WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM CAMPING BYLAW 2026

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1. TITLE AND COMMENCEMENT

1.1 This Bylaw is the Westland District Council Responsible Freedom Camping Bylaw 2026.

1.2 This Bylaw comes into force on 16 November 2026 .

1.3 This Bylaw is due for review under section 13 of the Act by 16 November 2031.

2. APPLICATION OF BYLAW

2.1 This Bylaw applies to all Local Authority Areas in the Westland District.

2.2 Nothing in this Bylaw shall limit the application of any other enactments, rules or codes or regulations made under any other enactment.

3. DECLARATION THAT NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORT AGENCY (NZTA) LAND IS LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA

3.1 The areas of NZTA land identified in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 are declared a local authority area for the purpose of the Act, which means they are local authority areas for the purpose of this Bylaw and are regulated as such under this Bylaw.

4. BYLAW DOES NOT APPLY TO LOCAL AUTHORITY LAND THAT IS RESERVE

4.1 This bylaw does not apply to any local authority area that is a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. Decisions on whether to allow or restrict camping, including freedom camping, on any reserve will be made in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977.

5. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Bylaw is to control freedom camping the Westland District in order to:

(a) Protect local authority areas;

(b) Protect the health and safety of people who may visit local authority areas; or

(c) Protect access to local authority areas.

6. DEFINTIONS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Unless the context other requires, a term or expressions that is defined in the Act and used, but not defined, in this Bylaw has the meaning given by the Act.

6.2 Any headings, explanatory notes and attachments are for information purposes and do not form part of this Bylaw.

6.3 For the purpose of this Bylaw, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) **Act** means the Freedom Camping Act 2011.

(b) **Camping ground** has the same meaning as in section 5 (3) of the Act.

(c) **Certified Self-contained** (has the same definition as set out in section 4 of the Act) means, in relation to a motor vehicle, that the vehicle has a valid certificate of self-containment issued in accordance with section 87U(3)(d) of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006.

(d) **Chief Executive** means the Chief Executive appointed by the Council under section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002.

(e) **Council** means Westland District Council.

(f) **District** means the district of the Council.

(g) **Enforcement officer** means a person appointed as an enforcement officer under section 32 of the Act.

(h) **Freedom camp** has the same meaning as in section 5 of the Act.

(i) **Local authority area** has the same meaning as in section 6 of the Act.

(j) **Prohibited area** means an area identified in Schedule 1: Prohibited Areas, in which freedom camping is prohibited.

(k) **Restricted area** means an area identified in Schedule 2: Restricted Areas, in which freedom camping is permitted subject to restrictions.

6.4 This bylaw contains explanatory notes, which are not part of the bylaw. The Council may add, amend or delete explanatory notes at any time without amending the bylaw.

7. AREAS WHERE FREEDOM CAMPING IS PERMITTED

7.1 Freedom camping using a certified self-contained motor vehicle is permitted in any local authority area within the District unless it is prohibited or restricted in

an area:

(a) Under clause 8 or 9 of this Bylaw; or

(b) Under any legislation; or

(c) In the case of a certified self-contained motor vehicle, by the limit placed on the maximum number of people for which the vehicle is certified.

8. PROHIBITED AREAS

8.1 A person must not freedom camp in any area identified in Schedule 1: Prohibited Area.

8.2 Freedom camping in a tent or other temporary structure on any local authority area in the district is prohibited.

8.3 Despite subclause (8.1), a person may freedom camp in any prohibited area if they have obtained the prior written consent of the Council, granted under clause 10 (1) of this Bylaw, and complies with any conditions on the consent.

9. RESTRICTED AREAS

9.1 A person may freedom camp in any area identified in Schedule 2: Restricted Areas, but must comply with the restrictions listed below:

(a) The freedom camping must only take place in a certified self-contained vehicle;

(b) The maximum stay in any one location is two nights within a 30-day-period and the location must not be within 500 meters of a location where the person has previously freedom camped within a 30-day period;

(c) All waste must either be removed or disposed of in the bins provided;

(d) All wastewater (including human waste) must be disposed of at an approved dumpsite.

(e) Campsites must be kept clean and tidy;

(f) Parking must be legal and not obstruct public or private access;

(g) No person may light fires;

(h) No person may interfere with or damage any freedom camping area, flora, fauna or structure; and

(i) Enforcement officers must be able to inspect any campsite and freedom campers must comply with any reasonable direction.

9.2 Schedule 2: Restricted Areas also places additional site specific restrictions on:

(a) the number of vehicles permitted;

(b) hours available

9.3 Despite subclause (9.1), a person may freedom camp in a Restricted Freedom Camping Area if they have obtained prior written consent of the Council, granted under clause 10 (1) of this Bylaw, and complies with any condition of that consent.

10. PRIOR CONSENT FROM COUNCIL

10.1 The Council may grant consent to a person to freedom camp in any prohibited area, restricted area, using a tent or non-self-contained vehicle, contrary to any prohibition, restriction, or conditions that apply to that area under this Bylaw.

10.2 An application for consent must be made in writing to the Chief Executive at least two weeks in advance of the date planned for freedom camping in the area.

10.3 If the Council grants an application, it may impose any conditions it considers appropriate that are consistent with the purpose of this Bylaw.

10.4 If the Council refuses an application, Council must inform the applicant of the reasons for the decision.

10.5 An enforcement officer may revoke a consent given under subclause (10.1) if any person breaches the conditions specified in the consent or the freedom camping covered by the consent otherwise breaches this Bylaw or the Act.

11. CLOSURE OF FREEDOM CAMPING AREA

11.1 The Chief Executive may temporarily close or restrict entry to any overnight freedom camping area or part of any freedom camping area where such restriction is considered necessary by Council to:

(a) Prevent damage to the local authority area or facilities in the area; or

(b) Allow maintenance to the local authority area or facilities thereon; or

(c) Protect the safety of persons or property; or

(d) Allow or facilitate public access, including circumstances where events are planned for that area.

11.2 The Council will publicise a closure or restriction under clause 11 (1) of this Bylaw in any manner it considers is appropriate to the reason for the closure or restriction. The publicity may occur before the closure or restriction, but only if that is reasonably practicable.

12. OFFENCES

12.1 Section 20(1) and 20C of the Act species the infringements offences applicable to local authority areas, which include that every person commits an offence who –

(a) Freedom camps in a local authority area in breach of any probation or restriction in this Bylaw that applies to the area; or

(b) Makes preparations to freedom camp in a local authority area in breach of any prohibition or restriction in this Bylaw that applies to the area.

12.2 For the purposes of section 20(1)(a) and (f) of the Act, any person who has obtained the prior written consent of the Council, granted under clause 8(1) of this Bylaw, and who complies with any conditions on the consent, is not acting in breach of any prohibition or restriction in this Bylaw.

13. PENALITIES

13.1 As specified in section 20E of the Act, every person who commits an infringement offence under the Act is liable to the infringement fine specified in regulations made under the Act, or if no regulations have been made an infringement fee of $400.

14. RELATIONSHIP OF THE BYLAW WITH THE NGAI TAHU CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT 1998

14.1 This Bylaw does not limit or affect the rights in relation to nohoanga entitlements under the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

Explanatory Note

This bylaw applies to local authority areas under the control of the Westland District Council. It also applies to specific areas of New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) land where the Chief Executive of NZTA has given their written consent for the area to be considered a Local Authority Area.

This bylaw does not apply to places managed as camping grounds or nohanga; or to land owned or controlled by organisations other than Council (for example, the Department of Conservation, Land Information New Zealand) or privately owned land.

Compliance with this bylaw does not remove the need to comply with all applicable Acts (including the Reserves Act 1977), regulations, bylaws, the District Plan, reserve management plans and rules of law.

The regulations made under section 43 of the Freedom Camping Act that are in force at the time this bylaw was made provide for fines ranging from $200 to $800.

Reserves

Reserves administered by Westland District Council are managed in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977. Camping on reserves is prohibited under the Reserves Act 1977 other than in areas set aside for that purpose. Infringement notices for unauthorised camping on reserves are issued under the Reserves Act.

SCHEDULE 1: PROHIBITED AREAS

A person must not freedom camp in any prohibited area freedom camping area within the district identified in this Schedule without the prior written consent of Council.

