



Amberley town centre main street, entrance and exit upgrade

prepared for Hurunui District Council (March 2010)

Volume 1

Amberley URBANDESIGN ASSESSMENT

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introduction

This report examines the evaluations and recommendations of an urban design assessment for the township of Amberley, located approximately 50 km north of Christchurch.

Amberley is primarily a rural service centre to the surrounding North Canterbury farming and viticultural areas, and the tourism attractions of the Hurunui and beyond. These include the Waipara Valley wineries, hot springs and other visitor facilities of Hanmer Springs, and the nearby coastal settlements of Amberley and Leithfield beaches. Further afield Mt Grey(Maungatere) offers extensive tramping opportunities and the Mt Hutt/Methven area winter skiing and snowboarding, hot air ballooning and other outdoor pursuits.

The range of facilities available in Amberley is supported by moderately priced housing; the further growth and development of the urban area is anticipated due the rural and urban trade catchments of the township, its location on the increasingly busy State Highway 1, local and regional employment opportunities within convenient travel distances, and the attractiveness of the area to families and retirees.

Amberley presently has a population of approximately 2200 persons; projected growth (based on the 2006 Census) is anticipated to approximately 3000 persons by 2031. The corresponding numbers for the Amberley Ward overall are 3900 and 5000 persons.

The planning period to be addressed in the urban design assessment is a 15-year horizon to 2025.

Urban development within Amberley is located to the east and west of State Highway 1 (also known as Carters Road or the Main Road). Contextually the township is defined not only by its land use but also by the landscape features observable as one approaches from various directions - providing a visual frame to the township setting. Observed are Mt Grey to the west, and Mt Cass and the Amberley Downs ridgelines to the northeast. The nearby coastline is not generally visible from the township, nor the extensive farmlands beyond residential areas to the west.

SH1 has an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) flow of 8500 vehicles of which over 13% is heavy traffic. Amberley Beach Road provides the eastern entrance to the township and Route 72/Douglas Road the western entrance. The most significant feature of the town is presently SH1 which is a 40m wide, visually dominant north-south corridor.

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the study brief

The brief for the urban design* assessment requested '*a forward masterplan for Amberley incorporating a strong identifiable town centre and streetscape, entrance and exit enhancements*' in order that various design concepts could be explored and public feedback obtained. The brief also specified that the assessment should include recommendations to address:

- improved connectivity between public spaces and buildings, commercial premises and an east - west connection across Carters Road
- enhancement options for the main street utilising traffic calming and other measures to reduce conflict between motorists and pedestrians
- a sense of arrival and promoting Amberley as a destination by means of entry/exit upgrade
- means to promote a warm country village in suggestions for paving, planting, street furniture and lighting.

The full brief is included at [Attachment 1](#).

* The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (2005) states '*urban design is concerned with buildings, places, spaces and networks that make up our towns and cities, and the ways people use them. It ranges in scale from a metropolitan region, city or town down to a street, public space or even a single building. Urban design is concerned not just with appearance and built form but with the environmental, economic, social and cultural consequences of design. It is an approach that brings together many different sectors and professions and includes both the process of decision making as well as the outcomes of design*'.

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the assessment process

The assessment of the above factors occurred over several months and included a series of evaluations and assessments including:

- a desktop review of a number of statutory and non-statutory documents and other information addressing Amberley both now and in the future
- analysis of key urban design factors for the township and the contextual environment, and of constraints and opportunities for enhancement alternatives. Observations of how people presently use and access the facilities and services available within the township
- research about other relevant matters including something of Amberley's history and cultural associations, ownership of public land, and of the township within the wider regional economic context. This included a visit to the Kowai Archives and research about Waitaha peoples and Maori and European settlement of the wider North Canterbury area
- consulting on urban design and development issues with the Amberley Ward Committee, the Mayor, Amberley and Ward councillors, Hurunui District Council, developer and landowner interests, and Council managerial staff. The study team met with the Amberley Governance Group and Ward Committee members several times as work progressed, and also with New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA) concerning the State Highway 1 network, and various design and operational parameters applicable to enhancement upgrade concepts
- facilitating at a display of design roughs at the Amberley Library to enable the public at large to view a range of concept options and provide feedback on the outline proposals
- reviewing comments and refining the design response
 - a) in respect of enhancements envisaged in the short to medium term (c.2012)
 - b) recommendations of the study team in respect of a year 2025 vision for Amberley.

the building blocks of urban design and an Amberley analysis

Like any other physical entity a township, town or city has an underlying framework that enables people to live, work and interact, and to access its shops and services either as residents, visitors or passers by.

Depending on the size and extent of a particular urban area its urban framework will typically include some or all of the following structural elements in some priority or 'hierarchy of significance'.



paths: local streets, the railway, main highway, bicycle routes, walkways.

Key factors in providing for the various types paths are - functionality, convenience, provision for a reasonable balance of these elements to accommodate a variety of users, also considering integration and safety factors.

There are numerous examples of paths throughout Amberley including Amberley Beach Road, SH1 , Route 72 roading and the Main South Island Trunk railway.



edges: the areas and spaces between different kinds of areas (the boundary or transition between town and country, where land use activity is differentiated, school from residential area, park from street, car sales yard from retail shops, business areas from community facilities).

Key factors for edge environments are considering how to achieve an appropriate transition and differentiation between different locale, how to establish linkages (perhaps by common design themes and other response), how to address safety issues and maintain views into, out of, and among edge locations - the southern entrance to Amberley of partially screened paddocks, hedges and letterboxes, the edges to Chamberlain Park, edges to Dock Creek.



districts and sub-districts: these have been described as areas that can be entered. You 'know when you get there'.

Key factors for districts and sub-districts are buildings or structures which share similar characteristics, perhaps of a distinct scale and age of development, a shared history, or structural elements such as signage, roading, tree plantings that are easily perceived as a distinctive locale.

One of the most distinctive 'sub- districts' within Amberley is the area that contains the District Council building, another is the truck stop and associated services area at the northern end of town. A further example is the residential area to the northwest of the railway line.

Districts and sub-districts, together with nodes, offer potential for 'precinct' design using distinctive elements to create and enhance identity, recognition and common scale.



nodes: are specific points in a community that have a name/place recognition value. Nodes are also points from which people travel to and from and may be at the centre of a district /sub- district.

Historically one of the most significant nodes of early Amberley was the railway, and associated activities nearby, another was the saleyards and a third example was the former Town Hall located on the south west corner of Douglas Road and SH1.

Today nodes are less easily discernible in Amberley and the township generally lacks a 'legible' and easily interpreted hierarchy of the types of features/building blocks of urban form and settlement described. An overall structure to the township is thus not readily apparent and was a key rationale to undertaking this urban design assessment.

Existing nodes include the Domain and Amberley School, the Library, Chamberlain Park, and the public toilets and seating area near the Council building.

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landmarks: are components of a town or township that are similar to nodes and are described as reference points. They are perceived as a single element, either structural or natural, and are used by all in navigating a path through the community.

Landmarks may be a significant public or open space, a significant artwork or a significant building. They are seen in contrast with their surrounds. They engender a feeling of familiarity with a particular area and help to establish an identity for it.

In the Amberley area Mt Grey and Mt Cass are defining landmarks, however with glimpsed and partial views only. Other examples include the Boer War memorial, the old BNZ building and the Markham St Gallery (as remnants of the once significant streetscape), Chamberlain Park, the public toilet block, the Library, and Charles Upham and the Three Grandmothers sculptures. Other examples include the historic Anglican and Catholic churches, and the Masonic Lodge building set somewhat apart from its surrounds. Landmarks within the private realm include the Nor'West Café and the Amberley Hotel.

Presently there is no one dominant feature to the public or private realm space of Amberley other than that of SH1. Nodes, districts and sub-districts exist with only a limited degree of connectedness (see **Amberley urban structure drawing**). This effect is made more significant by the gaps and variable setbacks that exist to frontages to SH1 and Markham St, the latter reflecting an historical pattern of growth in commercial and other premises that has moved from an east-west alignment to an elongated north - south alignment.

Thus to provide 'a blueprint for the development of a strong identifiable town centre' and other design concepts specified in the study brief it is necessary to consider how the above elements can be presented and interrelated in a more coherent fashion, so that the township's services and amenities are more easily accessed by residents and visitors, and the community's experience of their town enhanced. The design concepts therefore look to establishing an hierarchy of spaces and interconnections, giving careful consideration to buildings and open space, traffic circulation and connectivity, and balance (particularly between the southern and northern parts of the main street).

Both the immediate and long term 2025 vision would enable a more ordered, contextual and unique realm for land use and public activity that is appropriately supported by a physical framework of streets and other accessways.

