National Policy Statement on Urban Development

Waitaki District Council Monitoring Report

January 2025

Waitaki
DISTRICT COUNCIL
TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O WAITAKI

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to fulfil Waitaki District Council's (Council) monitoring requirements under clause 3.9 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD). This report provides the update for the 2024 calendar year.

Executive summary

This yearly NPS UD monitoring report provides an update and analysis of changes across the Waitaki District for housing and business supply, demand and capacity over 2024. Future updates will be provided, as required under legislation.

Introduction

The NPS-UD came into effect August 2020 and identifies Council as tier 3 local authority due to the Waitaki District (District) containing areas of land that are predominantly urban in character and also containing an urban environment that is part of a housing and labour market of at least 10,000 people. As a tier 3 local authority, clause 3.9.1 of the NPS-UD requires Council to monitor quarterly:

(a) the demand for dwellings

(b) the supply of dwellings

(c) prices of, and rents for, dwellings

(d) housing affordability

(e) available data on business land.

The purpose of monitoring under the NPS-UD is to allow Council to make planning decisions informed by robust and frequently updated information about some of the district's development indicators. The data that informs this update report is sourced from the Urban Development Dashboard (UDD). The UDD is a platform on the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development website and is provided to help territorial authorities to give effect to the monitoring requirements of the NPS-UD. Some indicators on the UDD are updated quarterly, while others are updated annually or less frequently.

Overview of Population growth in the Waitaki District

The Waitaki District is situated in both the Otago and Canterbury Region and covers an area of 7,107.73 km2. One of the resource management issues the district faces is planning for growth and development, whilst ensuring that the needs of the community are met and any adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

The 2023 census had the Waitaki District with a total population of 23 472

Understanding Data (Robin Miller) and Stats NZ predict that there will be population growth in the Waitaki District. The potential population growth for Oamaru is below with three scenarios possible medium, high, and higher.

	2019	2020	2023	2030	2050
Medium (rebased)	15990	16110	16191	16354	16815
High (rebased)	15990	16110	16463	17358	19500
Higher (2013-18 growth trend continues)	15990	16110	16767	18301	22683

Understanding Data

Table 1: Future population change scenario results (rounded) for the Oamaru area. Housing Demand Assessment for Oamaru

The below graph shows how the population is changing over a period of time in the wider Waitaki District.