Name	Description	Map
Rimu Lookout	Unformed Legal Road on Woodstock-Rimu Road	Figure 1
Milltown Road Shelter	Car park and adjoining legal road (formed and unformed) associated with the Milltown Road Shelter.	Figure 2
Park Street (DWC Westland Sports Hub)	Park Street between Rolleston Street and Brittan Street, Hokitika	Figure 3
Weld Street (Cass Square), Hokitika	Weld Street between Bealey Street and Brittan Street, Hokitika	Figure 4
Richard's Drive Beach Access, Hokitita	Unformed legal road between 261 Revell Street and 2 Richards Drive, Hokitika	Figure 5
Spencer Street Beach Access, Hokitika	Unformed legal road between 243 Revell Street and 245 Revell Street, Hokitika	Figure 6
Tudor Street Beach Access, Hokitika	Unformed legal road between 217 Revell Street and 221 Revell Street, Hokitika	Figure 7
Hampden Street Beach Access, Hokitika	Unformed legal road between 165 Revell Street and 167 Revell Street, Hokitika	Figure 8
Hokitika Township	All those formed and unformed legal roads west of the railway line including and bounded by Beach Street, Stafford Street, Railway Terrace, Weld Street, Seawell Street and Gibson Quay. (Note: Excludes areas set aside as defined in Schedule Two)	Figure 9
Grimmond Avenue, Ross	Unformed legal road adjacent to the Chinese Miner Memorial Garden.	Figure 10
Ross Hall	Car parking area and surrounds of Ross Hall	Figure 11

Ross Beach - Totara River	All formed and unformed legal roads from the Telecommunications Tower on Ross Beach Road to Ross Beach and the Totara River	Figure 12
Okarito	All formed and unformed legal roads within the township of Okarito	Figure 13
Tidal Creek, Okarito	Car parking area on Forks-Okarito Road adjacent to Tidal Creek Bridge	Figure 14
Franz Josef Township	All public roads and land managed by Westland District Council and NZTA within the Franz Josef Township from Waiho River Bridge State Highway 6 at the southern end of the township to and the Tatare River Bridge on State Highway 6 at the northern end of the township	Figure 15
Fox Glacier Township	All public roads and land managed by Westland District Council and NZTA within the Fox Glacier Township from the 60km/h speed restriction signs on Cook Flat Road, to the 50 km/h speed restriction signs on State Highway 6 at the northern end of the township to and the 50 km/h speed restriction signs on State Highway 6 at the southern end of the township	Figure 16
Te Kopikopoko o te waka - Peak View	The section of Gillespies Road opposite and including Te Kopikopoko o te waka - Peak View and extending along the formed and unformed sections of Gillespies Road to Souter Creek.	Figure 17
Papakeri Urupa, Mahitahi	Car park associated with Papakeri Urupa, Mahitahi	Figure 18
Bruce Bay (State Highway and Local Road)	SH6 where it adjoins Bruce Bay from the south-western end of Bruce Bay to the north-eastern end of Bruce Bay including the State Highway and unformed legal road at the northwestern end providing access to the beach.	Figure 19
Mahitahi River	Unformed legal road accessing Mahitahi River at 5100 Haast Pass Hwy	Figure 20
Paringa	All Formed and unformed legal road located at 6156 Haast Highway, Paringa 7886 (Note: Excludes area set aside as defined in Schedule Two)	Figure 21
Haast Beach (SW) Access 2	Unformed legal road adjoining Haast Beach, 470m south-west of Haast transfer station	Figure 22
Haast Beach (SW) Access 1	Unformed legal road adjoining Haast Beach, 1670m south-west of Haast transfer station	Figure 23
Cuttance Road, Okuru	All of Cuttance Road (both formed and unformed legal road)	Figure 24

Johnston Crescent, Okuru	All of Johnston Crescent, Okuru (both formed and unformed legal road)	Figure 25
Marks Road Toilets and Playground, Haast	Full extent of Marks Road from State Highway 6 including car parking areas adjacent to public toilets, bus stop and playground.	Figure 26
Arawhata River Bridge Viewpoint	The carpark for the Arawhata River Bridge viewpoint and associated picnic area and memorial to Dan Greaney	Figure 27
Arawhata River Access	Single lane gravel road and small turning area located at 4010-3912 Jackson River Road.	Figure 28
Neil's Beach	All public roads within the Neil's Beach residential area located off the Hasst-Jackson Bay Highway including Neils Beach Road, Oleary Place and Duncan McFarlane Road.	Figure 29
Haast-Jackson Bay Road	The Haast-Jackson Bay Road from the "No Stopping Next 5km" sign east of the Pioneer Cemetery to the No Stopping Next 5km at Jackson Bay.	Figure 30
Jackson Bay	The Esplanade from the 60km speed restriction signs past the Jackson Bay Wharf and adjoining Kairaki Beach to the intersection of The Esplanade and Pier Street.	Figure 31