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design opportunities

Design opportunities exist to:

- enhance and make more prominent the entry and exit locations to Amberley using a series of design measures to effect a transition between the countryside and the township, to introduce an 'Amberley character', and to provide traffic calming. Measures of this type need to take account of NZTA safety parameters for SH1, clear distances, turning circles and manoeuvrability for light and heavy vehicles, appropriate intersection locations and right and left turning movements

- use landscape devices to help reduce vehicle speed, thus promoting/reinforcing the 50k speed limit within Amberley and a safer traffic environment.

Identifying landscape and textural devices to help reduce vehicular speed was an important aspect of the study brief, particularly as applied to entrance locations. Available research into motorist response to visual cues has showed that through careful, intentional selection of roadway and roadside design elements can influence traffic speed, independently of posted speed limits.

As compared to open highways, a sense of enclosure, street widths, building setbacks, sidewalks and on-street parking tended to be characterised by lower speeds. This research and consideration of vertical elements and optical widths; (see **Guidelines for Urban-Rural Speed Thresholds NZTA 2002**) contributed to the development of the landscape proposals for the entrance areas

- retain and enhance a country village atmosphere via such measures as gravel pathways, uncluttered roadside areas along the main road, retaining a sense of spaciousness and openness and simple rural boundary treatments such as large edges, shelterbelts, low or 'open' fence' and gates, colourful rural mailboxes. Avoiding excessive use of urban kerb and channel engineering approaches, and maintaining maximum expanses of grass or swale areas to receive surface runoff is also consistent with the rural township character
- enhance the streetscape appearance of SH1 within town to denote this significant vehicle and business corridor as being 'of Amberley' (rather than primarily a road to destinations north and south), by giving particular attention to entrances, edges and margins. The design response should incorporate a rural elegance, and avoid an overly urban or cluttered atmosphere

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- provide a diversity of spaces within the public realm on a scale of more important to less important, arranged around a series of precinct/sub-district locations such as a town square, civic locale, Markham St/railway precinct
- over time there is also the opportunity to adopt a series of measures to more efficiently separate and manage through traffic and local traffic (including improved cross town links), as the town grows and traffic on the main road increases.

State Highway 1 has a formed carriageway that is offset to the east of the cadastral centre line. This is a design factor to be accommodated in addressing edge treatments, pedestrian accessibility and parking options. These matters are further discussed in the traffic and urban framework options comments in [Attachment 2](#)

- give particular attention to the spatial arrangements of different areas in terms of the visual and functional environments, streetscape effects and to provide greater prominence to structures and locations within a better defined hierarchy/structure/framework. An effective future roading pattern is a significant consideration here, in order to underpin the functionality of the study area
- establish clearly defined pathways within linear edges, and managed transitional spaces so that there are clearly discerned linkages between the northern, southern, eastern and western areas of Amberley
- in some parts of the study area use Dock Creek edges to add a further dimension to the streetscape and contrast in the urban environment: for instance within the Markham St locale
- acknowledge that the School and Domain are key facilities within Amberley and provide for improved accessibility of pedestrians and cyclists to these facilities
- build upon 'sense of place' by enhancing/protecting view corridors to Mt Grey and other nearby ridgelines viewed from town, provide specific entry treatment that reflects various elements of the Hurunui branding, borrows from the visual amenity of the surrounding farming and viticultural landscapes, and celebrates seasonal changes in the town and events that occur during the year

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- create more enlivened streetscape and open spaces. This can be achieved by providing surrounding space and improved visibility to significant buildings such as the library and cobb cottage/frontage areas to Chamberlain Park, and referencing specific landmarks that emphasise the image of the street e.g. refurbishing and retaining the Boer War memorial at the Markham St/Douglas Rd intersection, enhancing the space about the historic BNZ building, using markers, signage and other measures to show something of Amberley's history

- create a series of spaces that can be easily understood by visitor and residents as a nodal points, with cohesive design elements and visual elements that show connectiveness and use a consistent 'family of design' approach throughout Amberley. This should apply to all selections of street furniture, signage, hard and soft landscaping, plant species selection and so on.

An example of a common, inter-related element aiding the definition of locale and connectiveness would be to use banners attached to main road lighting with variations (potentially at a smaller scale) at specific localities - to announce events at the library, a sculpture exhibition near the Council building, an Amberley heritage day focussing on Markham Street, or just a seasonal celebration

- create and retain a definitive rural/urban boundary to the township and to promote consolidation of activities/development to frontage lot lines within the Business zone, and infill. These factors are all important to an Amberley sense of place and reference the township's early development pattern. (A definitive urban/rural boundary is consistent with District Plan policy, and would promote concentrating private/public investment within areas with available or planned infrastructure services as well as good traffic management - as discussed in more detail in Attachment 2). The factors overall would assist the sustainability of the township and the contextual rural environment.

- use Council (and potentially other public sector held) properties to implement the recommended urban design framework and imagery enhancement, as catalyst to other development (see **drawing - public landholdings**). In this way community leadership can achieve specific environmental outcomes, and inspiration to others. Opportunities also exist for public and private partnerships and volunteer contribution to implement and maintain public realm spaces

- keep a watching brief of future growth and development trends when detailing and implementing urban design measures. The population projections for the Hurunui District suggest an anticipated 28% growth between 2006 and 2031, creating a future population for Amberley of approximately 3,000 residents. This is a relatively significant growth rate and may potentially impact on demand for housing and facilities development in Amberley perhaps at an earlier stage than presently indicated.

In providing for a forward master plan for Amberley we are looking at rural development as much as urban development (since one is closely inter-related with the other) and thus urban design requirements can be thought about strategically as but one element of agricultural, viticultural, tourism and other growth management measures.

A range of growth initiatives is in place for Hurunui District, including the District Plan, Long Term Community Plan and other governance and statutory measures (see discussion below) as well as various other economic and tourism initiatives.

One example addressing the wider economic and labour market is Enterprise North Canterbury's **Labour Market Strategy 2008**. This has the goal to ensure "*North Canterbury is a place where businesses and organisations can access a skilled and committed workforce, residents can access quality employment, and where businesses and organisations can grow and prosper*".

The Labour Market Strategy noted that North Canterbury competes with Christchurch for labour and looks to increase the ratio of workers working locally by 2011, build the capacity of the labour market and to encourage best workplace practice. It comments that North Canterbury residents have the luxury of choosing to work locally or in a major metropolitan city '*literally on their doorstep.....*' and promotes investigation of, for example:

- innovative models for overcoming transport issues such as carpooling and public transport changes
- accommodation issues such as ways to bridge ownership gaps, group house and other affordable accommodation initiatives
- means to encourage more part-time/flexible/job share opportunities to enable more women, third age and beneficiaries to work.

A survey of job vacancies 2005-2008 showed them to have increased by 20% and that positions difficult to fill included truck drivers, general engineers, labourers, timber yard workers, civil construction workers, meat processing workers, farming assistants with heavy traffic skills, horticultural and viticultural workers, retail and front of house service workers.

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Economic and social trends of this type will impact on Amberley and may alter design priorities over time e.g. if a commuter/school pupils' rail service was found to be viable, provision for a rail station will appear more justified than presently, demand for workforce housing may encourage infill development not presently envisaged (including that within the Business zone), and altered services' impacts may result in a more immediate need for additional library and community hall space.

The design concepts presented therefore address both the short-term and longer term, responding to the sorts of considerations noted above, District Plan and other statutory documents, and to the types of environmental outcomes sought in the **Amberley Concept Development Plan 2005**.

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urban design concepts

shorter term enhancements

The following are design concepts that can be undertaken in the shorter term, covering:

- entry/exit areas
- main street upgrade locations and Chamberlain Park area
- library/town centre locale
- Markham Street and north precinct areas.

The location of the areas covered is illustrated in a series of drawings shown on the **Amberley Framework drawing**. All drawings are included to **Volume 2** of this report.

- entry and exit areas
 - drawings - southern entry, Hynd's corner, Grays Rd.
 - northern entry, Turners Rd area



In the **southern entrance area** the drawings show more definitive demarcation of the entry alignment in the vicinity of the Amberley sign (a new sign would replace that existing) and use hedges and other plantings to give more prominence and visual definition as one enters the built up area. The existing trees on the western side of SH1 are retained. These provide a visual screen to residences in this location.

Specific elements envisaged include a large feature hedge (*Fagus sylvatica 'pupurea'*-copper beech or similar character edge species), formal tree cluster arrangement and feature planting using attractive and low maintenance plant varieties. New 'Welcome to Amberley' sign design to be frangible construction as per NZTA guidelines. Grass verges. All elements such as trees, hedge and entry markers to be outside the NZTA 4.5m clear zone. Relocated 50kph sign location at southern area. Mountable kerb with adjacent 600mm wide edge of river stones.