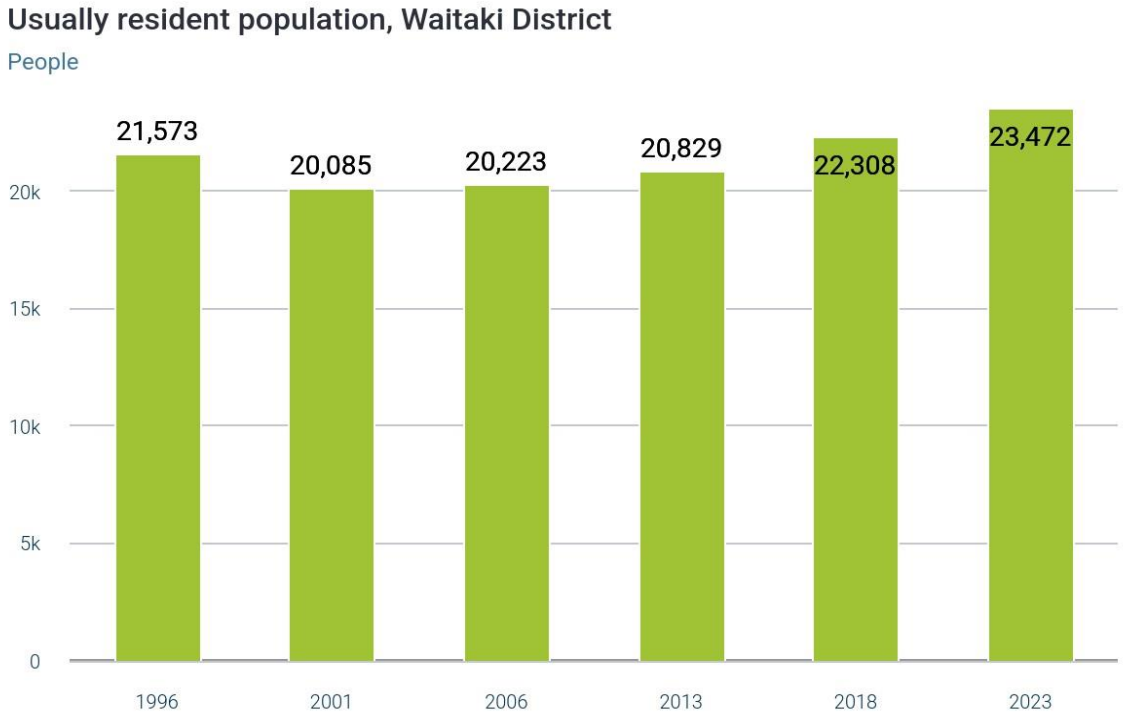


Figure 1: Previous population growth in the Waitaki District
Place Summaries | Waitaki District | Stats NZ

Supply and Demand for dwellings

Population change is the key driver underlying the District's increased supply and demand for new housing with our population now reaching record levels.

Housing supply can be measured using building consent data. The difference between supply and demand for new dwellings can be calculated by comparing building consent data and household growth.

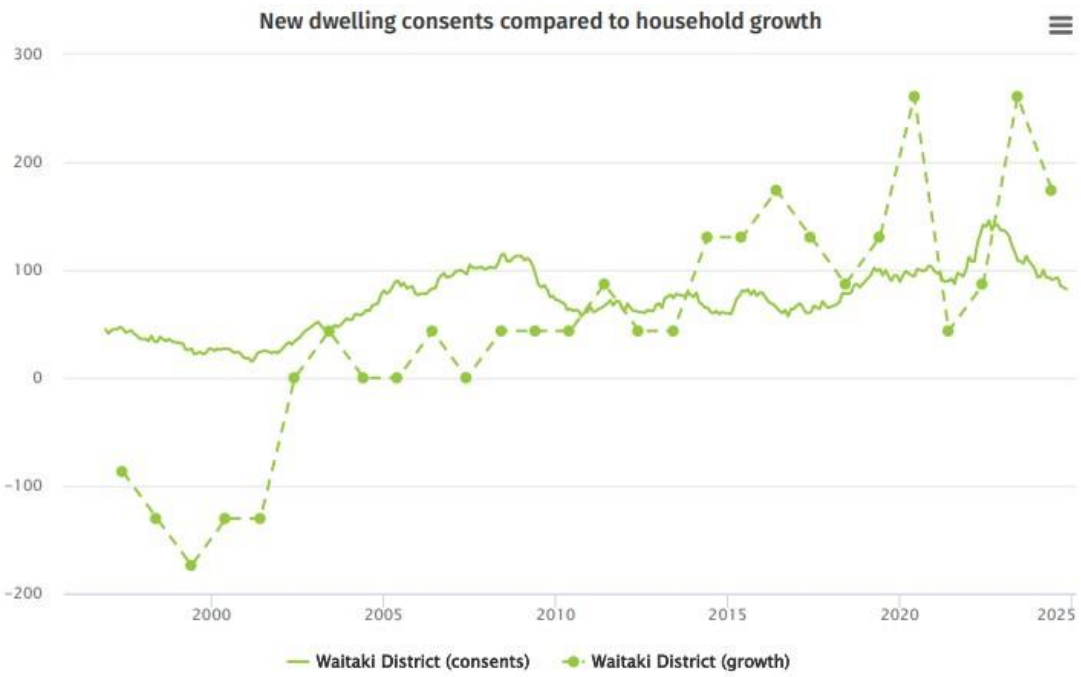


Figure 2: New dwelling consents compared to household growth in the Waitaki District
Urban Development (shinyapps.io)

Figure 2 above shows the annual supply of new housing by way of new building consents issued as well as household growth changes. Figure 2 also provides an indication of the changes in demand (household growth) and how responsive supply is (consents). This indicator approximates the demand for, and supply of, new dwellings. The information will also be used to inform the review of the Oamaru, Weston and Kakanui Spatial Plan in the next few years. It will help to track the rate of dwelling growth so as to determine if additional land/increased density provisions will be needed sooner than anticipated by the Spatial Plan.

The number of new dwelling building consents is lagged by six months (presented as a 12month rolling average), to account for the time taken from consenting to completion. It is not adjusted for non-completions, or for demolitions. It is used as a proxy for supply. The most recent resident population, divided by the local average housing size, is used as a proxy for demand. Both sets of data are sourced from Statistics New Zealand.