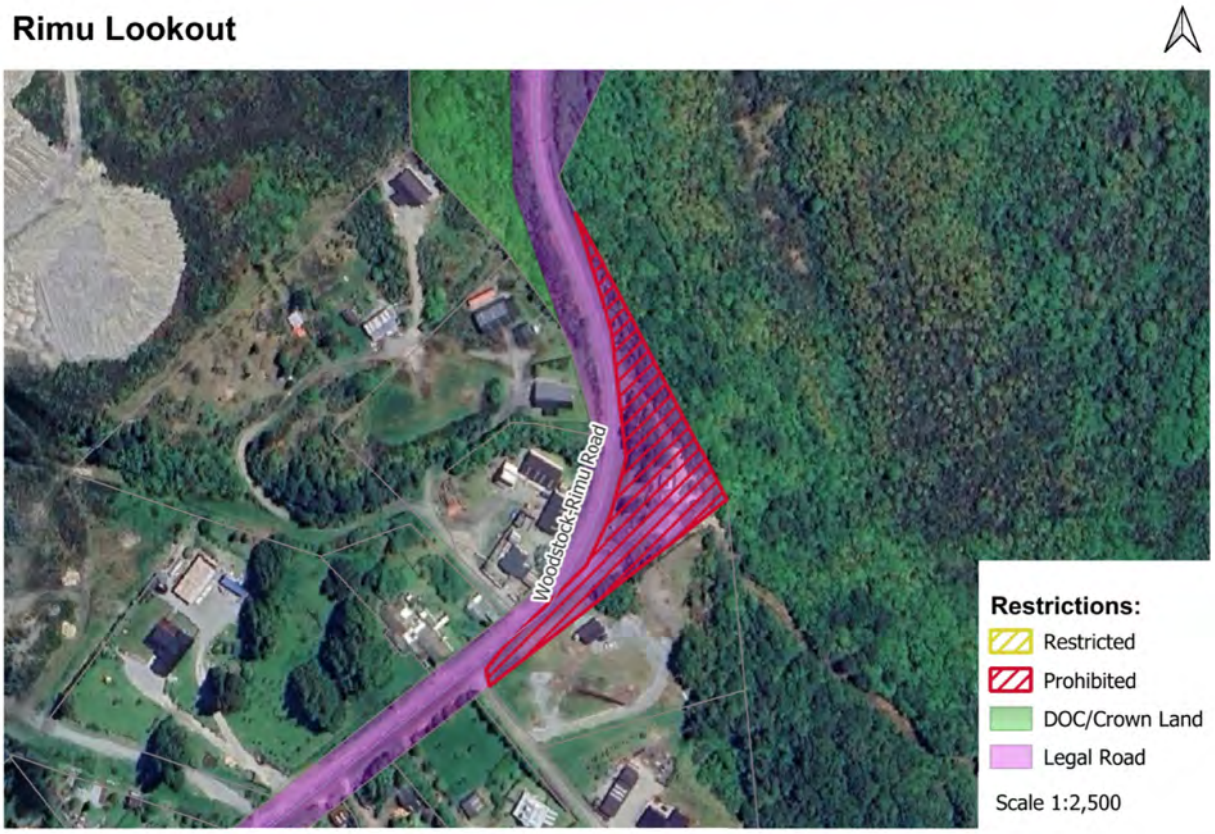


Figure 1 Rimu Lookout



Figure 2 Milltown Road

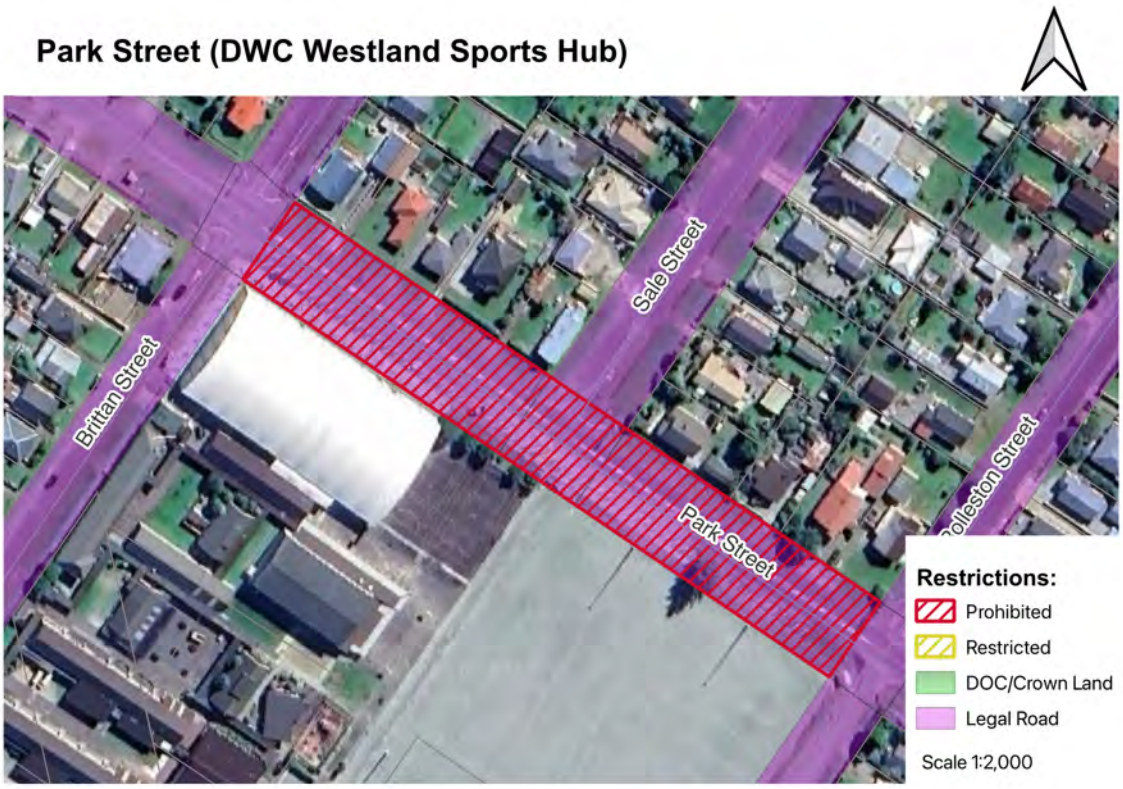


Figure 3 Park Street

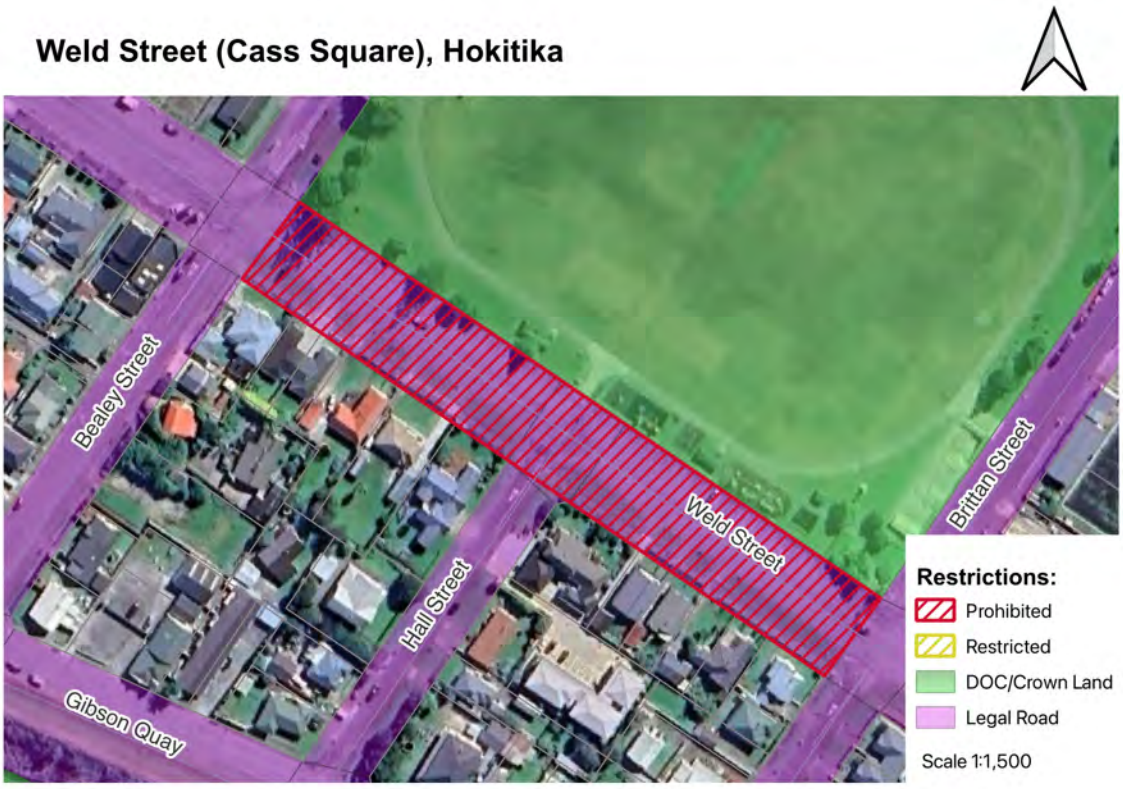


Figure 4 Weld Street (Cass Square)