Optional scheme proposals showing integration of possible side road junction, shifted future property line on eastern roadside to ensure future building setback of residential subdivision in order to retain distant views to the east, Mt Cass and associated ridgelines.



In the [Grays Road](#) area the drawings show improvements to intersection geometry which enhance the appearance of the intersection area and expand views towards Mt Grey, the most significant of the landscape features of the Amberley locality.

Low planting along commercial property boundary to enhance the 'industrial' foreground. Adjustment of Grays Road junction to 90° and right turning bay to improve traffic conditions. Western roadside median planted with kerb and low shrub planting.

Lateral median islands are included to the north of Grays Rd. These are proposed for visual reasons and to better regulate traffic movement and parking associated with the bakery/saddlery.



[Hynd's corner](#). Further into town from Grays Road views to ridgelines to the north and north east, and also to Mt Grey remain significant to sense of place. This edge environment needs to be carefully managed, with views corridors protected (given the desirability of maintaining the visibility of the township's rural, country setting).

The concepts show a continuation of the southern entrance landscape treatment to improve this road section. Tree clusters, feature plantings (native and seasonal), single section of 600mm wide river stone edge, and entry markers. Grass verges. Low screen planting along commercial property frontages.

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In the **northern entry area** the design concepts are similarly aimed at reducing the rural to urban speed threshold and include hedging, formal tree clusters and feature planting using attractive and low maintenance plant varieties.

New 'Welcome to Amberley' signage design to be frangible construction as per NZTA guidelines. Grass verges. All elements such as trees, hedge and entry markers to be outside NZTA clear zone 6.0m clear zone. Existing 50kph sign location retained, new 70kph sign proposed at northern area (i.e. a new transitional speed zone). Mountable kerb with adjacent 800mm wide edge of river stones.



North of **Turners Road** additional planted islands with trees and shrubs have been placed to screen views of the truck stop area and strengthen planting of the Carters Road northern end of the township. Consideration of vehicular turning patterns and possible parking areas is shown.

Lateral median islands are included south of Courage Rd to better regulate traffic movement and parking associated with the Caltex truck stop area and truck servicing facilities on the western side of SH1.

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- main street upgrade locations
drawings - Chamberlain Park vicinity



The design concepts for this area show enhancements to the eastern frontage area to Chamberlain Park/western verge to SH1. (A similar typology is proposed for the eastern road berm areas in front of the Amberley Library and extensive parking area to the recently approved Brackenfields retail complex- eastern side. See also **town centre plans**).

The verge area shown for western side of SH 1 extends north to Douglas Rd.

Development of the western roadside area as a pedestrian focus adjacent to the historic cobb cottage. Informal pedestrian promenade under shaded tree grove with a proposed 'Hurunui Pathway' walkway incorporating a narrative of stories of the District - the wineries, railways, sheep stations, Waitaha, Ngati Mamoe, Ngai Tahu.

Selective tree removal and associated planting works to improve views to the cobb cottage /historic landmark and formal rest area (the present picnic tables are out of character with the cottage and surrounds), enhance public amenity and further strengthen the open space network (Chamberlain Park etc).

- town centre locale c. 2012
 - drawings - town centre
 - Markham St



A definitive heart to Amberley was a key consideration of the study brief.

As the centre of Amberley is approximately at Douglas Road, and the Library is a key community facility a community heart is logically located in this vicinity. In years gone by the Amberley Town Hall, an attractive art deco building, was located on the Douglas Rd corner opposite.

Drawing **town centre c. 2012** shows a community heart containing a number of community facilities focussing on the library area but with a wider spatial 'sphere of influence' across SH1 to Douglas Road and Chamberlain Dark vicinities and the Pound St area.

The integration of the civic heart to Amberley as a whole is promoted in a number of ways:

- the design concept includes an open town square to the north of the Library with a 'possible community facility' on the eastern side, connections to the library and with a glazed walkway through to the Plunket Rooms
- the square provides an attractive outdoor area where one could enjoy sitting in the sun, having a coffee, reading a book, supervising small children, displaying artwork and so on
- the outdoor areas would be sheltered from the prevailing winds, and would be a suntrap on sunny winter afternoons during winter months. Deciduous tree plantings are included to provide shade during summer
- the spatial arrangement enables both indoor and outdoor activities of an informal or more formal nature focussing on the lawn, water feature and paving areas to the square, the library and other nearby buildings

- the possible community facility building offers opportunities for additional library space and also space for such activities as displays in association with outdoor events occurring in the town square, movies and talks, choir, little theatre, evening classes, indoor Tai Chi other similar recreation classes, horticultural display days, fundraising, cake stalls and other events
- the northern area to the town centre locale includes the existing NZ Post and offices to the rear and across Pound St envisages the existing Council owned building as a Visitor Centre. A new commercial service road (indicative location only) is shown on Council owned land further along Pound Street
- a wide pedestrian crossing is shown directly opposite the library providing upgraded east -west accessibility. This crossing location is also at the northern end of "Hurunui Pathway"
- grass berms extend along the SH1 frontages to the town centre on the eastern and western sides of the road as mentioned , linking with the Chamberlain Park and other frontage treatments on the western side, and to the Brackenfields entry on the eastern side
- a new rear parking area is shown adjacent to the northern perimeter of the shopping centre parking, and also at the rear of the Westpac Bank. Parking is also shown to the rear of the visitor centre. On-street parking is available at the bank frontage and the dairy/tearooms frontage.

Materials have been chosen to be consistent with Amberley's country town vernacular: as mentioned the town square would incorporate a lawn and paving areas and tree plantings for summer shade.

The pedestrian crossing opposite the library would include paving to berm area to provide texture contrast e.g. cobblestones or stone setts. This treatment serves the important purpose of 'warning' to pedestrians that they about to enter the roadway as well as being an introduction to a civic place.

□ Markham Street/north area
drawing - Markham St precinct



The design concepts for the [Markham Street/north locale](#) acknowledge the significance of the area to the history of Amberley commerce (and township) and would further revitalise this interesting street. The area also encompasses the Council building area, the rail corridor and intervening properties, and significant artworks.

In addition to current activities and premises, exciting opportunities exist to build on the historical associations and sense of place factors of this area, to consolidate specialist retail outlets, viticultural and other services and to showcase and sell regional products, art, craft etc. away from the SH1 traffic environment, and for the street to again function as a primary east-west route.

The **Markham St drawing** shows:

- streetscape enhancements with street trees and surface texture treatment to assist traffic calming and reinforce an 'in town' traffic environment that is shared with pedestrians and cyclists, taking into account that Markham St would be an arterial link however also 'urban place'. These works also promote the heritage nature of the area and listed and other historic buildings could be signed as part of a heritage trail
- greening of the area to the south of the Council building and enhancements to outdoor areas near the visitor toilets. These open space areas and nearby commuter carparking, could be used in association with the Amberley's Saturday market and are also large enough to accommodate one-off events such as a sculpture week, country fair, wine tasting events, business and community promotions
- the potential for infill commercial development so that the streetscape is more consolidated than presently. This would also be an attractive location for medium density residential development, potentially at second floor level above retail shops and services

- an opened Dock Creek and bridge across the stream within Markham St (replacing the existing culvert and providing for increased flow volumes). A pathway runs alongside the stream within the vicinity of the historic BNZ building and other nearby properties. The pathway turns south to cross the railway line on Douglas Road. South of the new bridge it extends to link to the library/town centre area
- relocation of the concrete batching plant to an industrial area would enable this area to be utilised for a possible future railway station (accessed via a roadway linking Turners Road to Markham Street and also accessed by way of pathways at various intervals along Markham St)
- significant additional open space in the north-west area of the precinct locale with some more formal 'Victoria Park-like' elements, incorporating paving and semi-circular garden beds in the vicinity of the station
- a grassed area to SH1 frontages and footpath to improve links to this area from the southern end of town, and to the attractive mounded berm frontages in front of the Council building
- a possible future service lane to the rear of SH1 premises (indicative location) so as to assist way-finding and service access 'midblock'
- an altered intersection geometry to the corner intersection with Douglas Road
- visitor or residential accommodation among rear and open space areas: 'the Mews' apartments complementary to existing and possible future tourism, hospitality and viticultural functions.

Landscape plantings, textured paving, lighting/lamps and flags are envisaged. There are also opportunities for interpretative signage, precinct banners and other elements to promote localised business and events. Street markers are indicated at eastern end of the street and could also be placed at the western end.

longer term urban design possibilities

□ 'Amberley 2025' composite drawing



An important part of the study brief and of the matters identified in the Amberley Concept Development Plan 2005 was a long term vision and 'blueprint for development'.

