>

a clear block of land. While it was acknowledged that reducing the contingency meant taking on more risk, building material costs have dropped and contractors were looking for work so now was the time to build, in the future costs will be higher. It was time to get on with it as the councillors had been elected to make a decision.”

“While the views of those who wanted to keep the façade were respected and acknowledged spending nearly \$2 million to save it didn’t make financial sense. Elements of the old building could be included in the new design but there was also the need to embrace our full heritage and culture and to work with iwi to make sure everyone who has contributed to the rich tapestry of our history is included. It was a community project which needed to acknowledge our past as we build for the future. Our community needs and deserves a flexible multi-purpose building, that’s what the council was elected to deliver.”

- [118] The Council LTP resolution as a result of this deliberation is listed in page 3 of the application. The LTP resolution does not obviously reflect the requirements of an assessment under the RMA, but it does signal that from a cost-effectiveness and economic effects point of view, the retention of the façade is not an option.
- [119] The raw costs of the options considered by Council in formulating the proposal are not normally matters that require a detailed assessment under the RMA. However, in this case, the feasibility of adaptive re-use, and the cost of maintenance or repair are relevant in relation to parts of proposed WCDP policy HH-P9. These matters have been addressed in detail by the applicant and do not warrant the retention of the heritage building. The feasibility of reuse is not economically viable according to the Horwath Report in Appendix G and the cost of repair outlined in the RPS Cost Plan Report in Appendix E do not ‘stack up’.
- [120] Interestingly, when referring to the RPS Cost Plan Report, prepared in late 2024 (so recently), the only option that comes in under the \$25million budget set aside by Council in the LTP is to decommission and mothball the buildings (Option 3). The total project cost to demolish and complete a new build is costed at approximately \$33million. If the façade was also to be retained, the total project costing is around \$36million.
- [121] A number of submissions (#19, #20, #21, #28, #35, #42, #49) have also noted the likely escalation in costs, especially if any heritage aspects are to be retained. I consider this is a realistic concern. Other Council’s, with Wellington City Council given as an example by submission #28 as being caught out this way.
- [122] Some submissions, #31, #33, #51 have questioned the integrity of the financial analysis that Council’s decision to proceed with demolishing the building have been based on, whether it escalated the cost of repair to influence decisionmakers and questions the timing it was undertaken. Some submissions request a better cost-benefit analysis be undertaken. Other options should be costed fairly and the costing peer reviewed. On the basis that no technical information, contradicting the submitted reports has been provided by submitters, and the level of costing scrutiny required through the RMA process, I consider the financial reporting is sufficient.
- [123] Submissions #20, #21 and #28 note that delays are costing money. The building is sitting vacant and will have rising insurance and maintenance costs. The cost

of work required to remediate the building, if consent was to be refused, will increase as the buildings further deteriorate over time.

- [124] I think it is appropriate to acknowledge that the project will provide economic stimulus and employment through the demolition and construction phase of the new building. It is also acknowledged that a new and modern facility will have opportunities to provide income (as assessed in the Horwath HTL Demand Analysis Report in Appendix F, and Market Demand and Financial Analysis In Appendix G of the application). A new building is also expected to have less on-going maintenance costs, and costs of compliance and insurance than an older building. These being potentially positive economic effects if the consent is granted.

Social effects

- [125] The submission by Jenna Snelgrove (#29) notes that a town hall can be the “heart of a community”, providing a focal point for immediate and future well-being of the people. Contrary to this submission #19 notes that Masterton has no need for a town hall as the community hasn’t had one for 8 years. A well-functioning, well-designed facility, capable of catering for a variety of community groups, has to have positive social effects for the Masterton community.
- [126] Some submissions have raised that the health and well-being of the community has been adversely affected by the on-going uncertainty about the Town Hall project. A definitive decision on this resource consent application will provide certainty going forward for the community.

Archaeological and Cultural effects

- [127] Submission #51 states that the site is an archaeological site. An Archaeological Assessment has been undertaken by Archaeologists Geometria and included in Appendix H of the application. The application on page 24 states:

The findings of this assessment are that while the Masterton Town Hall is not an archaeological site there could be archaeological features beneath it. These could include;

- foundations or other evidence of the previous library and municipal offices
- material from developments on the property prior to Council use
- material from early Māori settlement.

As recommended in the Archaeological Assessment, it is proposed that an application for an archaeological authority will be made to Heritage New Zealand to cover the demolition work. This will ensure that appropriate protocol is followed in the event of an archaeological feature being discovered during the demolition.

- [128] The applicant has suggested a condition of consent that requires them to obtain an Archaeological Authority before work commences on the site. It is noted that this would normally be a note on a consent as it is under a different legislative framework from the RMA, but as the applicant has volunteered it as a condition, it can be included this way.
- [129] Local iwi groups were served a copy of the application and have not made a submission or provided any comments on the application. Submission #32 has raised that mana whenua groups should be considered in any new design. The application states that this will occur through the design process.