Figure 5 Richards Drive Beach Access



Figure 6 Spencer Street Beach Access

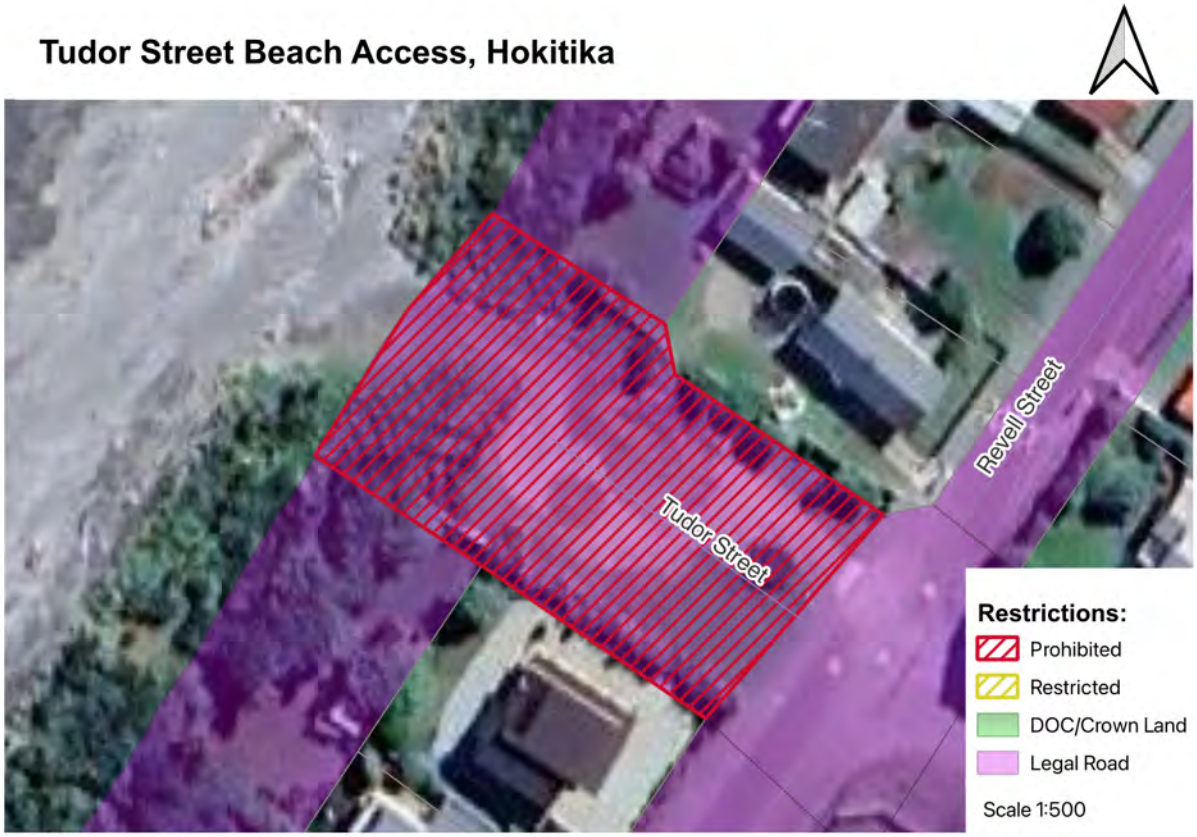


Figure 7 Tudor Street, Beach Access



Figure 8 Hampden Street Beach Access



Figure 9 Hokitika Township



Figure 10 Grimmond Avenue, Ross

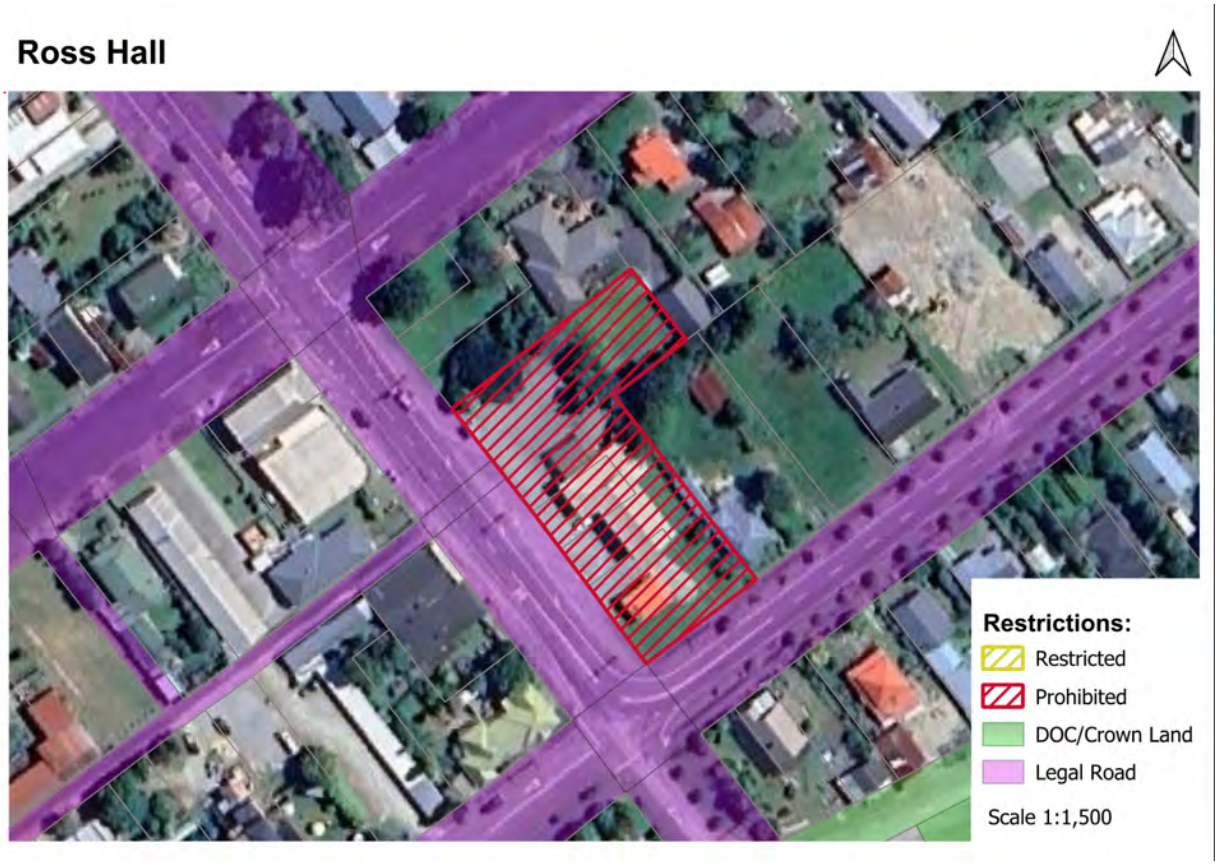


Figure 11 Ross Hall

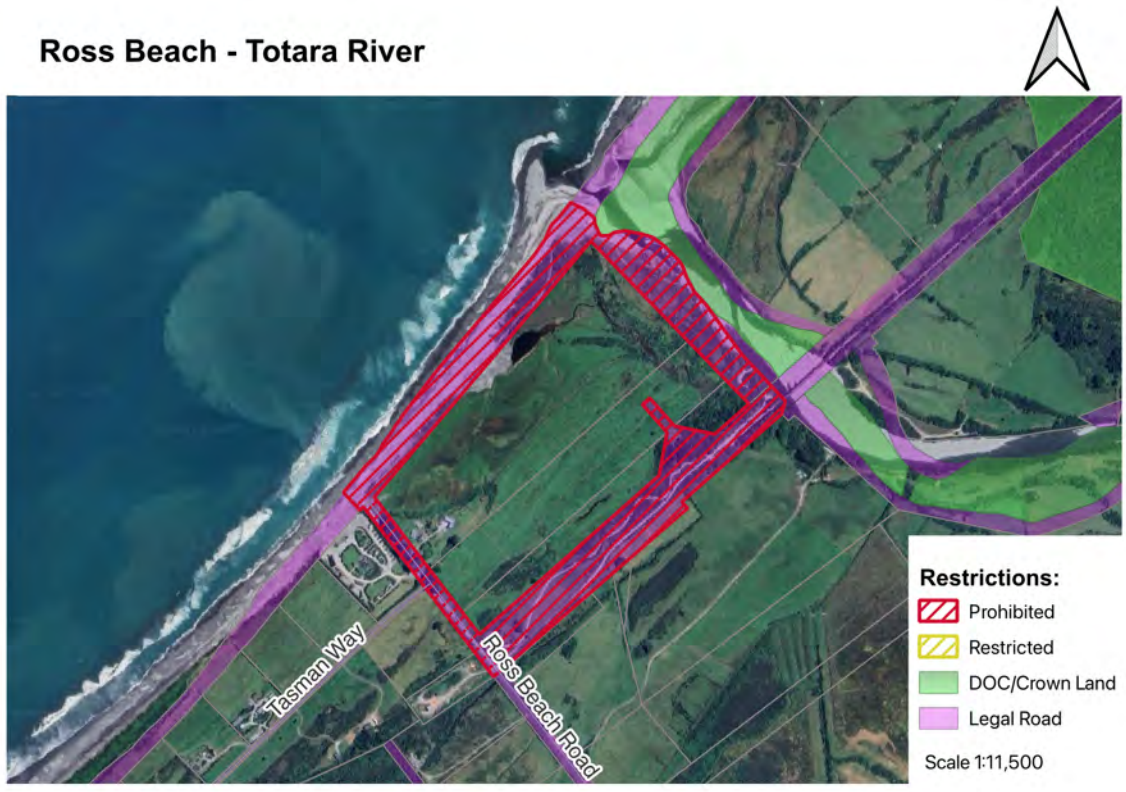


Figure 12 Ross Beach - Totara River