Whereas many of the design concepts could be implemented say, within a short-to-medium time frame we describe below a longer term vision consistent with local and regional growth expectations and associated issues for urban development.

The year 2025 concepts are shown in the composite drawing [Amberley 2025](#). The concepts show possibilities for an **expanded town centre locale, additions to Chamberlain Park, and further enhancements to the Markham St/northern entrance areas**. They have been developed in expectation that the town will have grown considerably, that its employment and socio-economic structure will be increasingly diverse and that events and services available in Amberley will attract many visitors to the town (as a destination in its own right and in association with other North Canterbury attractions).

In the [town centre](#) the town square on the eastern side of SH1 extends between the Library and Pound St with the Visitor Centre shown on the northern corner of the Pound St/SH1 intersection.

On the western side of SH1 a 'pocket square' is shown as a smaller dimensioned area of paving and grassed verge by creating this end of Douglas Rd as a cul de sac, with eastern and western edges linked by grassed verges on either side of the road and with banners and markers. The existing parking area/traffic island arrangement on the western side of SH1, south of Markham St is extended further north to the Council building, as shown in the **2012 town centre drawing**.

This 2025 concept promotes pedestrian and bicycle links westwards via Douglas Rd and beyond to the School and Domain areas. Access to the corner properties on Douglas Rd is

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provided either via their SH1 frontages or from that part of the Douglas Rd frontages not stopped at the end of the road.

The 2025 concepts would also enable an extended possible community facility building with space also for a relocated police station if desired.

Potential infill to SH1 frontages is shown to reinforce the north-south linkages to the commercial area, it being important to promote a balance of business activity and a consolidated streetscape in the area of town north of the Brackenfields shopping mall complex. The long-term vision facilitates Markham St as an arterial route, potentially with lights at the intersection with SH1, and if formed with an eastern extension, improved accessibility for residents across town. The 2025 concepts also facilitate use of the railway and commuter and other services. In this way they promote a 'transportation hub' for the northern area of town, and restore an earlier prominence to this node/district, assisting a balanced urban framework relative to the library locale and southern Brackenfields/ Amberley Beach Rd locale.

The **Amberley 2025** plan contemplates an extension to the northern area of [Chamberlain Park](#) in the SH1 vicinity. This would serve the dual purpose of providing additional passive recreation space to Amberley's shoppers, business community, visitors and nearby residents and improve the balance of open space to retail development within the town centre area.

Chamberlain Park is considered a key component to retaining the country village character desired for Amberley, as it is both the town's 'front lawn' and also functions quite differently from the planned neighbourhood parks, Domain and other recreation facilities further afield. This is because, in an urban design sense, the Park's open space is prominently displayed, and serves to separate and connect areas and localities.

Over time we anticipate the park will be important to Amberley retirees who will be able to easily access and feel comfortable in the urban setting. Similarly the park is also attractive as a lunch spot for local employees, and a picnic area and place for children to run around in. near the Library, and for travellers to take a break from driving.

In the [Markham St and northern area](#) of town the 2025 vision includes consolidation and infill development between Douglas Rd and Markham St, extended Dock Creek waterway links, and a further enhanced northern entry environment.

Other elements to the 2025 vision include potential for additional open space/park areas at the northern end of the township (**drawing Turners Rd 2025**) and a southern entrance incorporating an indicative eastern access to residential areas (**drawing southern entrance 2025**).

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Overall the 2025 vision is based on a considered framework for the town to promote an urban form that has balance between east and west, north and south, has improved east west links and improved rear service access for businesses fronting SH1. This connectivity is particularly important to the Amberley of the future, given the geographic location of the school and Domain on one side of town and c.50%+ residential population (including potentially an increased Amberley Beach community) on the other (see [Attachment 2](#)). The 2025 concepts thus show Douglas Road as stopped, an eastern extension to Markham Street and a 'traffic box' comprised of rear service access either side of SH1.

The vision also promotes a built form that places greater emphasis on the fabric of the street, with structures generally placed on or near the property frontage, providing a strong sense of address. Parking areas and access are generally to the rear. A mixture of land uses in close proximity to one another is encouraged to give vibrancy to the streetscape.

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streetscape design family

□ streetscape elements



A key to ensuring a successful and cohesive result for the main street and public realm areas is the need to consider two issues:

- coordination of the existing and proposed streetscape design elements e.g. signage way-finding, planting, street furniture, paths and ground treatments, lighting
- establishing a design character for the new elements which consistently represents Amberley's character.

Detailed design of streetscape elements is normally a subject of a separate design study, however some outline consideration needs to be given within this urban design assessment.

A co-ordinated and detailed streetscape design family would provide a 'tool-kit' or strategic design guide based on the rural character and setting that is distinctive to Amberley and its region, ensuring quality and consistent design outcomes for key urban area of the township such as the entire Main Street (i.e. avoids 'piecemeal' or uncoordinated streetscape development).

The table below provides a general list of possible streetscape elements for the Carters Road, Markham St (and entrance) areas, with indicative design attributes.

Table 1: Amberley Streetscape Design Family

Item	Design attributes	
Gateway feature (northern and southern entrances points only)	Primary threshold feature into urban zone, evergreen hedge , 10m high. Marks sequential approach to urban zone. 3 types: high, vertical or low bollard form. Stone/ cor ten steel/timber with optional lighting, signage elements	
Signature plant species (subject to maintenance, project or environmental requirements)	Candidate Trees	<i>Cordyline australis</i> (cabbage tree); <i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i> (Macrocarpa); <i>Fagus dywick</i> ; <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> (common beech); <i>Fagus sylvatica 'purpurea'</i> (copper beech); <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (European ash); <i>Podocarpus totara</i> (totara); <i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i> (northern pin oak); <i>Quercus ilex</i> (Holly oak); <i>Quercus robur</i> (English oak); <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> (Robinia); <i>Tilia cordata</i> (Lime/Linden tree); <i>Tila tormentosa</i> ; <i>Ulmus glabra</i> (Elm)
	Groundcovers/g rasses	pasture grass or roadside verge species to match existing. Native grass species (e.g. red tussock; sedge, wind grass, New Zealand Iris etc);
Paving and ground treatments	Compacted gravel/stone chip	Rustic ground treatment appropriate to the rural environment. For general rural walkways and pedestrian or roadside footpath areas
	Unit pavers (pavers/blocks/ cobblestones)	Urban plazas or high pedestrian areas
	Continuous (e.g. in situ concrete, asphalt)	Urban plazas or high pedestrian areas
Signage/Way-finding	Providing a range of community, seasonal or festival information items.	To be coordinated with HDC tourism initiatives New stand alone elements or information integrated into pavements, street furniture, 'clip-on' banners to existing light poles
Street furniture e.g. seating, pedestrian railings, bollards, tree guards and grills, litter bins etc		Simple design forms and typology using quality timber/stone/cor ten steel materials
Lighting e.g. streetlights, pedestrian lighting and special lighting effects		Refer NZTA and HDC standards

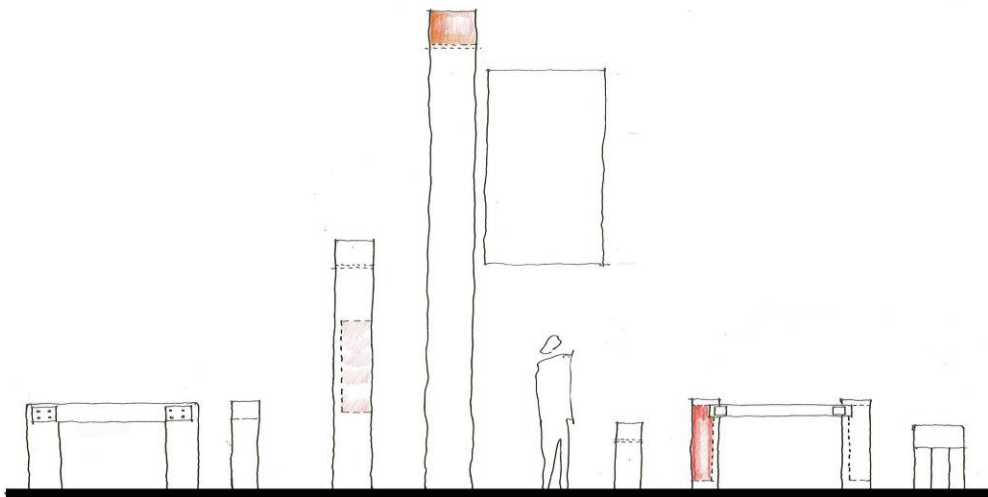
□ streetscape typology and design forms



To further ensure consistency in future main street upgrade areas, an integrated design approach (i.e. typology) is useful for the new streetscape forms such as gateway features, gateway markers, seats, railings, signage, ground treatments and street furniture. This typology serves to avoid the fruit salad effect of streetscape elements in areas or zones which benefit from being more unified on theme and character.