- [130] Additionally, as per normal conditions of consent, accidental discovery advice notes are recommended to be included, which will ensure that should any earthworks uncover unrecorded archaeological sites – work would stop immediately, and Heritage NZ would be contacted immediately to determine the next steps.

Effects of Natural Hazards

- [131] Natural Hazards that may affect the site include: “Flood Hazard Area Inundation Area – Low Hazard”, a “Possible Liquefaction Prone Area” as identified in the Hazards and Risks overlays of the Proposed WCDP, and of course earthquakes.
- [132] Natural Hazards have been addressed under the District Plan Analysis section of the report above. It is considered with appropriate design, that the demolition of the Town Hall building and construction of a new building meeting modern design standards will minimise any adverse risks associated with Natural Hazards. Floor levels and foundation design details can mitigate the flood hazard and liquefaction hazard risks, and the removal of the earthquake prone building will minimise the risk in the event of an earthquake, all resulting in positive effects when assessing Natural Hazards and any residue risks.

Other matters I consider relevant (s104(c))

LTP Consultation process v Resource Consent process

- [133] The topic of the Town Hall has been put to the community for consultation four separate times previously, as follows: through the 2017 LTP consultation process; the 2020 Annual Plan consultation; the 2020 Annual Plan consultation; and the 2024 LTP process (all detailed on page 19 of the application). Because of this repeated consultation already undertaken, it may be possible that Council may have received more submissions on this resource consent application (both for and against the proposal). Having said that, we can only look at the submissions received on the resource consent for the purposes of assessing this application.
- [134] It is fair to say however, when looking at the number of the LTP and Annual Plan submissions, and the submissions on this resource consent application, that the Masterton community is divided as to whether the Masterton Town Hall should be demolished or not.

Resource Consent notification process

- [135] Some submissions, including that of the Masterton Ratepayers and Residents Association (MRRA) (#32) and Lyn Riley (#42) have raised that the notification of this resource consent lacks transparency and that the timing of the notification of this application was poor, being over the Christmas period. In response to this, I note that due process for the public notification of applications has been followed, with the prescribed number of working days adhered to for the notification period, as required under s95A of the RMA.

New Building Standard (NBS) compliance

- [136] Some submissions have questioned the level of NBS compliance that the buildings have been reported as having, and that these may have been exaggerated to justify demolition of the Masterton Town Hall. The LGE Consulting Structural Report and the peer review by Dunning Thornton Consultants included in Appendix A of the application have to be relied upon with no contradictory

assessments provided from submitters. It is also understood that the longer the buildings remain vacant with very little maintenance, that the percentage of the NBS is probably worsening still. It is noted that this is not an RMA standard but covered under different legislation.

- [137] Legislative changes to the Building Act 2004, through the Building (Earthquake-prone Building Deadlines and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024, dated 26 November 2004, provides a 4-year time extension to allow building owners to meet the seismic requirements. These extensions apply to buildings where remedial work has not yet commenced, which is the case with the Masterton Town Hall. The Earthquake Prone Building (EPB) notice of repair required by 26/02/2026, has effectively been extended to 26/02/2030. This extension of time have been given as a reason by some submitters to mothball the project for the time being, or at least not rush into making a decision on demolishing the building.
- [138] The applicant may be able to provide more detail and certainty about the NBS ratings at the hearing, however based on the information provided in the application, it appears the building fall well-short of the NBS requirements in their current state.

PART 2 RMA ANALYSIS

Section 5 Purpose of the Act

- [139] The overarching purpose in section 5 of the RMA, is promotion of the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. This requires a balance between the use, development and protection of natural resources on one hand, and enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and health and safety on the other.
- [140] In my opinion, with the inclusion of suitable conditions, based on the above assessment, reviewing all of the application material and considering the submissions, the proposal can be undertaken in a manner that would avoid, remedy or mitigate potential adverse effects on the environment that are no more than minor.

Section 6 – Matters of National Importance

- [141] Section 6(f) of the RMA identifies that as a matter of national importance persons exercising powers under the RMA shall recognise and provide for:

“(f) the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development”.

- [142] This is recognised as being important in the context of the Historic Heritage chapters of both the Operative and Proposed WCDP's which both start off by quoting this section of the RMA. It comes down to what is appropriate or more specifically, “inappropriate” use and development. In my opinion, having weighed up all the information supplied with the application and the submissions received, I consider the proposal to demolish the Masterton Town in its entirety will have more than minor adverse effects on the historic heritage of Masterton. However,

I believe it has been adequately demonstrated that no reasonable alternatives to demolition exist. Therefore, the demolition is deemed appropriate, and considered to be not contrary to this principal of the RMA.

Section 7 – Other Matters

[143] Section 7 of the RMA sets out a number of matters to which persons exercising functions under the RMA must have particular regard. In particular, of relevance to the application, these other matters include:

- The ethic of stewardship;
- The efficient use and development of natural and physical resource;
- The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values;
- The maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment; and
- Any finite characteristics of natural and physical resources.