Figure 13 Okarito Township

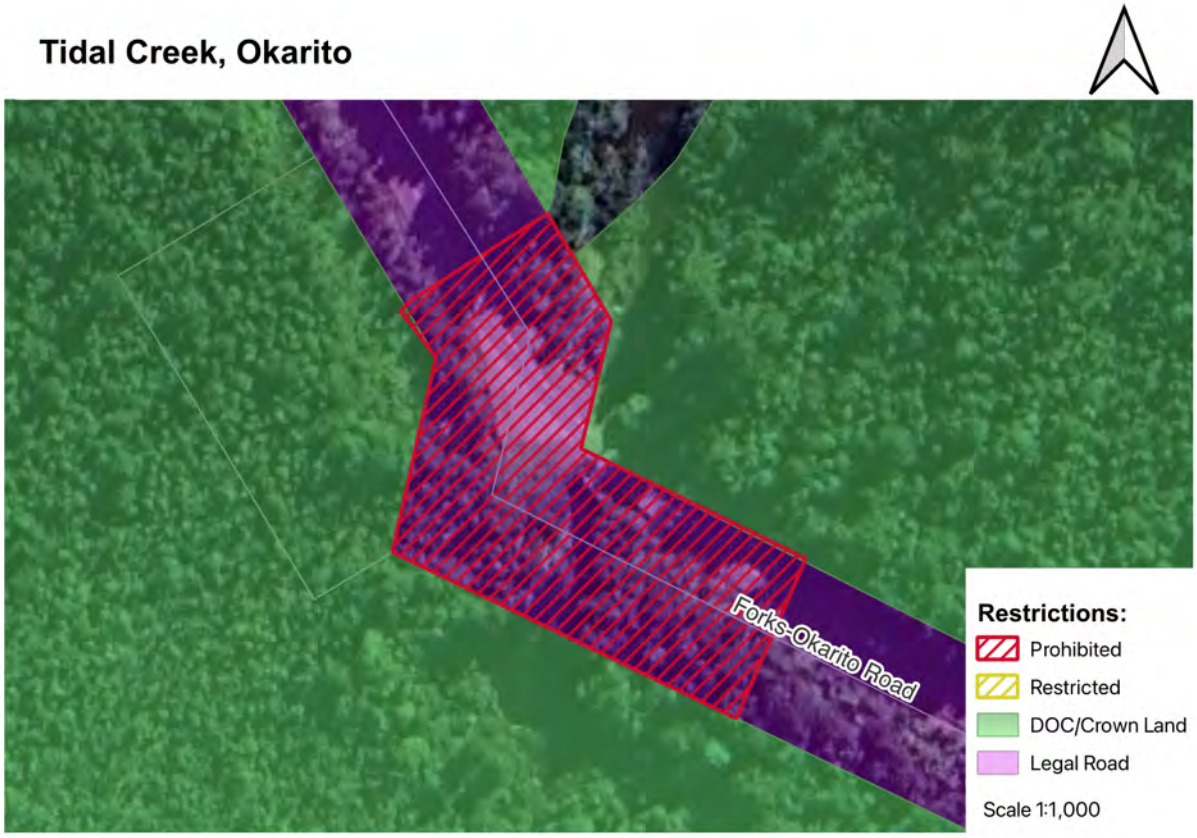


Figure 14 Tidal Creek, Okarito



Figure 15 Franz Joseph Township

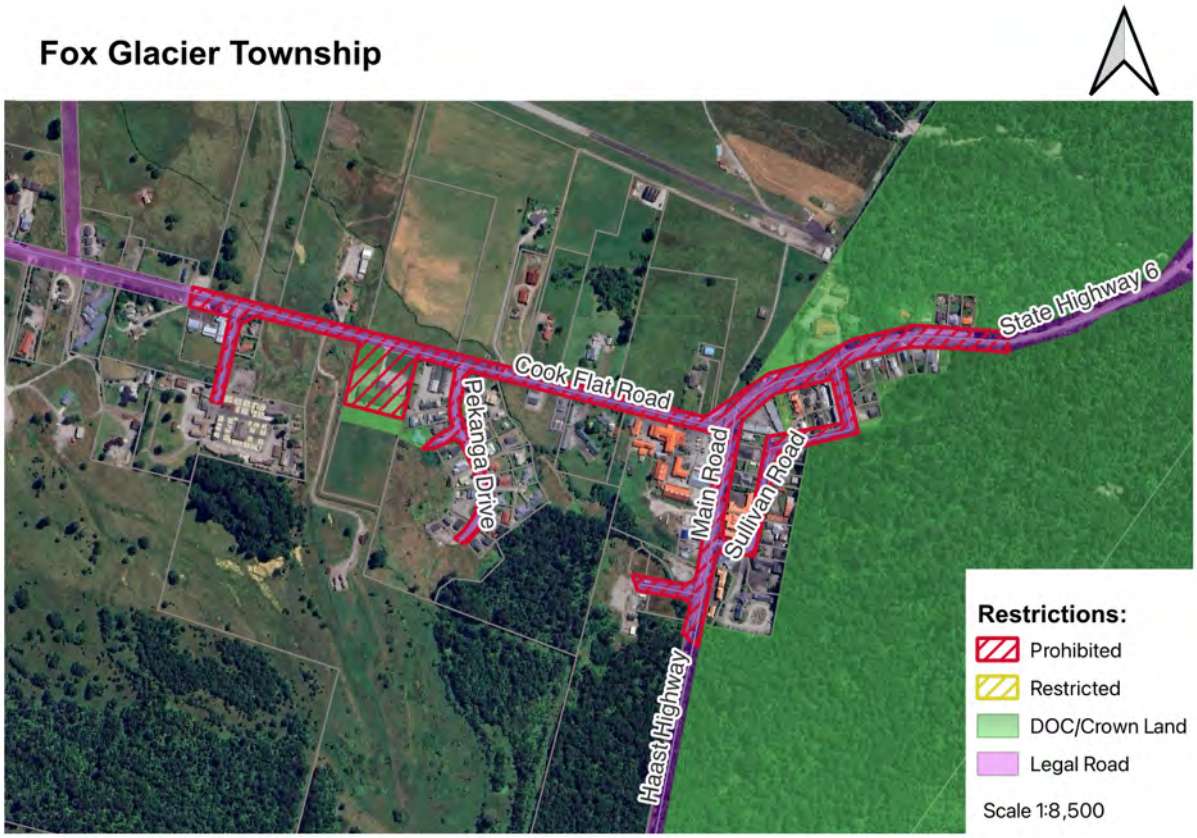


Figure 16 Fox Glacier Township

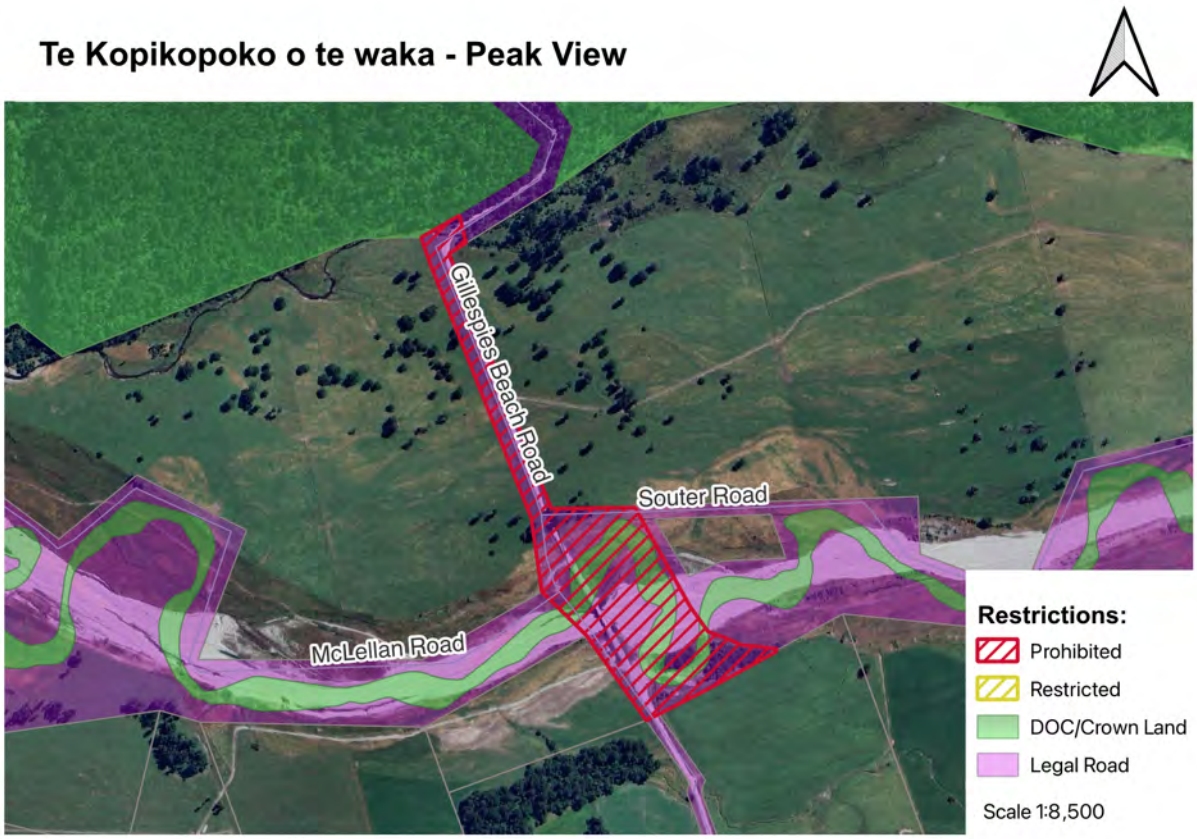


Figure 17 Te Kopikopoko o te waka - Peak View

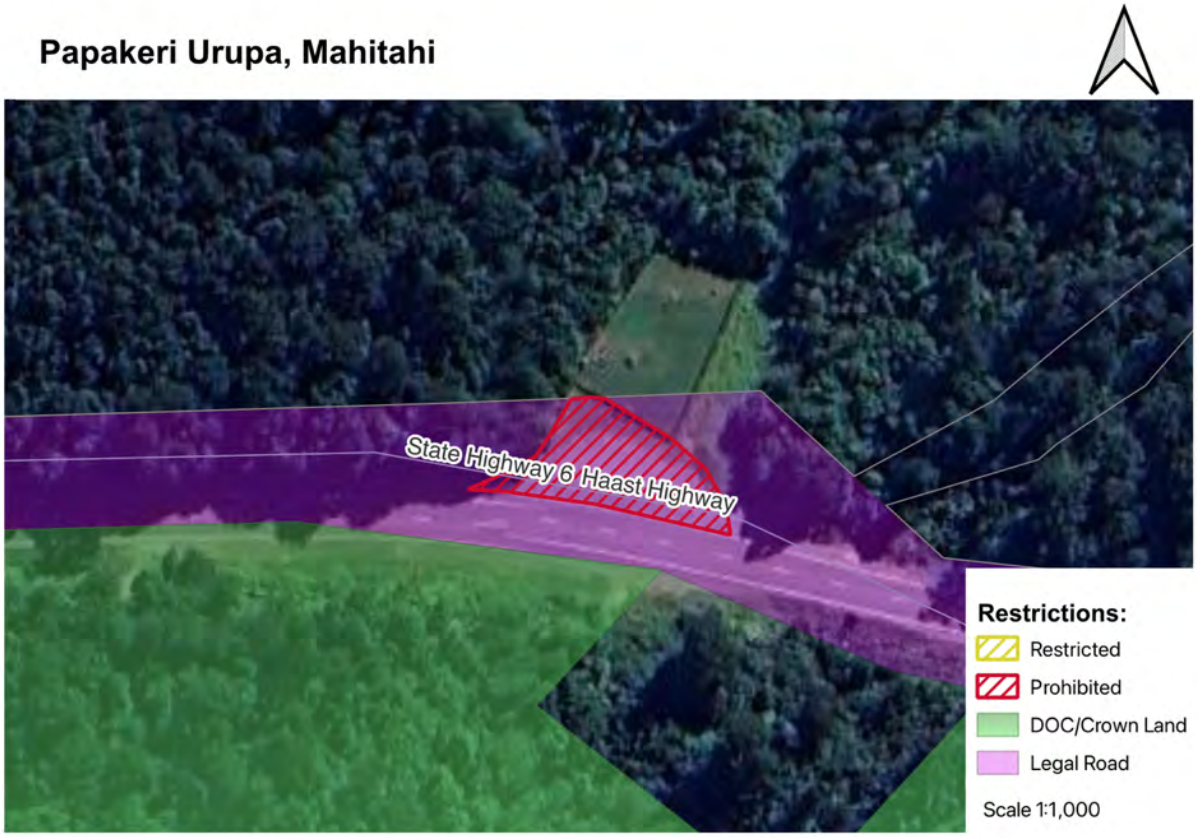


Figure 18 Papakeri Urupa, Mahitahi



Figure 19 Bruce Bay