Prices of, and rents for, dwellings

The price of rents for dwellings has been steadily increasing. This is in line with national trends.



Figure 3: 12-month rolling dwelling rents (actual weekly amount) in the Waitaki District
Urban Development (shinyapps.io)

Housing affordability

Housing affordability is measured by the ratio between average house values and average annual household income.

In Waitaki District the average house value was 4.9 times its average household income in 2024. Housing was more affordable than in New Zealand (7.0).

The affordability of houses (as shown in the below table) in the Waitaki (%) remains reasonably steady. The peak came in 2022, with more recent data showing a downward trend. There has been no further analysis of whether this recent trend is caused by changing incomes or house prices.

The table below shows the difference between Waitaki District and wider New Zealand's housing affordability.

Year	Waitaki District House value to income	New Zealand House value to income
2020	4.4	6.6
2021	4.9	7.8
2022	5.7	8.6
2023	5	7.2
2024	4.9	7

Table 1: Housing affordability in Waitaki District in the last 3 years (the lower the number the better)

The Waitaki District has seen a slight improvement in housing affordability in the last year.

Available data on business land

2025 has seen a decrease in vacant buildings in the central business district, with 9 being vacant at the time of recording compared to 16 in 2024.

The Oamaru central business district (CBD) has shown no definitive trend towards either growth or shrinkage in the last four years. Changes in the number of vacant buildings (ground floor only) can be noticed but trends either way are not extreme. Roughly 10% of the ground floor main street buildings has been vacant during the observed time period.

The number of vacant buildings in the CBD is suggestive of there being enough retail/business space and opportunities available, although more investigation would be needed to assess the appropriateness of the availability for the type of businesses (e.g. larger format retail).

Discrepancies in numbers result from variations in recording methods as well as changes in building occupancy spaces (e.g. two smaller shops going to one larger shop).