[144] The ownership of a listed heritage building or item is a form of stewardship. Heritage items, just by the fact that they are listed, have a higher component of “public good” than non-listed items or buildings. By this I mean, the item has a wider benefit than that to just the owner. This may however come at a cost to the owner. In this case, with Council being the owner, unfortunately most of the costs are passed onto the ratepayer. In this case, the elected members have decided on behalf of the ratepayer that the cost of retaining and remediating the Town Hall is too high, which has led to this proposal as it has been formulated and lodged. It is my assessment that the proposal is the efficient use of a physical resource, it will allow for development that will enhance amenity values and ensure maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the Masterton Town Centre environment. Unfortunately, in this case, the finite characteristics of a physical resource, being a heritage building, I believe must be acknowledged.

Section 8 – Treaty of Waitangi

[145] I am not aware of any specific Treaty of Waitangi issues raised by the proposal.

Overall assessment with regard to Part 2 of the RMA

[146] Overall, I consider that the proposal is consistent with the purposes and principles of Part II of the RMA and therefore can be granted consent.

CONCLUSION

[147] As a discretionary activity, this consent application has been considered under section 104(1) of the RMA.

[148] The determination of applications for discretionary activities is under section 104B of the RMA. Under section 104B of the Act, after considering an application for a resource consent for a discretionary activity, a consent authority—
(a) may grant or refuse the application; and
(b) if it grants the application, may impose conditions under section 108.

[149] In regard to the above, I consider that the adverse effects of the proposed demolition activity are considered to be no more than minor; and the assessment of the proposal against the Proposed and Operative WCDP has found that, on balance the proposal is not contrary to the objectives and policies within those Plans.

[150] In my opinion, although regrettable to remove heritage fabric from the Masterton area, having reviewed all the application material and considered the submissions I believe the demolition of the building, including the Municipal Building façade, is the logical option.

RECOMMENDATION

[151] The following recommendations are made to the Resource Management Commissioner Alistair Aburn:

- (a) That the proposal be granted consent due to effects being no more than minor and that the proposal is not, on balance, contrary to the Objectives and Policies of the Proposed and Operative WCDP; and
- (b) That, if the Resource Management Commissioner sees fit to grant the application, that the following conditions, or similar, should apply (noting these have been formulated from the set of proposed conditions provided in pages 39-41 of the application document):

Recommended Conditions:

General

1. Subject to the further conditions of this consent, the proposal shall be undertaken in accordance with the consent application RM240135, the assessment of environmental effects prepared by Russell Hooper Consulting dated 29 November, and supporting information.
2. Pursuant to section 36 of the Resource Management Act 1991, the consent holder shall pay all costs incurred by Council in respect to the approval and completion of conditions relating to the proposal, and in the perusal and approval of related document(s) required by the conditions below.

New build and re-use and salvage of materials from the demolition

3. That any demolition authorised by this consent shall not commence on site until a set of development plans for a replacement building on the site have been agreed to by Council.
4. That the replacement building, as referred to in condition 3 above, shall commence within 2 years after the demolition of the building.
5. That a full inventory of materials that may be salvaged for reuse, either as part of new building on the site or for sale, should be made prior to any demolition works commencing. The inventory may include (but are not limited to) items

such as:

- timber and steel window and door joinery;
 - aluminium window and door joinery;
 - timber floorboards;
 - bricks;
 - structural and sarking timbers;
 - fitted timber joinery such as cupboards and shelving;
 - timber wall panelling;
 - staircases and balustrades;
 - fixtures, fittings and soft furnishings such as theatre seating, drapery, carpets;
 - rainwater goods including gutters, rainwater heads, and downpipes;
 - electrical fixtures and fittings including light-fittings and theatre equipment;
 - mechanical plant.
6. That installation of interpretative material and memorabilia be installed, which will allow the public to engage with the history of the site and the buildings which originally existed there.

Earthworks

7. All earthworks must be carried out in accordance with a site-specific Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP), prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced professional, which follows the best practice principles, techniques, inspections and monitoring for erosion and sediment control contained in Wellington Regional Council's Erosion and Sediment Control Guide for Land Disturbing Activities in the Wellington Region. This plan shall be approved by the Masterton District Council.
8. The consent holder must notify Masterton District Council no less than three working days prior to works commencing, of the earthworks start date and the name and contact details of the site supervisor. The consent holder must at this time also provide confirmation of the installation of ESCP measures as per the plan referred to in Condition 7 above.
9. Run-off must be controlled to prevent sediment leaving the site. Sediment, earth or debris must not fall or collect on land beyond the site or enter the Council's stormwater system. All sediment laden water must be treated, using at a minimum the erosion and sediment control measures detailed in the site-specific Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, prior to discharge to the Council's stormwater system.
10. No earthworks may commence until the ESCP has been implemented on site. The ESCP measures must be maintained over the period of the construction phase, until the site is stabilised (i.e. no longer producing dust or water-borne sediment). The ESCP must be improved if initial and/or standard measures are found to be inadequate. All disturbed surfaces must be adequately topsoiled and vegetated or otherwise stabilised as soon as possible to limit sediment mobilisation.