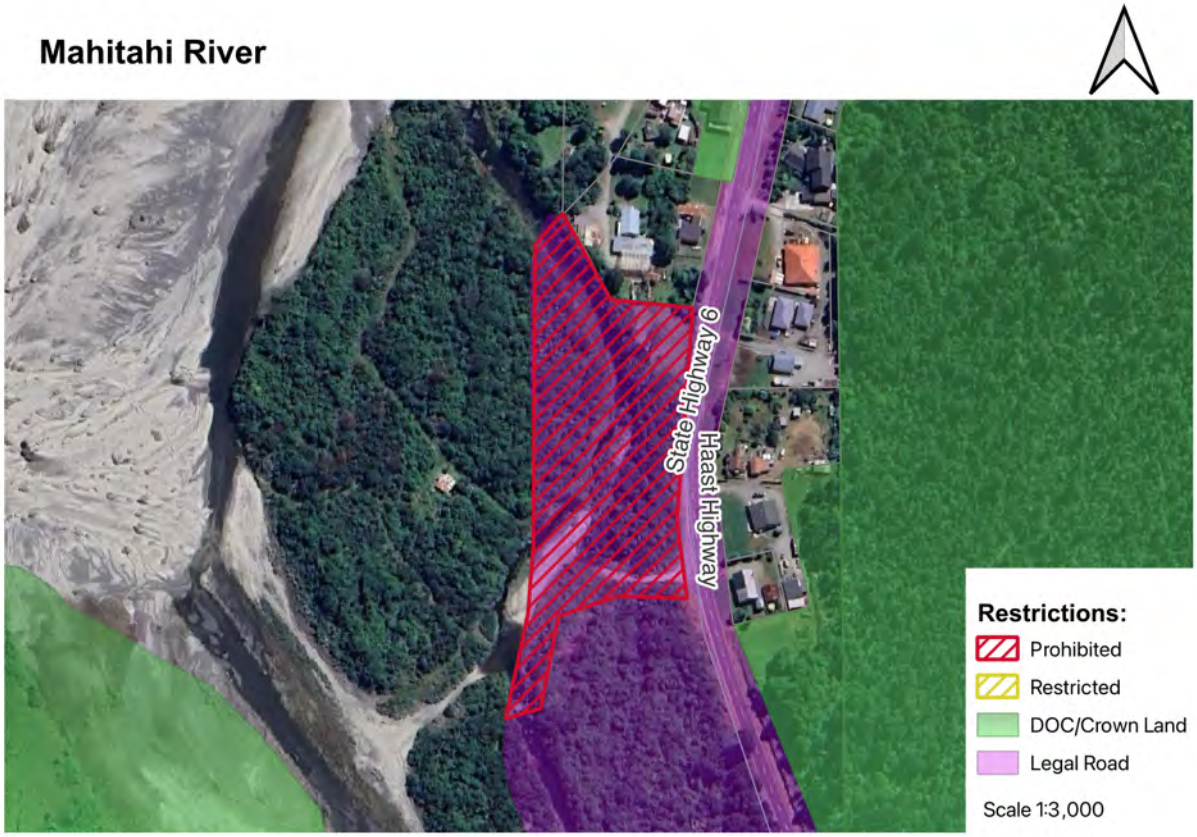


Figure 20 Mahitahi River



Figure 21 6156 Haast Highway, Paringa 7886



Figure 22 Haast Beach (SW) Access 2



Figure 23 Haast Beach (SW) Access 1

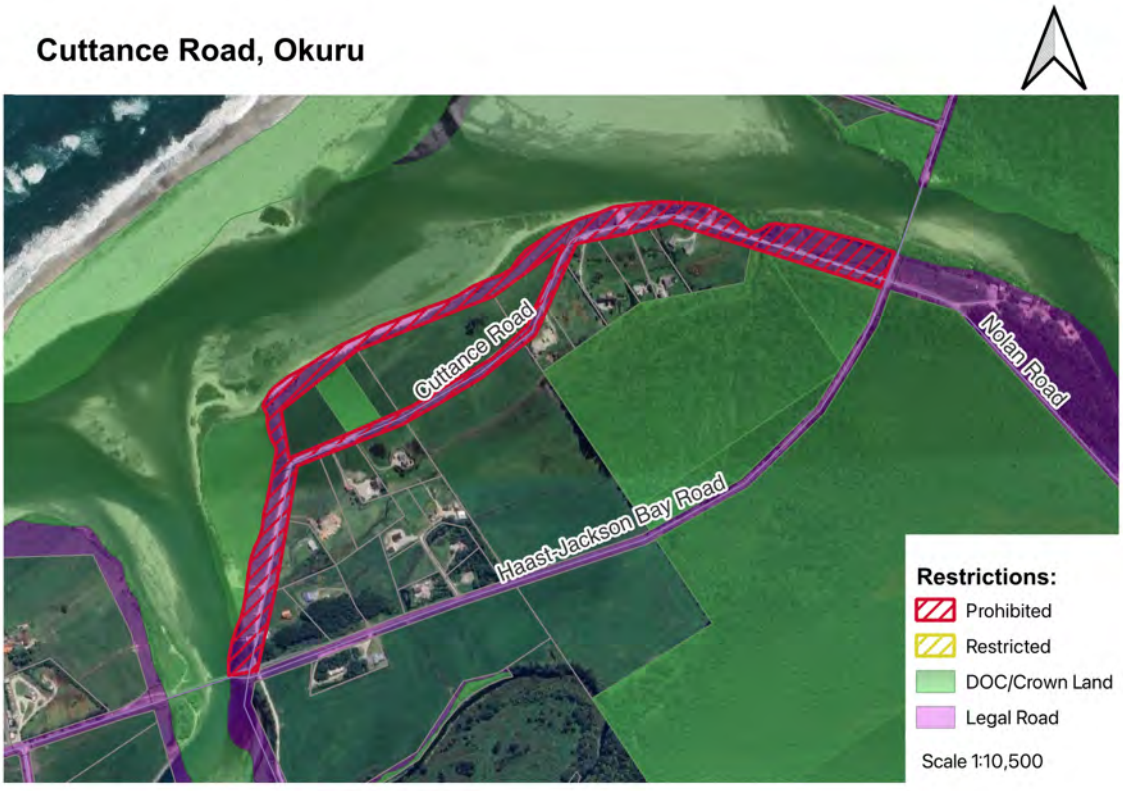


Figure 24 Cuttance Road, Okuru



Figure 25 Johnson Crescent, Okuru

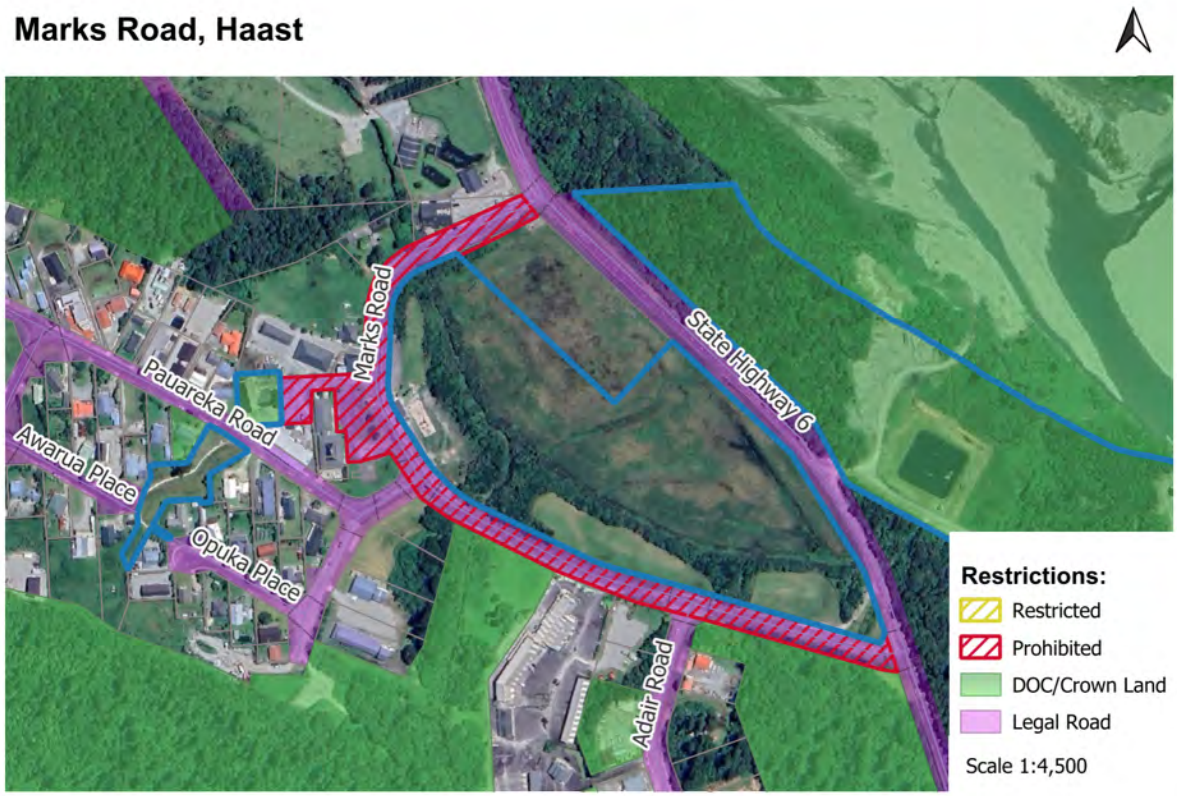


Figure 26 Marks Road, Haast (Note Council Reserves shown in Blue outline)