The simple rural elements observed in Amberley and the Hurunui landscape (fences/gates/hedges/vine rows structures) are constructed of robust materials - timber, stone, steel and wire.

These forms will reflect their rural context, and yet provide the opportunity for imagination and quality detailing with multiple benefits as required (e.g. provide colour, carry community or tourist information, express local narratives, etc).



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urban design recommendations



The urban design recommendations envisage a number of project-based outcomes, supported by various governance and community actions.

Some of the recommended outcomes are within the public realm, others would involve Council working with landowners, businesses and community groups; yet others could be achieved by community initiatives - via a management strategy that provides project oversight allied to various time frames.

As mentioned a key factor to the urban design measures recommended is to utilise a coherent and consistent 'family of elements' so that design elements are collectively themed to reference Amberley as a brand, correlated with tourism nomenclature etc.

Of the various enhancements suggested shorter term projects could include;

- installation of colourful banners to street lighting poles on the eastern and western side of SH1 carriageway to a detailed design and production specification. The banners could be changed to announce specific events (food and wine festivals), celebrating seasonal changes (Matariki, the ski season, 'big skies ' of the winter months, Canterbury summer), showcase 'sense of place' factors - the northwest winds of the equinox), using photographic images of historic structures of Amberley and surrounding areas, showing local sheep breeds, agricultural machinery over the years, iconic local landscapes, viticultural events, images depicting Waitaha, Ngai

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Tahu and other regional artistic/cultural dimensions or simply announcing Amberley and the Hurunui.

- [enhancements to entrances and exits](#) to include planting and associated treatments to the northern and southern entrances and other installations following detailed design of amenity planting and other elements such as welcome signage, entrance markers and lighting. The considerations for traffic safety, clear zones and other requirements for the western and eastern entrances to town are different from those for SH1, however similar enhancements to these entrances would also promote arrival and sense of place
- [measures to recognise and protect view corridors](#). Part of Amberley's distinctive character is its presently rural setting and views to Mt Grey ridgelines; these are important contextual elements and should be protected by means of building and development setback, amenity planting and hedge screening in various entrance locale in the areas noted. Other contextual/preservation measures that can be considered are via District Plan mechanisms (rules/designations/resource consenting processes), and initiatives such as 'businesses acting as good citizen', volunteer projects maintaining amenity plantings
- [private/public joint funding projects](#) e.g. a multi-use visitor centre/community hall/art gallery space (and associated 'civic' outdoor areas) perhaps funded by a community collective or trust, perhaps also assisted by tourism interests or operators
- the [Hurunui pathway](#) detailed design of planting, paving, interpretive signage and other elements extending between Chamberlain Park and Douglas St
- detailed design for [Markham St enhancements](#), envisaged in a series of stages to raise the profile of this important part of town, perhaps starting with a 'historical day' interpretive signage, pavement textures, promoting the past and present of the street, creating a heritage walk, commencing Dock Creek enhancements
- using a [consistent street signage](#) and [other design elements](#) to delineate and showcase different parts of the town centre. For instance in the Markham St precinct utilise 'outline' artwork (with the central part blank in reference to artworks attributed to Waitaha people, stencils for woolpack identification, blacksmithing). As with other materials' selection and detailing for enhancement projects this is best done with professional design assistance
- reviewing [District Plan and associated measures](#) to better promote an improved streetscape, undertake a parking strategy assessment, consider the use of design guidelines or character area zoning with the to promote consolidated and infill development as described above, appropriate scale and massing, appropriate

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materials selection to Amberley's rural village character, techniques to protect key view corridors

- use a 'whole of Amberley' structure planning approach to promote a consolidated urban form, and to further evaluate east-west and north-south connectivity options over a 10-20 year planning horizon, and possible implementation measures, generally in accordance with new urbanism principles
- relocation of the recycling centre to facilitate rear access roading improvements, and associated statutory processes, and incentives for infill development on SH1 and Markham St properties
- consider how the other various measures outlined in this assessment could similarly be addressed via altered District Plan mechanisms, other governance actions and allied planning initiatives.
- the land parcels owned by Hurunui District Council and other public agencies present opportunities to implement a number of the recommendations made in this study
- monitor and assess ongoing development in Amberley and the wider economic and social environment, continuing to assess funding and other measures that may present enhancement opportunities and/or the presumptions as to short and long term needs
- undertake parking strategy research. The proposed urban design concepts will at some stage require an assessment of truck and carparking requirements both for private and public activities, particularly along the main street. This survey data would also assist assessment of parking requirement provision in the Business Zone as part of the District Plan review. Traffic modelling may also be appropriate to show projected through traffic to local traffic effects over time.

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relevant previous studies and planning documents

A number of earlier studies and planning documents have informed this urban design assessment. In addition to consultations on the assessment as outlined above, the planning processes Council has undertaken to date have included discussions with the community between 2004 and 2009 about providing a strong platform for Amberley's future growth and making Amberley an attractive place to live, visit and invest.

The statutory and non- statutory documents completed as a guiding framework to the township's further development include

- Plan Change 13 to the Hurunui District Plan
- a draft Walking and Cycling strategy
- infrastructure strategies for reserves, roading and services infrastructure
- the Amberley Concept development Plan 2005
- the Amberley Town concept - a landscape character study

The urban design assessment has also considered the objectives, events calendar and other initiatives for the township and wider district and regional area.

□ Amberley Concept Development Plan 2005

This document is subtitled *'the creation of a community based vision and an opportunity for individuals to have a direct input into shaping the future of their town.*

The Concept Plan provides the community's vision for Amberley at 2025 as *"an inviting town offering accessible services and a safe and supportive living environment for its diverse population. Through responsible growth and aesthetic improvements, Amberley has increased its sense of community and created an active and vibrant town centre that retains a rural spirit, surrounded by attractive, safe and highly liveable neighbourhoods. Amberley is a better place to live work and play than it has ever been'*

The particular elements of this vision most important to the study area include

- town character: enhancing hospitality and rural characteristics to maintain economic vitality as a destination as well as a rural service centre
- sense of community: a friendly, small-town feel, welcoming and accommodating a diversity of people
- managed growth: a compact town that has retained a village character
- residential living: Amberley is envisioned as a community of clean tree-lined streets, subtle commercial signage and buildings of architectural distinction nestling among properly designed and well maintained landscaping

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- town centre: a vibrant attractive town centre filled with people and activity. *'There is a diverse array of shopping, dining, business and amenities including a town hall/community centre and the District library. The town centre is the social and cultural centre of the community, and the first place locals want to take visitors. At night the town centre is filled with people and activity'*
- parks, recreation and green space: a wide selection of parks and green space, *'intermingling pleasantly with the urban fabric of the town'* and interconnected greenways joining neighbourhoods, school, parks shops and town centre, as well as stretching into the countryside
- amenities and facilities: primary and early childhood services, public transport to enable a greater choice of secondary school options, *'a central town hall/community centre provides a gathering place for young and old alike to develop their skills and share their talents with others.* Other facilities envisaged included primary health services including GP, pharmacy, aged care, dental physiotherapy, midwifery etc
- public safety: planning takes account of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles
- economic opportunity - a diverse local economy offering employment in hospitality, retail, services, manufacturing and agriculture, among others. *'The town centre meets consumer needs and also enables small business retention and encourages new development that is essential to Amberley's economy, 'town and country' image and quality of life'*
- high quality water and sewerage systems
- arts, entertainment, sports and culture: *'in the year 2025 Amberley is a fun town with abundant recreation, leisure, arts and cultural opportunities...Community values emphasise the appreciation and preservation of Amberley's history and character. Amberley is host to a variety of cultural events, including the arts, entertainment and sports competitions....'*
- local governance and regional co-operation: Amberley is viewed by residents as an integral part of a greater region
- environmental quality: Amberley's natural areas contribute to the character and quality of life of the community. *'People appreciate that Dock Creek adds to the beauty of Amberley and supports healthy and diverse aquatic ecosystems '.* Other initiatives mentioned to assist the sustainability of the Amberley environment included *' innovative work- from- home arrangements to reduce the need to commute and the use of the interconnected walkway system allowing for shorter commutes so people walk or cycle....'* A public transport system to Christchurch and Rangiora exists and the environmentally conscious community ensures that it is well utilised'

The Concept Development Plan also contains a comprehensive list of *'aspects to be preserved or developed'*.

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The urban design recommendations presented herewith show a number of options to achieve many of the items listed at pages 13 through 15 of the Plan.