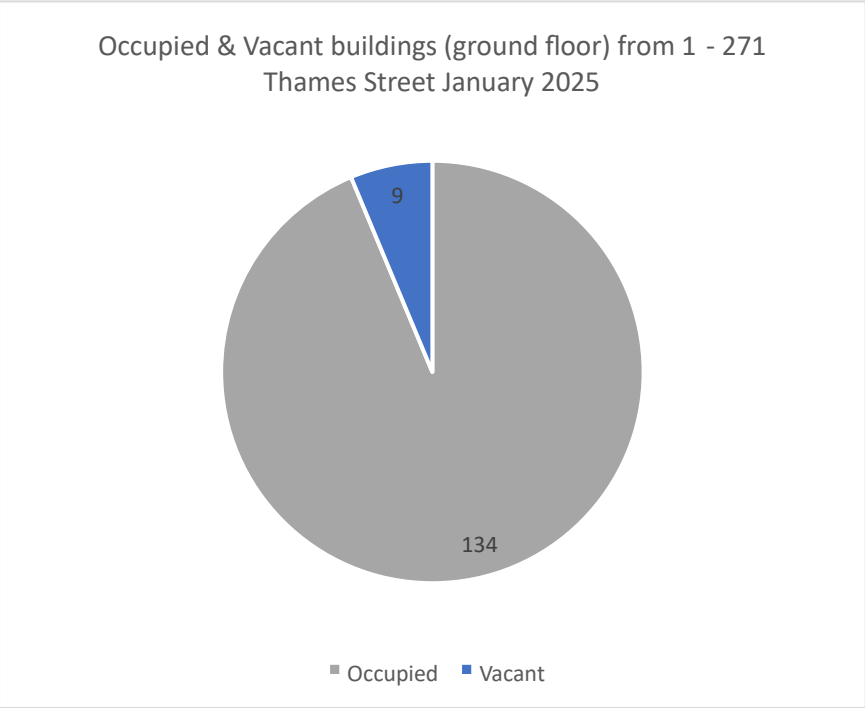


Figure 4: 2025 CBD occupied and vacant buildings

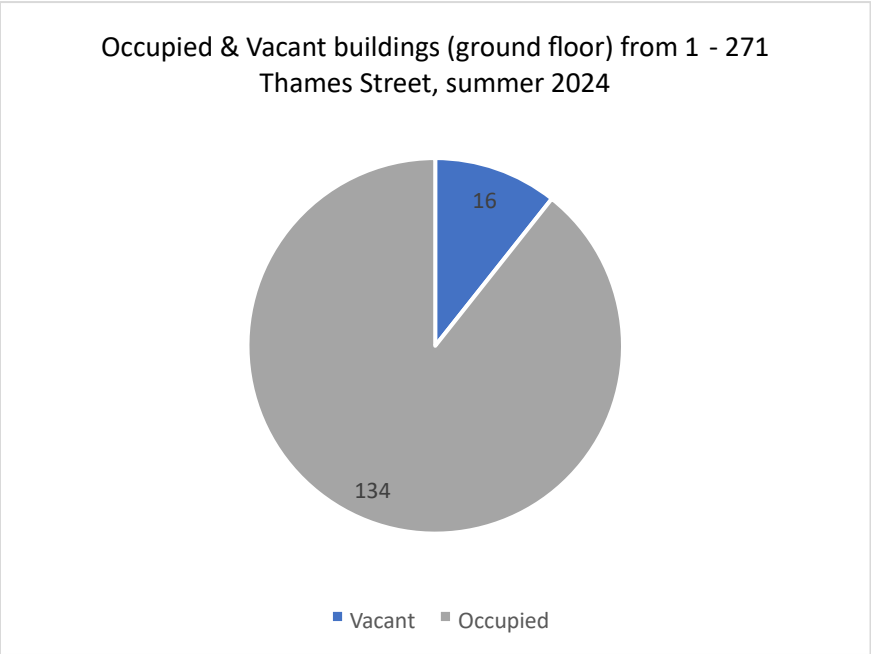


Figure 5: 2024 CBD occupied and vacant building

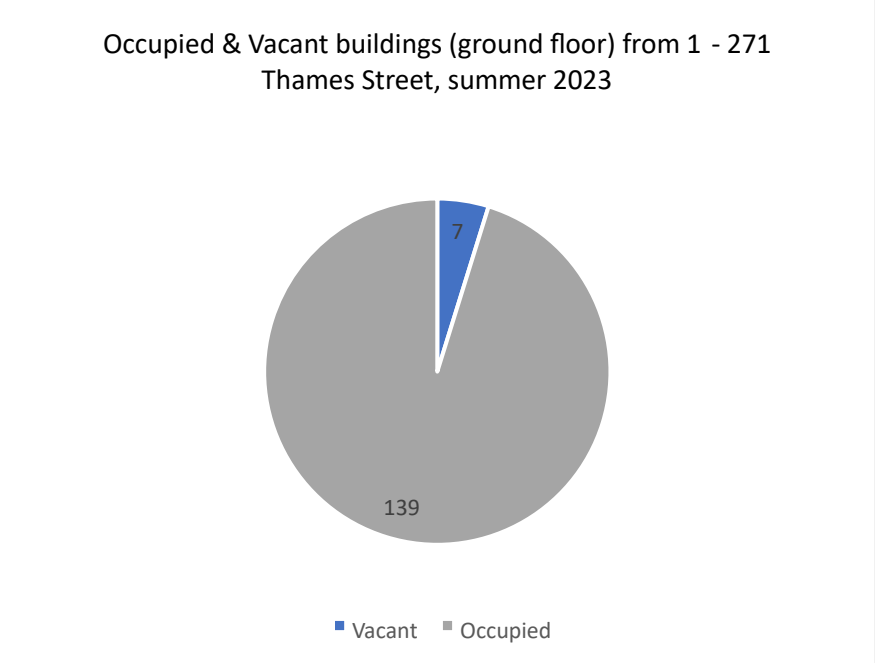


Figure 6: 2023 CBD occupied and vacant buildings

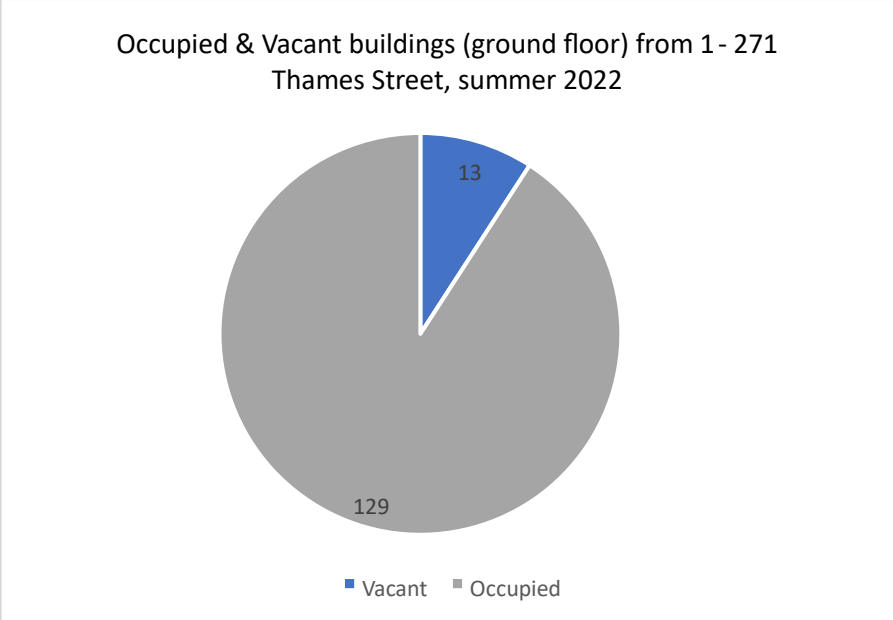


Figure 7: 2022 CBD occupied and vacant buildings

The current year suggests slightly less building vacancies but is a very short-term record, and we can see it fluctuate up and down over the last 4 years.

The types of occupancies for the ground floor buildings are also shown over the last four years below.