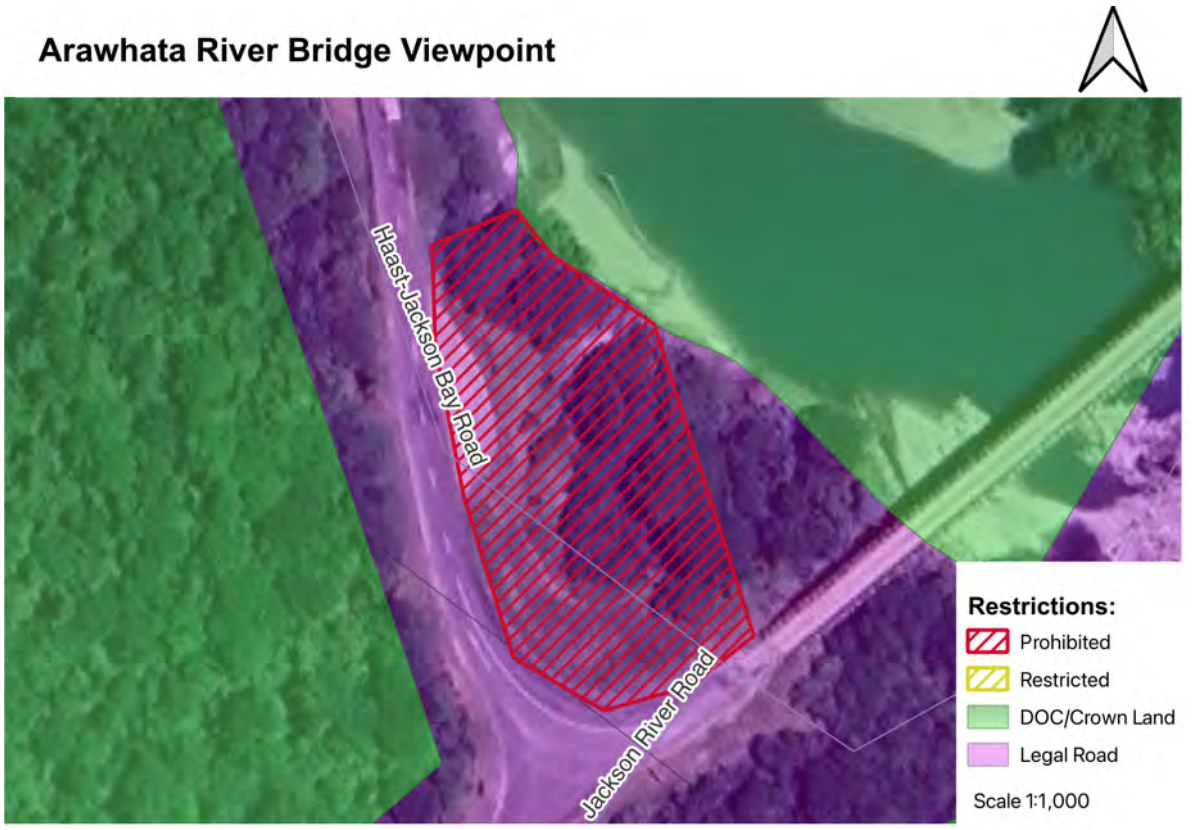


Figure 27 Arawata River Bridge Viewpoint

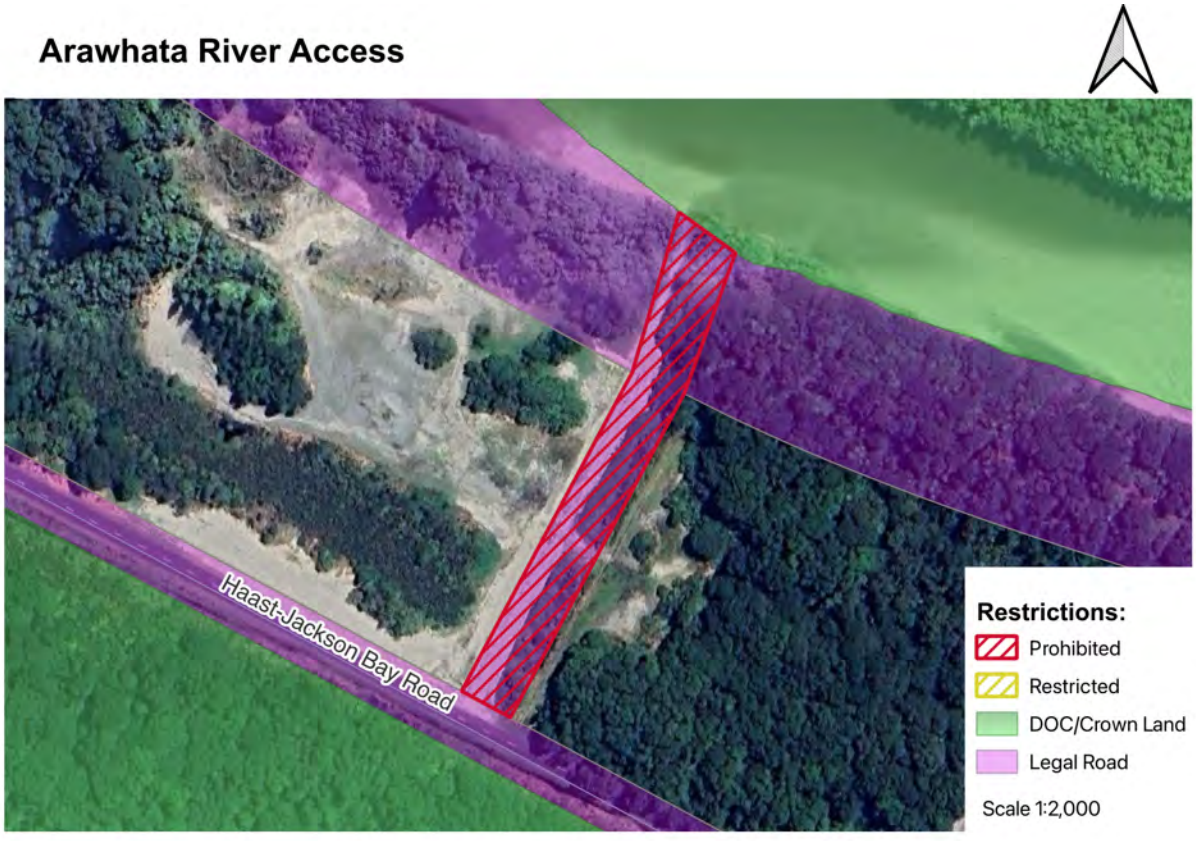


Figure 28 Arawhata River Access



Figure 29 Neils Beach

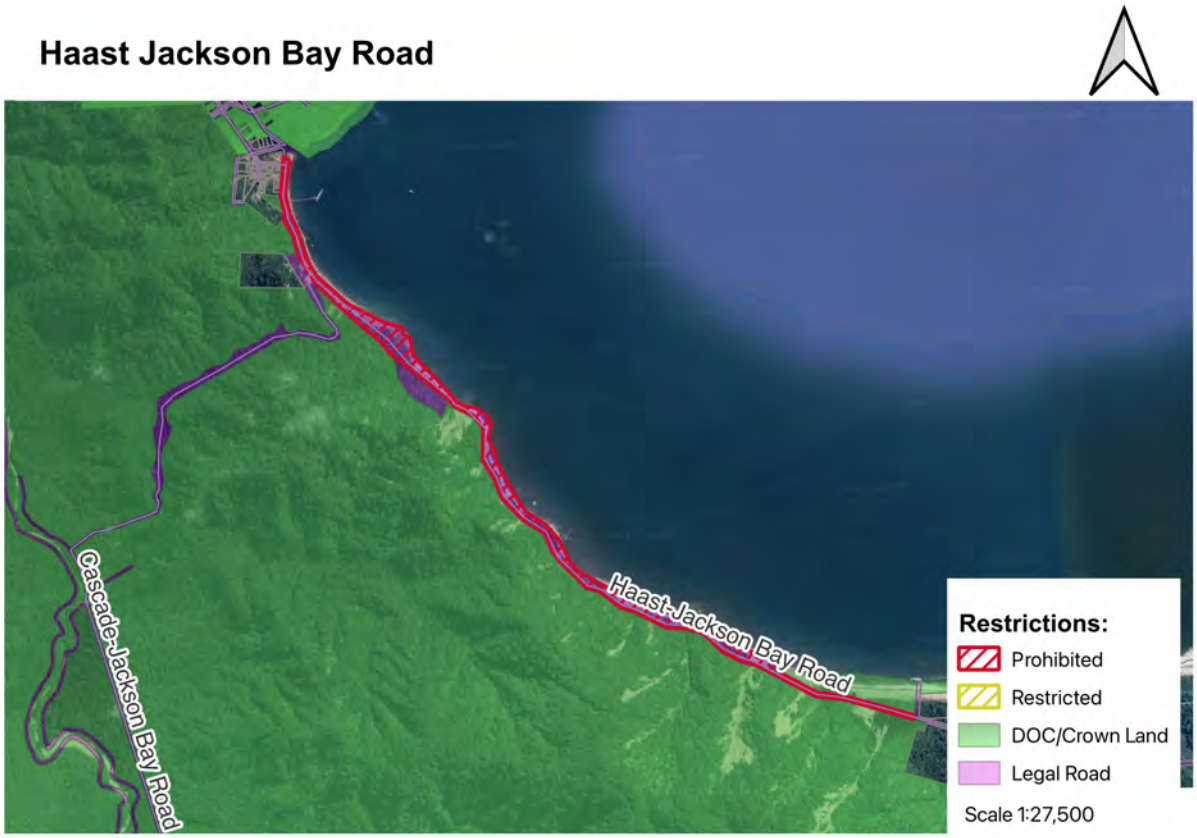


Figure 30 Haast Jackson Bay Road



Figure 31 Jackson Bay

SCHEDULE 2: RESTRICTED AREAS

Freedom camping in the areas described below is subject to the restrictions specified in clause 9 of this bylaw for each area.

Any restrictions must be complied with unless the prior written consent of the Council is obtained under clause 10 of this bylaw.

Name	Description	Map