The matters considered most important to this assessment include:

- parks - additional open space within the north west sector of town, further development of Chamberlain Park
- trees - retained within the main street
- Dock Creek- the development and protection of this asset
- road connectiveness - the need to maintain a roading connectiveness and avoid becoming a cul-de sac village
- safe movement of traffic and pedestrians on the main road
- traffic speed and volumes and attendant difficulties for pedestrians to cross the road, parking problems outside shops.

Zoning issues were listed as including *'mish-mash; areas don't complement each other, no defined town centre, shops too spread out, a lack of urban form, nothing going on in n side streets, development plans need to include shops/industry moving off the main road, moving the recycling area elsewhere to enable use of this part of the township as a business location'*.

Other matters noted included

- a lack of commercial and tourism accommodation, in numbers and variety
- the need for improved public transportation for workers and students, improved mobility for students and others to Christchurch and nearby towns
- library, community centre and town hall: more space needed for library *'no purpose designed conference/meeting facilities for 40-90 people, lack of a town hall or central community centre, need for a multi-purpose facility'*
- townscaping/streetscaping; the need to make the town more identifiable, *'State Highway 1 through Amberley too straight (boring and unattractive), hardiness (long straight road) sides and/or centre need softening'*
- lack of separated spaces for sitting, resting, picnicking.
- Markham St should be enhanced (historical and commercial aspects), dog leg entrance to Markham St from Douglas Rd needs straightening
- waterways and verges need maintaining
- both the north and south entrances to town need to be more welcoming and better defined, signage boring, speed restrictions needs to reduce to 50k earlier
- community: lack of youth employment opportunities and youth/senior interaction
- need a balance of diversity in population, families, workers, retirees, life-stylers
- miscellaneous: need to lift the profile of Amberley, the visitor centre is not visible
- public art. Suggestions included the development of a walkway 'art trail' potentially attracting national and international visitors, themed murals throughout the township, art lighting or entrance features, rural sculpture in the town centre.

[Amberley Town Concept - a landscape character study](#)

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Among other matters this study reviewed the development of Amberley's urban character as a rural service town from the 1860's to the present day, as focused initially on rail transport and, post 1950's, as aligned to SH1. The description of the Main Road included the following;

'Amberley's distinctive 'main road' character arises from the unusually wide street reserve and the number of passing motorists, truckers and tourists whose experience of the town is [principally] from this strip.... the scale of noise and speed, the continuous numbers and large size of passing vehicles differs from the scale of the town generallyPlanning for the future needs to capitalize on positive aspects of the traffic, while minimising the negatives.

"There is a spaciousness, a low impact from fencing, a predominance of grass [in some areas] a simplicity of streets and street engineering and beyond the main road a free, unhurried atmosphere..."

The Dock Creek system was referred to as enlivening the west and southwest of the town with *'waterways...offering prime opportunities for structuring the future town layout.. Mountain and hill views link Amberley to its district and should be systematically planned into the expanding town...'*

Other analysis saw the need to retain potential for a future rail service, the feeling of connection between the street and businesses and of interesting doors, workshops and the industriousness of town. *'The re-use of surviving older commercial buildings adds character to Amberley and maintains links to the older town, as to Markham Street. This should be encouraged including old buildings converted to new uses A unified feel should be maintained by aligning businesses up to the street frontage, with street parking or alleyways to parking at the rear or off side streets. As far as possible parking should not be between commercial frontages and the street...The Council should encourage the 'recolonisation' of Markham Street by businesses serving the local market, A small town feel can be maintained better here than in the main street...'*

Much of the analysis in the report covers residential character; which is outside the main focus of this urban design assessment however opportunities are noted for mixed commercial/residential use as infill behind existing buildings on SH1 with 'open space, lanes and natural features such as the creek' : refer for example pages 21, 22 of the report.

Referring to [town centre locations](#) the report commented:

' there are elements of a 'centre' at both the library and Council buildings but these are isolated and lacking in the scale necessary for a focus

- *a centre requires meaning to a populace, plus a dignified space big enough for town gatherings....*
- *possibly the best area for a centre would be at the library which is both central and has a civic role ..'.*

The Landscape Character Study advised the protection of views to the Amberley Hills as ‘*a natural backdrop to the town and should remain in a rural state, in the interests of maintaining the natural character of Amberley*’.

□ Plan Change 13 to the Hurunui District Plan

Plan Change 13 notes the growth potential for the township of Amberley and manages urban activities and new development: as with other townships of the District as “an Environment of Special Concern’.

Growth issues noted for Amberley include

- the township being dissected by SH1 and the Main South Island Trunk Line
- the need to facilitate good access to these major transportation routes while at the same time providing safe and effective links across Amberley
- added infrastructure capacities
- ensuring land is available for business and industrial activities as well as residential growth
- *‘ the need to encourage the development of town centre activities on the eastern side of SH1 so as to add to sense of identity and place ‘*

Various policies and other Plan provisions inform the urban design assessment as to the ‘overarching’ [environmental outcomes sought for Amberley](#). Plan policies promote compact growth, note constraints to urban development associated with potential for inundation from Kowai River and Duck Creek, and a potential area for industrial expansion along Grays Road.

Policy 21.4 is ‘*to identify a potential area for ‘town centre’ development, provided that adverse effects to the efficient operation of Carters Road/SH1 can be avoided or mitigated*. Explanation to this policy states “*Policy 21.4 recognises the desirability of establishing a core ‘town centre’ area within the Business Zone to the east of SH1. The development of such a centre should accommodate retail and office activities while discouraging warehousing, big box retail, light industrial and residential activities ..”*

Under the heading [Community Facilities](#) Policy 21.20 of the Plan is ‘*to promote the development of a town centre in Amberley; the explanation for which reads ‘a town centre is a focal point for any township and the hub of most country townships. The lack of an identifiable town centre was cited as an issue in the Amberley Town Concept*

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Development Plan process 2005. Amberley's two phases of development firstly as the railhead and later along SH1 has resulted in up to three possible but no definitive town centre. The school, Domain, Boer War Memorial and old railway station, post office and courthouse are all located west of SH1 around the Douglas St/Markham St/ Lawcocks Rd intersections. The library, Post shop, Police station and shops are situated along Carters Road south of Pound St, while the Civic offices are located on Carters Road, north of Markham St. Therefore as part of ensuring Amberley retains its country town character and its sense of community and connectivity, the Council is committed to investigating options to better identify and develop a town centre, in consultation with the community"

Transport policies address issues for [integration and connectivity](#). Policy 21.14 states '*to recognise SH1 as an integral part of Amberley Township, and work in partnership with the New Zealand Transport Agency and the community to manage its dual functions as a local road and part of the state highway network*'.

Policy 21.15 is "*to ensure an integrated transport network for Amberley township, with all new residential and business developments occurring in a way that both recognises and reflects the principles of connectivity underlying the Hurunui District Councils' Amberley Rooding, Cycleway and walkway Strategies*

Policy 21.16 is '*to recognise the traditional and potential role of the railway in Amberley's growth and avoid land uses that may foreclose the use of the railway, in the future*'

The Plan goes on to note '*the **Amberley Town Centre Concept Development Plan 2005** and further research undertaken by the Council (Parrish A. A Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment of the Future Growth of Amberley Township (2007) record divergent views within the community over SH1 passing through Amberley. Given that Carters Rd is likely to remain part of SH1 for the life of this District Plan, and because of the economic benefits it provides the township, it needs to be managed as part of the township.. NZTA administers the state highway network and is therefore a key stakeholder in the management of Carters Road. Through its National State Highway Strategy and its Planning and Policy Manual NZTA recognises that the various roles of the state highway require managing and it is prepared to work with the District Council to achieve this*".

Policy 21.14 supports Council and NZTA working together to manage the role of Carters Rd as part of both the state highway and the local networks. Examples given include continuing to provide access across Carters Rd/SH1 and ensuring that as the township expands it develops a second north-south road network through the township, and cycle and pedestrian links '*Other components of the transport network are important in providing alternate ways of moving around Amberley. These include walking and cycling networks to provide easy access to business and recreational areas. Therefore provision for links between development stages is critical to ensuring that useful links occur. These*

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links are best achieved at the time of subdivision and therefore the Council will use the technique of 'concept plans' as a means of ensuring that developments link together'.

"The council has developed a roading strategy and a cycleway/walkway strategy for Amberley township. These strategies provide indicative road and walkway links throughout the township to ensure safe and efficient access for motorists and cyclists/pedestrians, as the township grows. The strategies identify the key access links which need to be provided as each area of land is subdivided and upgrades required to the roads network, where, when and how these links are formed and what developers are required to pay for or provide. The strategies are implemented through the rules for subdivision and financial contributions'.