11. Dust emissions must be appropriately managed within the boundary of the property in compliance with the Operative District Plan and the Natural Resources Plan. When required, dust mitigation measures such as water carts or sprinklers must be used on any exposed areas. The roads to and from the site, and the site entrance and exit, must remain tidy and free of dust and dirt at all times.
12. All loading and unloading of trucks with excavation or fill material must be carried out within the site.
13. Any surplus or unsuitable material from the project works must be removed from site and disposed at a facility authorised to receive such material.

Construction Management

14. All demolition works must be carried out in accordance with an approved Site Management Plan (SMP). The purpose of the SMP is to ensure that any potential effects arising from construction activities on the site are effectively managed. The SMP must be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced practitioner.

The SMP must include, but not be limited to the following:

- a) Site description, topography, vegetation, soils and other reference information;
 - b) Details of proposed works;
 - c) Roles and responsibilities, including contact details for the site manager appointed by the Consent Holder;
 - d) Site establishment;
 - e) Timing of works;
 - f) Schedule of the construction period stages and types and volume of vehicles utilised at each stage;
 - g) Detailed schedule of construction activities, highlighting peak traffic times and measures to minimise disruption including extents of works;
 - h) Construction noise management measures;
 - i) Site access and Traffic Management measures;
 - j) Detailed plans for site access and egress, including the design and construction of the vehicle crossings and exact extents of works;
 - k) Traffic Impact Assessment to evaluate the potential effects on State Highway 2 and surrounding local roads;
 - l) Internal circulation paths to ensure safe and efficient movement of vehicles within the site, including turning radii and signage;
 - m) Provisions for safe pedestrian and cyclist access if required within the development, including pathways, crossings and connections to existing networks;
 - n) Storage of fuel and/or lubricants and any handling procedures;
 - o) Contingency plans (including use of spill kits);
 - p) Protocol in case of identification of archaeological artifacts.
15. The consent holder must submit this SMP to the Council, at least 20 working days prior to the commencement of work associated with this consent.

16. The SMP may be amended at any time by the Consent Holder. Any amendments to the SMP must be submitted by the Consent Holder to the Council for certification. Any amendments to the SMP must be:
 - a) for the purposes of improving the measures outlined in the SMP for achieving the SMP purpose (see condition 14), and;
 - b) consistent with the conditions of this resource consent.

If the amended SMP is approved, then it becomes the approved SMP for the purposes of condition 14 and will thereafter form part of the Approved Consent Document.

Note: In relation to these conditions, the term 'construction work' relies on the definition contained in NZS 6803:1999.

Cultural

17. An archaeological authority shall be obtained and adhered to from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 before work commences.

Advice notes:

1. The resource consent is valid for five years from the date consent is granted.
2. If any archaeological site deposits are identified during any development of the land, the owner/contractor should act in good faith and avoid effect to the deposits and contact Heritage New Zealand, Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā, Rangitāne O Wairarapa, and Ngati Kahungunu Ki Wairarapa Taiwhenua immediately. Under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 it is an offence to modify or destroy, or cause to be modified or destroyed, the whole or any part of an archaeological site without the prior authority of Heritage New Zealand. The accidental discovery protocol is to be followed.
3. Prior to work covered by the National Environmental Standard – Assessing and Managing Contaminates in Soil to Prevent Human Harm (NES-CS) it shall be determined if resource consent under the NES-CS is required. If required, this resource consent must be obtained prior to work covered by the NES-CS commencing.
4. All work or discharge to or within the road reserve requires a Corridor Access Request (CAR). This includes any upgrades to vehicle crossings and the installation of infrastructure, services. A Corridor Access Request (CAR) can be made via the BeforeUDig website or through Council's website. A Traffic Management Plan for the works shall be submitted with the CAR.

Report prepared by:



..... Date: 21 March 2025

Honor Clark
CONSULTANT PLANNER
for Masterton District Council

Report reviewed and approved for release by:



..... Date: 21 March 2025

Christine Chong
PLANNING AND CONSENTS MANAGER
Masterton District Council

Appendix 1 – Richard Knott Limited Heritage Assessment

Richard Knott Limited

Urban Design | Masterplanning | Built Heritage
Town Planning | Landscape and Visual Assessment

To: Honor Clark, Consultant Planner, Masterton District Council

From: Richard Knott

Date: 20th March 2025

Application RM240135

Re: Demolition of Masterton Town Hall, Municipal Buildings, and Civil Defence Building

Introduction

1. Masterton District Council have applied for a Discretionary Resource Consent to demolish the Masterton Town Hall, Municipal Buildings, and Civil Defence Building. The buildings are all linked and in effect form a single building. The buildings are earthquake prone and have not been used as Council offices or a public venue since 2016.
2. The application sets out that the cost of repairing the building is significant, the buildings are no longer fit for purpose, and the costs to repair the building cannot be justified.
3. The application is accompanied by a Heritage Effects Assessment, and various reports considering structural issues, market demand, financial analysis and the costs of options.
4. I undertook a site visit on the 11th March 2025, and viewed both the exterior and interior of the building, its surroundings and the exterior of other heritage buildings in the local area.
5. This memorandum provides:
 - A peer review of the WSP - Masterton Town Hall and Municipal Buildings - Heritage Effects Assessment (HEA) -28 November 2024
 - Considers the relevant Policies of the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan
 - Provides an overall conclusion based on my consideration of the HEA and other reports provided with the application