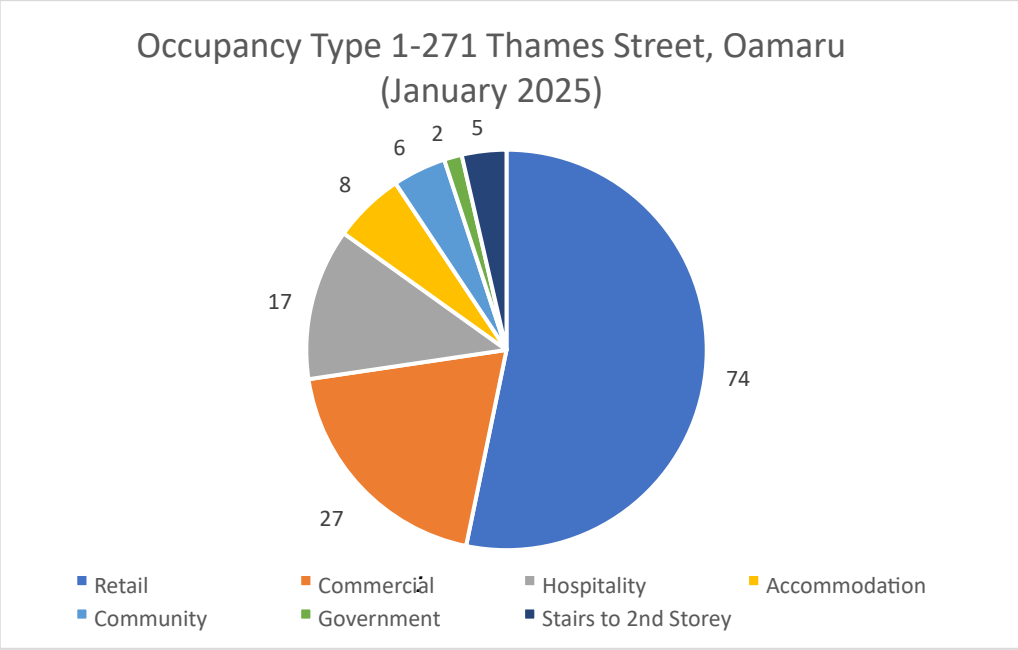


Figure 8: Occupancy type 2025

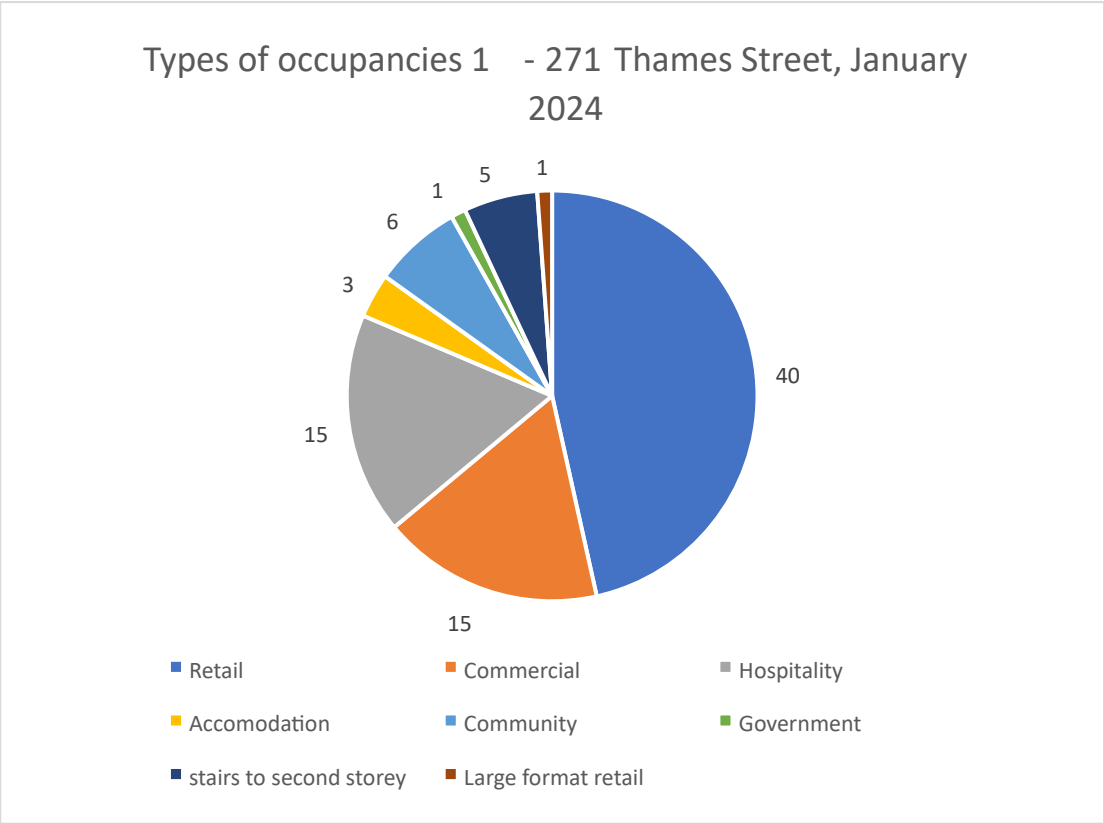


Figure 9: Occupancy type 2024

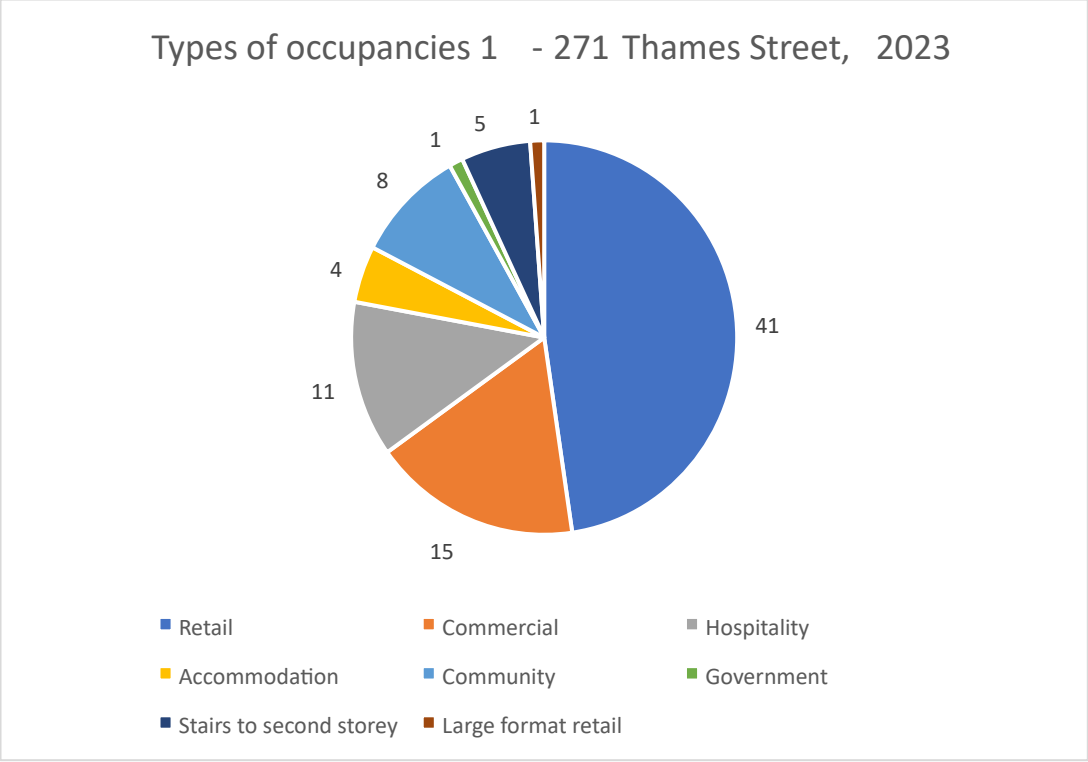


Figure 10: Occupancy type 2023

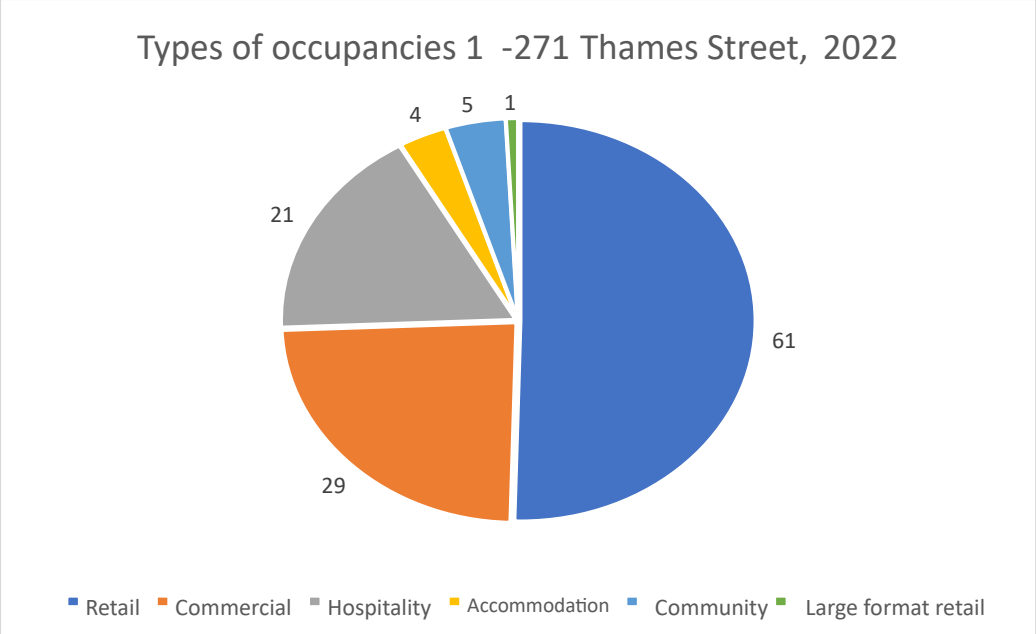


Figure 11: Occupancy type 2022

In 2025 we have seen an increase in retail and commercial occupancy, with other smaller occupancy types filling the spaces. This is a positive increase for the Oamaru CBD showing potentially more confidence in the retail and commercial space. Work is still being done by the Economic Development team and the business community to better understand this and realise other opportunities to try continuing this positive trend.

It is anticipated that longer term trends will start to emerge as this report is updated annually, however at this stage the trends are not particularly alarming or unexpected.

The data capture for this report extended to include some information for the second story (upstairs) parts of buildings to help further enhance the information and to also inform other Council projects and workstreams. The first graph shows the number of buildings that have a second story and simply reflects the status of main street buildings. The second graph then displays information about the known use of the second floor and in some cases, this is not known. Over time this data set will be completed, which will also be useful to help inform some of the initiatives from the Central Oamaru Masterplan. In future, the updated annual report can then start to analyse trend data about changing use of commercial buildings.