As to railway connections the District Plan notes 'the Main South Island Trunk Line bisects Amberley and the township grew historically with the arrival of the railhead in 1876. While there are currently no freight or passenger services from Amberley, the railway is a part of an important South island link. Retaining access to and space for rail services in Amberley retains options for greater use of rail in the future'."

As regards to resource consent evaluations, matters for [town character and amenity values](#) include;

- the country character of Amberley Township as outlined in the Amberley Town Concept Landscape Character Study (Densem 2007) including retaining and enhancing a green leafy townscape with existing trees and simple spacious streets and subdivisions, where practical
- aligning subdivisions and streets in the north and northwest to look towards rural landscapes and features such as Amberley Downs or Mt Grey, where practical
- retaining open vistas at the entrances of the township as viewed from Carters Rd/SH1, the landscape value of the belt of trees on the west side of Carters Rd/SH1 between Bank St and Chamberlain Park and the value in retaining them
- whether the development provides for simple, spacious streetscapes and wide road reserves, with grass verges and trees and little or no street furniture.

The Plan also contains a number of assessment matters for [Business Zone developments](#) in addition to the above. These criteria include:

- to retain and promote the eclectic mix of business activities within the Business area, including rural service activities in the heart of the township
- whether the scale and design of business development reflects the rural character of the township, rather than suburban business areas. In particular using low rise

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- buildings, fence designs, and separation between buildings to retain outlooks both from and through the site
- verandahs and outdoor space to connect business premises with the street and community
 - the use of landscaping and building design and colour to reflect leafiness and greenery.

In respect of [roading and access](#) Plan criteria for resource consent evaluations include;

- whether the activity is generally in accordance with the Council's Roothing and Cycleway and Walkway Strategies for Amberley
- whether the development avoids overtly urban characteristics e.g. community gates, cul de sacs, private lanes large numbers of back sections or south facing lots, high fences
- whether road and walkway links will be provided to allow the roading pattern to continue into adjoining land
- whether the proposed roading pattern provides for a connecting road network.

In respect of [public reserves and amenity spaces](#) for landscaping of reserves, road reserves and public amenity area, the Council's recommended landscaping species for Amberley and council's Biodiversity strategy.

The Planning map shows the Amberley Business zone on the eastern side of Carters Road to a width generally aligned to Morris Rd in the north through to Amberley Beach Rd in the south, and on the western side generally covering areas from Douglas Rd to Turners rd . There are some residentially and industrially zoned properties in the areas described; reference should therefore be made to **Map A, Amberley** of the District Plan for the study area zoning details.

Infrastructure Strategies for Amberley

These strategies provide a brief outline of how growth in the township will be serviced and address provision for water, stormwater sewerage, roading, cycleways and walkways, and reserves. *'The Infrastructure Strategy serves as a basic guideline for the Council, developers and the community. It does not replace the Council's Asset Management Plans and should not be used as a substitute for discussions with Council staff in planning submissions or developments in Amberley Township.....'*

Among other matters the strategies include;

- an integrated walkway and cycleway network linking Amberley and Amberley Beach, on Douglas Rd and SH1, SH1 north to Waipara

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- an anticipated review of main street functions of the State Highway , integration with the local road network and intersection treatments to be scheduled in the medium term
- an indicative roading map showing Council's proposed roading layout for Amberley (north and south links) and a new service road between Courage Rd and Amberley Beach Road to enhance access to commercial areas on the east side of the State Highway
- potential additional reserve spaces in the northwest and eastern future residential areas of the township
- a new rail underpass in Amberley (2022)

Reference should be made to the detail of the strategies in respect of these and other projects listed.

An [Issues and Options Paper](#) addressing scenarios for further industrial development and issues relating to potential conflicts of use was prepared in the latter part of 2009, following from Plan Change 13 submission process. Comments on the paper were received in December 2009 and further analysis of the development issues raised is presently underway.

□ Hurunui Tourism

Amberley township and its rural hinterland are a gateway to the Alpine Pacific Triangle locations.

Tourism growth and development, events and attractions can be linked and showcased within Amberley in a variety of ways, including facility development, residential and rural and tourism services development, specific imagery and by conceiving Amberley as a destination in its own right.

These matters have been addressed in various ways in the design concepts and implementation approaches, as discussed in more detail in other parts of this report.

conclusions

The urban design concepts recommended in this study cover the entrance areas of Amberley, main street enhancements and a town centre/heart. In addition they also detail design concepts for the Chamberlain Park frontage areas to SH1, Markham St and the HDC/northern vicinities.

A key objective of the recommendations has been to provide ideas and suggestions about enhancements that may be made in the short and long term, drawing on numerous attributes of the township.

The recommendations also promote the development of a balanced urban framework within and among the study area locale, adopting a realistic approach to issues for growth and connectivity that exist due to historical and current development patterns, and the need to address and manage the effects of SH1 traffic in considering Amberley's future environment.

NM Associates Ltd - Architects and Planners
March 2010

Urban Design team

Marilyn Hight Brown urban planner
Neil Penney registered architect
Kim Goodfellow registered landscape architect
John Chivers traffic engineer.

Attachment 1 - the study brief

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Attachment 2: issues for traffic management

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□ introduction

Because Amberley is a town that shares the full length of its main street with the principal vehicle corridor for the South Island there are posed a number of issues for traffic management not normally needing to be addressed to such an extent in town centre upgrade studies.

In addressing the study brief the project team has carefully considered a number of options, alternatives and different scenarios for Amberley in the short term and longer term, since an efficient connectivity framework is fundamental to the town's economic and social sustainability.

One of the premises to the study assessment, and to the various urban design recommendations made, is the following:

“Community, like any structure must have a framework that supports it and gives it physical form. Circulation systems, both vehicular and pedestrian, are not only the essential paths to movement, they are the bones, if you will, around which the organism of the community grows.

“More than an exercise in engineering technique, roads and pathways can serve as necessary evils or as conduits for the lifeblood of the community, providing access, service and security for residents. Superior circulation design creates the mental pattern or image of the community. It is the one element that truly creates individuality and establishes character....

“[Circulation structures are typically comprised of a number of minor and more significant streets and roads]. Minor streets are cul de sacs or short loop roads that serve residential properties. Collector streets connect residential areas to arterial streets....Arterial streets are designed for the movement of high volumes of traffic between nodes with commercial or industrial functions....[Arterial roads carrying the highest volumes of traffic] will usually have a divided roadway with a defined median in the centre

“[In creating traffic environments that are pedestrian and cyclist friendly, as well as accommodating vehicular traffic] ‘friction’ or ‘traffic calming’ measures can be employed to restrict the flow of traffic, to increase pedestrians’ sense of safety and reduce the likelihood of accident.

“Traffic calming devices are numerous and may be as simple as adding street trees, changing the pavement at pedestrian cross walks, or providing a narrower street, or they may be more complex changes that actually alter the geometry of the street to deflect a vehicle’s path. Examples of this type are offset midblock yield points, ‘bulbing’ at midblocks and intersections, traffic circles, roundabouts and parallel parking on one or

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both sides of the street.....Collector streets require somewhat less traffic calming than [arterial routes].

'Good circulation requires giving thoughtful consideration to such things as sight lines roads and highway, the visual grain or texture of such things as sightlines, transition, way-finding, visual clues and reference points. Circulation design should work to create an interesting and informative system that utilises subtle elements as well as technical ones.....

"The visual grain or texture of the surroundings should complement the design speed of the roadway; the lower the speed the more texture can be discerned from the vehicle. At high speeds texture is likely to be missed or unappreciated, meaning that larger elements and spaces will be better perceived and appreciated at higher speeds. This should not be allowed to happen at random....Conscious effort should be made to reinforce, not sever the ties between residential areas and their supporting commercial and [business/service]areas..." Community by Design Hall K and Porterfield G 1995

The [Amberley Urban Design Assessment](#) brief included the following:

'undertake a technical urban design assessment of Amberley Township and identify affordable and practical options to create a strong identifiable town centre. The focus of the design will promote strong connectivity between public spaces and buildings, commercial premises and an east -west connectivity across Carters Road..

'prepare options to enhance the Amberley main street with a focus on reducing pedestrian traffic conflicts by slowing traffic through the township and making it more attractive to those using the space from a pedestrian and motorist users' perspective

'prepare options to improve the main street entry and exit points

'consult with...New Zealand Transport Agency.....[the statutory agency for the management of SH1]'

By way of background the Brief noted in respect of the existing traffic environment ... 'SH1 runs through the centre of Amberley township and is the first [component of the urban area] visitors.....are presented with. While the State Highway is a great strength to the township for development and growth, viability and accessibility, it simultaneously creates challenges for road safety from the perspective of speed, noise and heavy transport effects.... The purpose of the assessment is to develop a forward master plan ...which will provide a strong identifiable town centre which binds the rest of the township together to make it an attractive place to live, work and visit....'.