Preparation of this Memorandum

6. This memorandum has been prepared by Richard Knott. Richard is an expert in Historic Heritage and Special Character matters and has worked in the areas of historic heritage special character, urban design and planning for over 35 years. He has holds post graduate qualifications in Building Conservation, Urban Design and Planning.
7. Richard has provided heritage area, heritage building and character area advice to Auckland Council, Christchurch City Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Mackenzie District Council and Hamilton City Council, as well as to many private clients. He recently prepared a whole of Hamilton study to identify historic heritage areas; the recently released decision of the independent hearings panel supported the inclusion of 20 historic heritage areas in the City Plan.

8. He is the holder of a Making Good Decisions Certificate (with Chairs Endorsement) and has sat as an Independent Planning Commissioner for Auckland Council, Hamilton City Council, Taupo District Council, Tauranga City Council, South Wairarapa District Council and Whangarei District Council, including on a number of heritage and character area related hearings. He was a panel member of Auckland PC81 Additions to Schedule 14 Historic Heritage Schedule and PC82 Amendments to Schedule 14 Historic Heritage Schedule, as well as being a current panel member for Auckland PC78 Intensification and its associated plan changes.
9. Having a design background as well as a heritage/planning background enables Richard to have a full appreciation of the impact of changes to historic buildings and within historic heritage areas.

Photographs from Site Visit (all photographs RKL 11 03 2025)



Figure 1: Southwest elevation



Figure 2 : Chapel Road frontage



Figure 3: Northeast elevation (civil defence building)



Figure 4: Northeast elevation (civil defence building)



Figure 5: Northwest elevation (side of Town Hall)

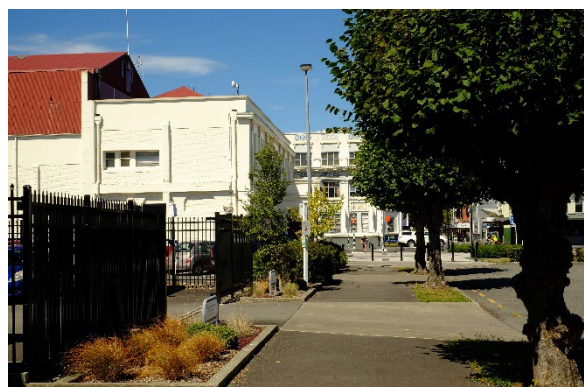


Figure 6: View along Perry Street along building frontage



Figure 7: Wide angle view across the Plaza illustrating the relationship between the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings to the Ex-Public Trust building (note this photograph is taken from within the historic alignment of Perry Street to the front of the Town Hall).



Figure 8: View along Chapel Street – were the original buildings still in place between the Wairarapa Times Age Building and the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings the relationship between the buildings would be quite different.

WSP Heritage Effects Assessment (HEA)

10. The HEA has been prepared in line with good practice and its contents cover the matters which I would expect it to include. Notwithstanding this, I do have detailed comments as set out below.

11. Comments on 4.1 Significance Criteria and 4.2 Definition of Terms

12. Whilst the significance criteria considered are not fully aligned to those utilised for assessments under the Proposed Wairarapa District Plan (PDP), I consider that they provide the opportunity to consider the same values.

13. Comments on 4.3 Heritage Significance of the Place

14. I consider that too great an emphasis has been given to the Contextual significance of the buildings (note: this aligns with the ‘surroundings’ criterion in the PDP). I accept that *‘The buildings have landmark value as a highly visible structure along a busy central road in Masterton’*. However, the assessment also discusses the building as being *‘part of a collection of historic buildings within Masterton’s central area which form a wider group and collectively contribute to the historic narrative of the place’*. It notes that the *‘The Wairarapa Times-Age building, immediately south of the Town hall, is a notable contextual anchor (1938) for the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings. The plaza to the south of the buildings is another important contextual aspect of the place, which – although not part of the original design of the buildings - is intrinsically tied to the place since it was introduced and has provided an area for the community to gather, such as the 2021 ‘Hands Around the Hall’ protest.’*



Figure 9: Masterton. Whites Aviation Ltd: Photographs. Ref: WA-11455-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22396220

15. The relationship of the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings to The Wairarapa Times Age building and to other scheduled heritage buildings in the local area was originally quite different, as illustrated on the annotated 1947 photograph included as Figure 9:

- a. Chapel Street - shown in orange
 - b. Town Hall and Municipal Buildings – Red Star
 - c. Wairarapa Times Age Building – Dark Blue Star
 - d. 28 and 31 Perry Street – Pale Blue Star
 - e. Other Scheduled Heritage Buildings – Yellow Star
- With buildings on the intervening land (the current plaza) it was not possible to view the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings with The Wairarapa Times Age building as is currently the case. They would instead only have been experienced as separate buildings which were viewed in sequence along Chapel Street. The buildings would in no way have been experienced as a group.
 - The removal of other buildings has enabled the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings to be read with the scheduled heritage buildings at 28 and 31 Perry Street quite differently than would have historically been the case. With intervening buildings, they would have appeared far more distant than is currently the case. They would in no way have been experienced as a group with the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings.
 - The distance to the scheduled Masterton Club and scheduled Former Masonic Hall is around 260m; as is currently the case, these buildings would have always felt remote from the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings and would not have been experienced as a group with the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings.
 - I understand that the plaza was only created in 2013, around three years before the use of the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings ceased. The northeast section of the plaza was formerly part of Perry Street and the southwest was originally occupied by buildings (as illustrated in Figure 22 of the HEA) before being formed as a car park.

- The recent creation of the Plaza has disrupted the historic street pattern of the area, so detrimentally altering the historic setting of the Town Hall, which was intended to front and be accessed from Perry Street.
 - Notwithstanding that I do not consider that the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings form a group with other heritage buildings in the wider area, I consider that their relationship to the adjacent scheduled Ex-Public Trust building remains important, and together the buildings have landmark value along Chapel Street.
16. In view of this, I do not agree that the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings are part of a collection of heritage buildings or part of a wider group of historic buildings, and do not consider that the plaza is an important contextual aspect of the place.
17. Based on the above, I consider that the buildings have Moderate Contextual significance (not Moderate to High significance as suggested in the HEA¹).
18. Notwithstanding this, overall, (taken as a whole) I agree with the HEA that ‘...The Masterton Town Hall and Municipal Buildings have high heritage significance’.²

19. Comments on Assessment of Fabric Significance

20. Linked to this matter, I also have concerns regarding the findings of ‘4.5 Assessment of Fabric Significance’, which considers the value of various parts of the building. The terms utilised to describe the significance of the various parts of the building are *High, Moderate, Some* and *None*.
21. Areas identified as having *Some* significance include the northwest elevation (the plain façade of the Town Hall, facing car parking), the first and ground floor Municipal Buildings interiors and the Basement and Boiler Room.
22. Whilst there are some limited original features in the Municipal Buildings, it is in general very altered; there are new staircases and suspended ceilings. Internally it is difficult to differentiate between the historic building and the newer Civil Defence addition, apart from the use of aluminium windows in the extension versus the retained timber windows in the older building.
23. Based upon my site visit, and having had the opportunity to view these areas, I consider that *Little* would be a more appropriate descriptor for the heritage significance of these areas, rather than *Some*. *Some* is an imprecise term whereas I consider that *Little* better reflects the limited heritage significance of these areas.
24. The areas of the building of *High* significance are identified as the Southeast Elevation, Municipal Buildings - Southwest Elevation, the Setting and the Town Hall Interior. I agree with these in part; for the reasons given above regarding the Contextual/Setting criterion, I consider that that the building has *Moderate*, not *High*, ‘Setting’ heritage value.
25. On the basis of the above, I accept that the following parts of the building have High heritage significance:
- Southeast Elevation

¹ Heritage Effects, Assessment Section 4.3.2 Contextual Significance, p42

² Heritage Effects Assessment, Section 4.4 Statement of Overall Significance, p43

- Municipal Buildings - Southwest Elevation
- Town Hall Interior

26. Comments on 5. Proposed Works and Alternative Options, 6. Methodology for Assessing Heritage Effects and 7. Assessment of Heritage Effects

27. The HEA provides an Assessment of Effects of five options for the building. The consideration of these options is critical in this case as Policy HH-P9 of the PDP points towards the consideration of whether there are reasonable alternatives available to the demolition of a historic heritage building. However, I also note that the application is clear that the Council (as applicant) has resolved to pursue the demolition of the buildings, and that the application is for the demolition of the buildings as a whole, not for partial demolition.

28. The options considered are:

- Option 1 – Full Demolition of Town Hall and Municipal Buildings – as proposed by the application
- Option 2A – Partial Demolition of the Buildings - retention of the municipal buildings and demolition of the town hall
- Option 2B – Retention of the Municipal Building façade to the southeast and southwest
- Option 3 – Decommissioning and Mothballing the Building
- Option 4 - Retention and Strengthening of the Building for Active Use

29. The Heritage Effects of each of these is considered against statutory requirements (the Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan) and Non-Statutory Guidelines including HNZPT non-statutory guidelines, the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Value (2010) Government Policy for the Management of Cultural Heritage – GPMCH (2022).