Beach Street, Hokitika	Signposted Freedom Camping parking opposite 59 Beach Street, Hokitika (6 Spaces) 8PM to 7AM	Figure 32
Stafford Street, Hokitika	Signposted Freedom Camping parking at 7 Stafford Street, Hokitika (5 Spaces) 8PM to 7AM	Figure 33
6156 Haast Highway, Paringa	Signposted Freedom Camping parking at 6156 Haast Highway, Paringa (20 Spaces) 3PM to 10AM	Figure 34

Maps of Schedule Two: Restricted Areas

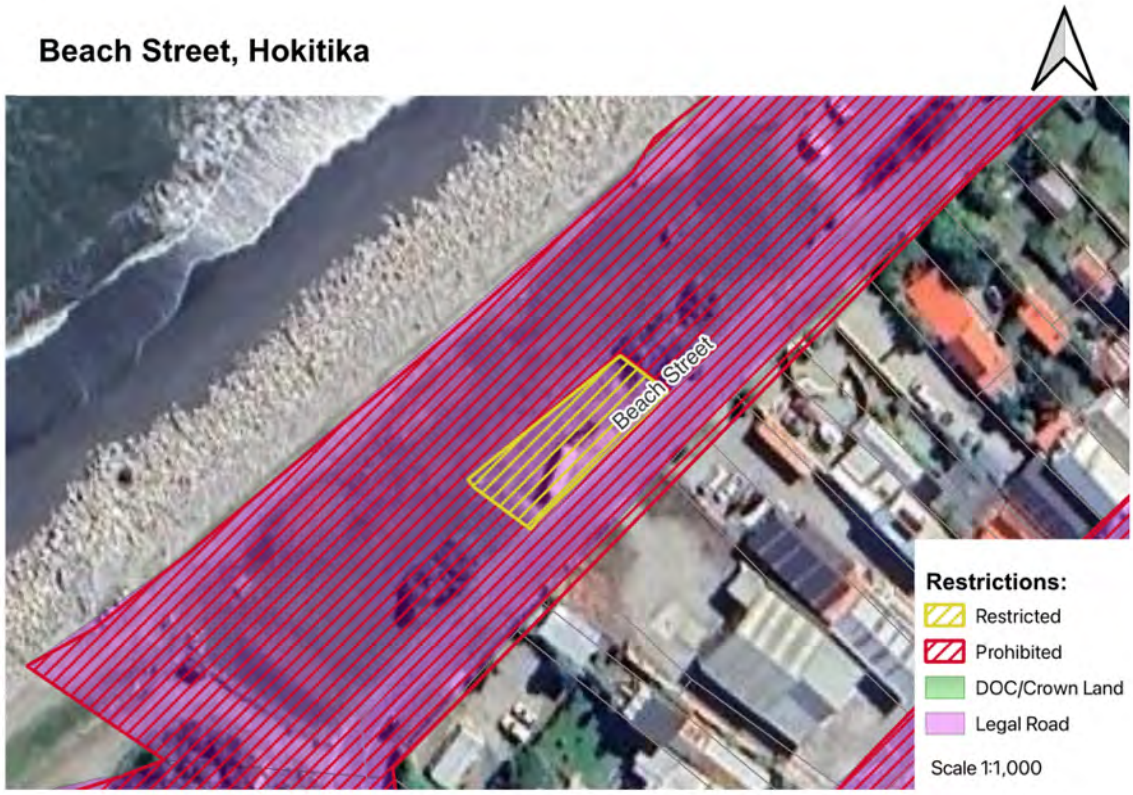


Figure 32 Beach Street, Hokitika

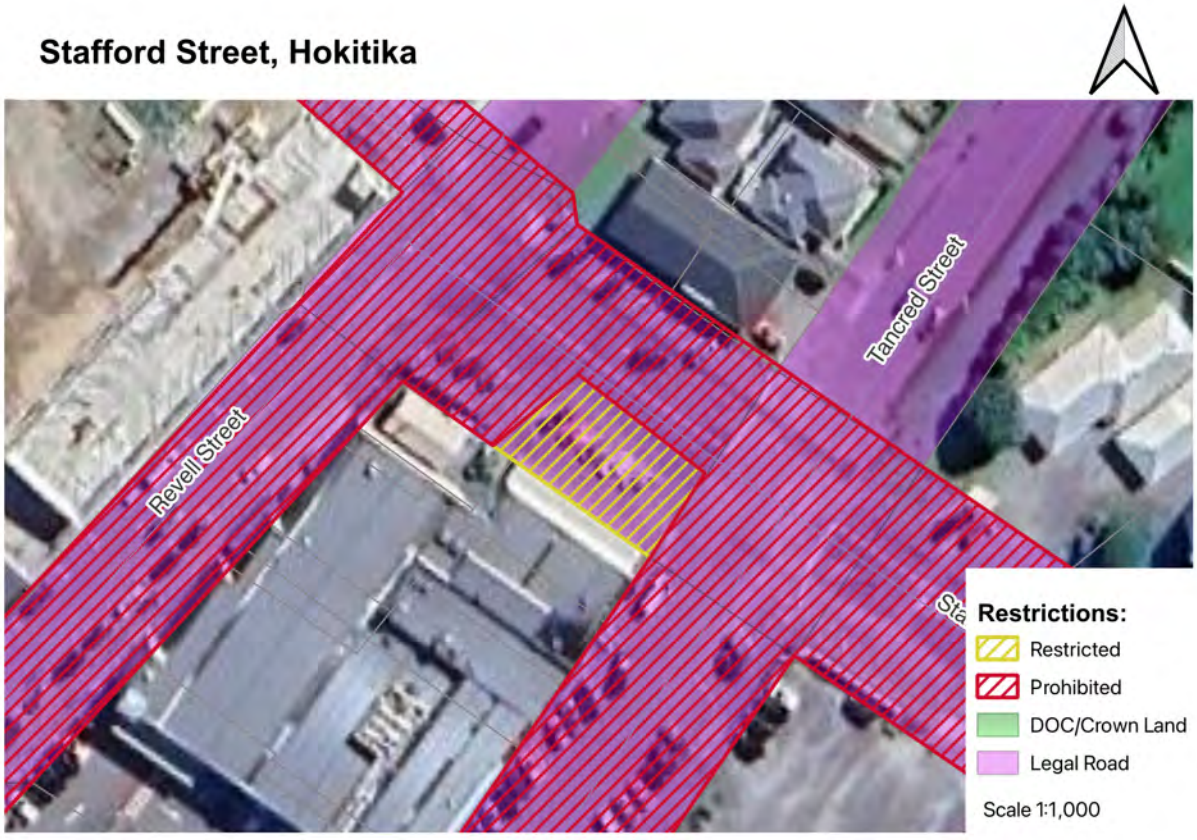


Figure 33 Stafford Street, Hokitika



Figure 34 6156 Haast Highway, Paringa 7886