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A relatively complex range of connectivity and safety factors have thus been addressed in considering the urban design enhancements requested. Expert traffic advice was provided on these matters by Mr John Chivers BE ME BTP MIPENZ

the existing situation

As noted, the traffic environment of Amberley is dominated by SH1 which traverses the Main Road/Carters Road. Through traffic and local Amberley traffic is forced to interact along this road.

SH1 has an average daily traffic flow of approximately 8500 vehicles per day and heavy vehicles comprise over 13% of the flow. Heavy trucks including all CCC refuse vehicles to Kate Valley, are an overwhelming part of the Main St environment.

In the last 10 years there have been 51 reported crashes on SH1 in the vicinity of Amberley. None of these were fatal. Only 2 accidents involved pedestrians (one was an 84 year old). The intersections of Grays Rd and Pound St stand out as being over represented. Overall this accident record is not of particular concern.

The speed limit on SH1 through the centre part of Amberley (1.5km approximately) is 50 km/h. At the south end there is 80km/h transition approx 1km in length between the 100km/h highway and the urbanised area. At the north end there is an abrupt change from 100km/h and 50km/h just north of the Osborne Rd intersection. NZTA has recently set up these speed limits in preference to the 70km/h lead-in that was there before.

Within the study area there are 8 side roads entering SH1, all as T junctions. There is a flush (painted) median approximately two metres wide on the State Highway through most of town. This regulates turning traffic on and off Carters Road to a degree and is satisfactory at present.

Looking at the existing street network for the town as a whole, there is a preponderance of new residential streets being cul de sacs, often of considerable length and often joined directly to an arterial road. The lack of cross links away from the arterials will cause problems for safe and efficient traffic management. This applies to local (neighbourhood) trips that do not require the use of an arterial, the planning of bus routes and coping with civil defence emergencies.

The Pound St intersection is unsatisfactory because of its proximity to the Douglas Rd intersection and is not visually apparent to through traffic. Its removal or relocation should be considered.

Amberley is unusual in that the main street (except at the very northern end beside the SIMT railway) has a 40m road reserve. This is mostly beneficial and theoretically allows choices in cross section design to accommodate through traffic and access to adjacent properties. Considering the existing environment overall and NZTA investment in road pavement and furniture in the facility no substantive changes appear warranted.

There are currently 4 defined pedestrian crossing points across Carters Rd by way of mid road refuge islands and kerb extensions at the side. In principle crossings of this type are acceptable however the Amberley crossings are not consistent in their design features, having been constructed at different times, and should be reviewed.

On the west side of SH1 there has been some recent construction of angle parking and a service road. This is satisfactory except for the exit on Markham St which could be improved by redesign.

On the east side only limited parking is possible on the edge of the SH carriageway, and depending on NZTA's requirements may be changed to meet future through traffic needs. This makes it desirable for provision to be made for rear access to businesses with frontages to SH1 and also for new and existing activities on the east side to meet in full the parking demands generated by their activities.

This factor is a consideration for town centre locale area, where the design of the library building, and its main entry, emphasise the street. This encourages patrons to park on SH1 which is undesirable in the longer term.

There is presently no commuter railway option and public transport options to Amberley residents are limited.

Decisions about regional traffic management and transportation services will be important to accessibility options for the future Amberley community, especially workers, youth and the elderly.

East-west links, and the future use of Douglas Rd, Markham and Pound St is complicated due to the left/right stagger of Douglas/Pound and the practice of some motorists who drive diagonally across from the east in the vicinity of the library to Markham St - there being two right turning bays very close to one another. Thus stopping one or other of these streets would be advantageous from a traffic management point of view, desirably in the shorter term. Comments by NZTA on SH1 traffic management issues indicated they considered these options to be practical measures.

traffic management objectives

It is desirable to provide for the efficient and safe movement of traffic by separating as far as possible State highway users from other users.

Consideration should be given to the needs of local residents, particularly children and the elderly, to move comfortably around the town and in particular to minimise the threat to them of State Highway traffic which includes a large proportion of trucks and heavy vehicles.

A network that gives residents the greatest possible mobility as well as private vehicular travel while minimising interference to State Highway traffic is desirable.

The needs of public transport, cyclists and pedestrians must be taken into account when planning transportation facilities.

future traffic management considerations

State Highway 1 has reserve capacity to accept traffic growth well into the future. However as time goes by there will need to be changes to allow traffic to turn on and off SH1 comfortably. (Presently State Highway traffic has unimpeded flows and turning movements from or into side streets are dependent upon a suitable gap occurring in N/S traffic). This will mainly be through intersection and median improvements and ultimately traffic signals in up to three locations. Signals would allow the use of at least one 4-way intersection which would allow town residents to move directly across the State Highway to the other side of town, rather than up and down the main road. Here we are talking about all kinds of local person trips - pedestrian, cycle and vehicle.

There is the potential for Markham Street to once again function as an arterial route, and to be extended east of SH1 to link with an accessway to service businesses on the eastern side of the main road. However if Markham Street is an arterial route then the Markham/Douglas intersection would need to reflect this. This is quite difficult because of the awkward angles of the four roads, proximity to the railway line and the need for fire trucks to have egress at all times.

Similarly there is also potential for provision of a rear service lane behind businesses fronting the western side of the main road, in a traffic box arrangement. (Indicative connections of this type are shown on the 2025 year concepts which also assume traffic lights at the Markham St intersection with SH1. The 2025 year plan also shows Douglas Rd as stopped to enable a more extensive community heart locale and to provide connections to pathways and roads to the school/Domain and Chamberlain Park. A

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further consideration for the 2025 plan is the relocation of a part of Pound St to the north to improve distances on SH1 between the Pound St and Douglas St intersections. Relocation would facilitate a more comprehensive town centre locale).

Improved accessibility for residents on the eastern side of Amberley should be provided by planning and considering a north-south collector street in the long term. This would give residents including children and the elderly the means to move through their town to shops, school etc with as little conflict with State Highway traffic as possible. Instead of being forced up and down the main road they would access the western side of town by travelling on a much quieter and safer road.

This road would function for local traffic only and is **not** envisaged as a through traffic bypass. Its design and geometry should however enable the street to accommodate a future bus route, including appropriate paving strength, and minimum width and carriageway. The alignment should include significant offsets (which discourages through traffic use) and enable access to the western side of town via a controlled crossing of the State Highway.

The proposed urban design concepts will at some stage require an assessment of truck and carparking requirements both for private and public activities, particularly along the main road. Thus parking surveys are advised.

The survey data would also assist assessment of parking requirements in the Business Zone and can be considered as a part of the District Plan Review alongside objectives to consolidate and infill development in the Business zone.

discussions about the design concepts with NZTA

During the preparation of the urban design concepts the project team had a number of discussions with NZTA concerning traffic management and other associated issues for SH1.

These included:

- agreement as to the advisability of separating through traffic from local traffic as far as possible
- preference for east west connections that in the foreseeable future uses an offset street arrangement, providing left and right turning can be adequately accommodated
- a rear service lane arrangements enabling a secondary access to businesses on SH1 was noted as assisting both local and through traffic accessibility, potentially occurring in the shorter to medium term

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- presently there are no plans for traffic signals. Signals are installed to SH locations only where significant delays to side street traffic are experienced as a result of local traffic conditions or where traffic volumes show they are warranted. This is not considered to be the situation in Amberley presently
- within entry locations to townships an abrupt 100 to 50km/h speed transition is preferred over a transitional speed zone arrangement
- a consolidated urban form assists good traffic management by enabling urban traffic to be managed in an urban environment. This is more efficient than a situation where commercial/industrial activities are located out of town where turning movements, people crossing the road, lines of sight, motorist distraction etc pose safety concerns
- thus consolidation of the Grays Road area for industry expansion is preferred over an out of town location
- intersection upgrade to the Grays Rd corner and nearby business frontages as elements of the southern entrance upgrade rd corner was considered helpful
- the camber of Hynd's corner creates difficulties for the driveways in and out of Hynd's because they are too steep. New access roading onto SH1 from future residential growth in this vicinity should preferably be located to the south of Hynd's corner, within the Grays Rd area
- entry and exit location enhancements require design to specific clear zone visibility and safety criteria and where structures and plantings are included within these areas they need to be frangible
- a consistent approach to the design of pedestrian crossing points is desirable
- there is potential for a traffic island median north of Markham Street to isolate carparking on the western side of SH1 in a similar treatment to parking areas to the south.

The proposed entrance treatments for the northern entry area have also been discussed with NZTA personnel: in particular a proposed 70km/h transition zone to slow traffic within the extended approach to town adjacent the railway, before reaching the commercial area. More detailed discussion about speed restrictions will be required in the design phase.

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