30. I have some comments regarding the Methodology and Assessment of Heritage Effects:

- Whilst s104(1)(c) provides for the consent authority to consider *‘any other matter the consent authority considers relevant and reasonably necessary to determine the application’*, in this instance the PDP is very up to date and includes policies which are directly applicable to the consideration of the application. I therefore consider that very little weight should be given to the non-statutory guidelines and the findings of the assessments against these.
- Equal weight has been given to the various PDP historic heritage policies, however of these only Policies HH-P2 and HH-P9 are relevant to demolition. The other Policies are not relevant, and I consider that the findings of the assessments against these should be dismissed.
- HH-P9 provides a set of criteria by which to consider the effects of demolition. I consider that these criteria should be given equal weight and an ‘on balance’ overall judgement made against them, as would be done when considering a proposal against a number of policies.
- I do not agree with the findings of the assessments against HH-P2 and HH-P9. I have provided my own assessment against these below.
- I do not consider that the various Rules that the proposal has been assessed against are relevant; these rules confirm the activity status only and the fact that consent is triggered by HH-R7(1) should not be considered a ‘Significant Negative’ effect as set out in the

Assessment of Effects. I consider that the findings of the assessments against the Rules should be dismissed.

31. **Comments on 8. Conclusions**

32. Based on my concerns above, I do not agree with all of the Conclusions set out in the HEA.

Consideration of Policies HH- P2 and HH-P9

Policy HH-P2 Protection of historic heritage		
	WSP HEA	Richard Knott Assessment
<p>Protect scheduled historic heritage buildings and items and scheduled heritage precincts from inappropriate activities by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discouraging the demolition or relocation of scheduled historic heritage buildings and items; and 2. Requiring activities on, in, or surrounding scheduled historic heritage buildings and items, or in heritage precincts, to avoid adverse effects on historic heritage values as much as practicable. 	<p><i>Full demolition of the existing buildings directly contravenes this policy. There is no attempt to avoid adverse effects.</i></p>	<p><i>Only point 1 is relevant. This is an overarching statement. The detailed consideration of Policy HH-P9 provides a more detailed response regarding whether the demolition of the building is reasonable in the detailed circumstances of this case.</i></p>
Policy HH-P9 - Demolition of heritage buildings and items		
<p>Discourage demolition of scheduled heritage buildings and items unless it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternatives, and having regard to the following matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effects on historic heritage values; 	<p><i>Full demolition of the existing buildings</i></p>	<p><i>I note that this policy does not seek to prohibit demolition (and as such demolition of a historic heritage building is identified as a discretionary activity in the plan).</i></p> <p><i>The policy requires that it be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternatives.</i></p> <p><i>Alternatives have been considered in the HEA and the other technical reports which have been submitted as part of the application.</i></p> <p><i>The demolition of the building would potentially take away all historic heritage values of the site.</i></p>

2. The importance attributed to the heritage item by the wider community;

directly contravenes this policy.

Heritage values will be permanently lost with the building (1).

The value of the asset to the wider community has been demonstrated, as outlined in the HSA (sic.) document.

Demolishing these buildings will therefore negatively impact their relationship with this asset (2).

3. Feasibility of adaptive re-use;

Feasibility studies on adaptive re-use have been conducted and have shown that both partial strengthening, and full strengthening are feasible (3).

There would be the potential to include interpretive material in the new building when it is constructed, and the applicant has outlined that it will look at the use of materials and features salvaged from the demolished buildings.

This has the potential to provide some mitigation of the effects of demolition.

I do not consider that the HSA has demonstrated this, it has merely reported that:

'a protest was planned – named 'Hands Around the Hall' – which saw locals turn out to show their support for the retention of the building.'

No conclusive information has been provided regarding this matter as part of the application material.

I note that consultation on the options for the building as part of the LTP showed broadly equal support from submitters for options which retained the southeast and municipal buildings - southwest facades versus options which assumed the total demolition of the buildings.³

I accept that studies show that adaptive re-use is possible with partial or full strengthening.

However, whilst not explicit in the criterion, I consider that feasibility must include consideration of whether adaptive re-use is financially feasible and desirable (in so much as a building which is fit for purpose can be achieved), in addition to whether adaptive re-use is technically feasible.

The RPS Revised Cost Plan Report, November 2024, shows that Option 4b – strengthening the building to greater than 34% NBS is the cheapest option considered (less than Option 1, demolishing the building and constructing a new facility). I agree with the HEA that this option would be a missed opportunity to secure the building's longevity with a higher % NBS.

Option 4a (strengthening the building to 80% NBS) also has a cheaper overall cost than

³ Masterton District Council, Ordinary Meeting of Council, Agenda Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Deliberations, 5 June 2024, p112

Option 1. However, I consider that this should be balanced against the Silverwood Fit for Purpose Assessment, November 2024, which indicates that this option has poor fit for purpose outcomes against all three categories; Spatial Planning, Building Fabric and Environment & Site Planning.

On balance, I consider that the poor fit for purpose of this option means that it is not a feasible option for the adaptive reuse of the building, as whilst the building would be brought into a safe condition it could be difficult to find a long-term user.

The next least costly option relative to demolition and new build is Option 2b – retention of the Municipal Buildings façade to the southeast and southwest (with a new building constructed inside of this).

Silverwood indicate that this provides a Fit for Purpose solution, although they note that it is not the optimal solution as concerns and limitations to this option have been identified in their assessment.

