

# Recognising Heritage at 125 Grey Street

**Update October 2025**

## Overview

The 125 Grey Street site, formerly St George's School, is a place of deep historical and cultural significance for Whanganui. Community workshops in September 2025 brought together Te Oranganui Trust, Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust, Sports Whanganui, and residents to shape a shared approach to heritage recognition as the site transitions to new uses.

## Why Heritage Matters

Heritage at 125 Grey Street anchors identity and memory, connecting people to place even as buildings change. It keeps stories alive by ensuring that both pre-colonial and post-colonial histories are acknowledged.

## Council Decision & Project Context

- Community input: 821 survey responses, with 65.6% supporting some form of deconstruction.
- Agrees to Option 5 – to deconstruct the buildings at 125 Grey Street, and lease the site long-term to Te Oranganui Trust, subject to:
  - a. The deconstruction of the buildings commencing after a long-term lease has been signed, which demonstrates the commitment to the project by Te Oranganui Trust; and
  - b. Council officers working with Te Oranganui Trust and the Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust, and other interested members of the community to ensure that any development at the site recognises the heritage value of the site in a meaningful way.

## Heritage Recognition Themes

Over the course of two workshops, participants engaged in open and thoughtful conversations, sharing their perspectives on what they hoped to achieve and the backgrounds they brought to the table. These sessions made it clear that recognising the heritage of 125 Grey Street should be approached through a multi-perspective narrative, ensuring that diverse viewpoints and experiences are meaningfully reflected.

### 1. Inclusive Storytelling

- Heritage extends beyond buildings—embracing pre-colonial, colonial, and recent histories.
- Capture social history and cultural memory through creative, design-led approaches.

### 2. Reuse & Sustainability

- Salvage, catalogue, and integrate materials (e.g., rimu, bricks, fittings) into new site features.
- Encourage innovative reuse on-site; off-site reuse may be possible for purchase.

### **3. Digital & Physical Commemoration**

- Record and share stories via podcasts, digital walk-throughs, and virtual simulations.
- Physical recognition through plaques, storyboards, public art, and landscape features.

## **Next Steps**

- Engage with councillors to share insights and outcomes from the workshops.
- Reconnect with the working group in the new year to continue collaboration and planning.

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