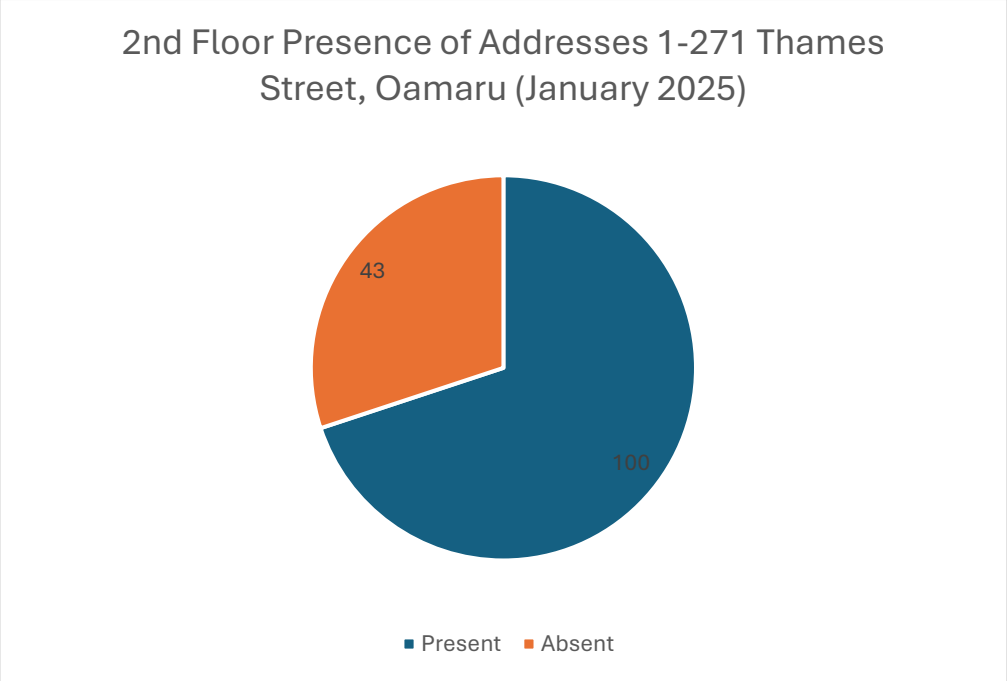


Figure 12: 2nd Floor presence

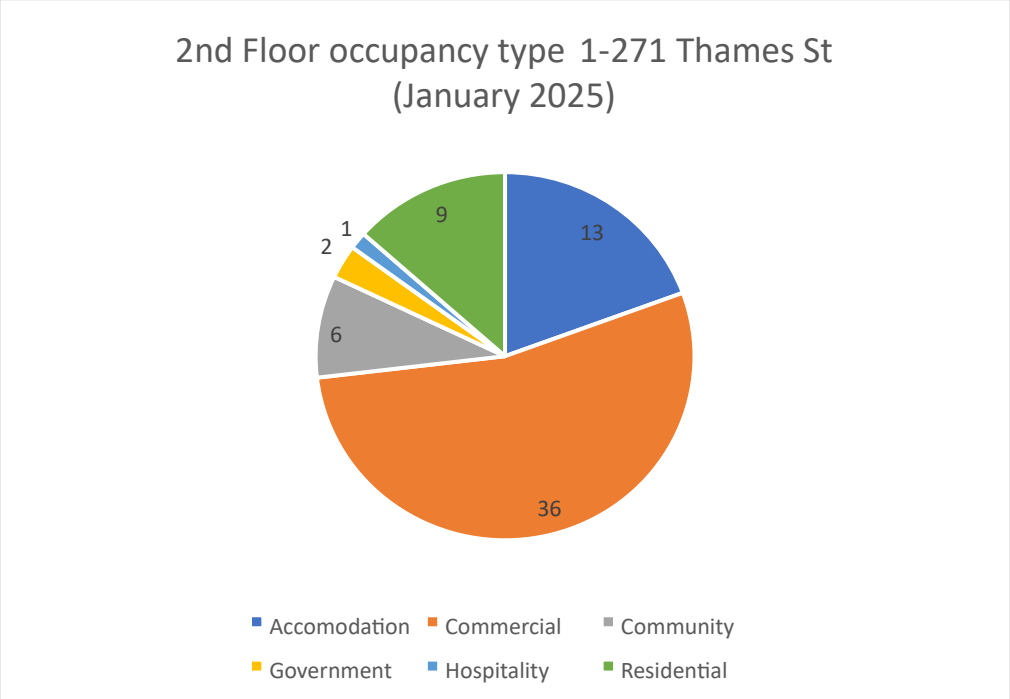


Figure 13: 2nd Floor occupancy type

Final Summary

Continuing this monitoring and reporting next year will allow us to see changes over a 5-year period and will start to build a bigger more robust picture of the changes and any trends happening in the Waitaki District and allow actions from the Master Plan and Spatial Plan be implemented if necessary.