I note that the Russell Hooper Consulting – Resource Consent Application document states that:

‘As set out in this application, part alternatives have been considered. Retaining the façade comes closest to meeting the applicants requirements. However, this option will add approximately \$3.6m to the build – when making comparisons based on the Cost Plan Report and including contingencies. While this could be worked into the available funding, this would require scaling back the design. The applicant does not consider that the inevitable compromises to the design justify retaining the façade.’

I note that this statement is made as though spoken by the applicant, not their planner or historic heritage consultant. I do not consider that it represents a reason for accepting one option over another.

The Russell Hooper Consulting – Resource Consent Application document also states:

‘In addition, as demonstrated in the Structural Options Report at Appendix C, the structural and ground condition risks identified in retaining the façade means that accepting this option opens the applicant up to significant project cost over runs – well beyond typical contingencies. This is a risk that the applicant cannot afford to take.’

4. Cost of maintenance or repair;

There will be no costs associated with repair under this option (noting the assumptions outlined above). However, RPS has estimated that demolition alone will carry a cost of just under \$3.5374 although it appears that this estimate may not

I note that the Cost Plan Report includes a recommendation that a risk assessment be prepared for all options. There could be cost escalation in all cases – a contingency is included for all options along with escalation costs.

Importantly, from a historic heritage perspective I consider that Option 2b would have significantly less adverse heritage effects than the demolition of the building as a whole:

- *Whilst the High heritage significance Town Hall interior would be lost, the identified High heritage significance Southeast Elevation and Municipal Buildings - Southwest Elevation would be retained.*
- *It therefore represents a reasonable compromise between the retention of the buildings as a whole and the Council's current desire to have a clean site for the development of the new fit for purpose facilities.*
- *I note that the Applicant's Statement included with the application confirms that through the 2024-34 LTP consultation and deliberations process, the Council's preferred option included retaining the municipal building façade.*

On balance I consider that Option 2b represents a feasible option for the adaptive reuse of the building.

On the basis of the above, I consider that there are other feasible options for the adaptable reuse of the building which could result in better historic heritage outcomes than the total demolition of the building.

I assume that this criterion relates to the ongoing costs of maintenance or repair of the building if it is retained. This represents Option 3 – Decommissioning and Mothballing the Building.

The Dunning Thornton Consultants Structural Options Report confirms that even if the building is not accessible to the public, the statutory obligations under Earthquake Prone Building Act would still require strengthening. The cost of this is shown to be over \$6m. In addition to this there would likely be ongoing

	<p><i>include remediation works to level and gravel the site. In addition to this, there will be ongoing maintenance costs associated with the site that have not been estimated (4). It may be noted that RPS has estimated the overall cost of building new facilities at just under \$34.7m.</i></p>	<p><i>costs to maintain the building. These costs would not assist with delivering the new fit for purpose facilities that the Council is looking for.</i></p>
<p>5. Building safety; and</p>	<p><i>The buildings are currently on the EQPB register and deemed earthquake prone.</i></p> <p><i>Building safety would be achieved by full demolition as there would no longer be any building. However, seismic upgrade feasibility studies have been completed and show full or partial retention of the buildings is feasible (5).</i></p>	<p><i>As noted in the HEA, the options illustrate that building safety can be achieved. In particular Option 2b – retention of the Municipal Buildings façade to the southeast and southwest could provide a fit for purpose solution, whilst being the next most affordable option after Option 1 - demolition and new build (noting that Options 4a and 4b have a lesser cost than Option 1)..</i></p>
<p>6. Appropriateness, compatibility, and appearance of any replacement building in relation to heritage values.</p>	<p><i>There would be no remaining heritage fabric, so the appropriateness, compatibility, and appearance of any replacement building is not relevant for this option (6).</i></p>	<p><i>I believe that the WSP response has misunderstood this criterion. I assume that the criterion allows consideration to be taken of the design of any new building and whether this relates in any way to the heritage values of the demolished building or heritage values remaining in the area.</i></p> <p><i>In this instance a replacement building has not been designed in detail. There is the potential for this to include some salvaged material and to maintain an appropriate relationship to the close by heritage scheduled Ex-Public Trust Building. Conditions could be added to any consent granted for the demolition of the building to ensure this.</i></p>
<p>Conclusion - Consideration of Policy HH-P9</p>		<p><i>Policy HH-P9 requires that it be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternatives to demolition.</i></p> <p><i>Having worked through the associated criterion, and utilising the information</i></p>

	<p><i>provided with the application regarding potential alternatives, I consider that on balance there appear to be reasonable alternatives, in so much there are other feasible options for the adaptable reuse of the building which could result in better historic heritage outcomes than the total demolition of the building, whilst appropriately responding to building safety concerns and providing a fit for purpose building.</i></p>
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Conclusion

33. Overall, having considered the findings of the HEA and the other reports submitted with the application, and carried out my own assessment against Policies HH-P2 and HH-P9, I consider that:

- a. The Masterton Town Hall and Municipal Buildings have High historic heritage significance.
- b. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that there are no other reasonable alternatives to the demolition of the Town Hall, Municipal Buildings and Civil Defence Buildings. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies HH-P2 and HH-P9, and the resulting adverse effects arising from the loss of this scheduled heritage building cannot be justified.



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