



# From the Mayor Time to invest in key areas

**TRANSPORT**

An important ingredient for a strong healthy economy is an efficient transport network and an effective supply and distribution of energy. New Zealand has lagged badly in the last decade in investment in both these areas.

We have been through expensive reforms that have not addressed the key ingredient of forward planning with a commitment from Central Government.

Traffic flows increase by 3-4% per annum, more importantly heavier transport is using roads that were not designed for such loading.

On 16 May, 16 South Island Mayors met with the Minister of Transport Paul Swain in Wellington to discuss the South Island position. There was no magic wand of additional finance but we were not there just for a chit chat.

I am confident that there will be reinstatement of a small number of enhancement projects. It will be a long haul but the South Island will not accept being second fiddle to Auckland. Inadequate funding is the main problem and is distorted through successive governments skimming off between \$700M to \$800M per annum of roading taxes into the consolidated fund.

Auckland has failed miserably over the last 20 years and is finally realising that the commitment has to be made. But this has to be addressed through a separate/additional strategy, rather than at the expense of the rest of the country.

Ashburton people contribute locally \$129 per person to roading through rates. Many rural authorities are in excess of \$200 per person compared to Auckland which is \$50. This year, as well as increases to their City rates, Auckland Regional Council rates are increasing to 30% as a step towards addressing the public transport challenges. Aucklanders are going to face some huge costs to be met in part by rates, tolling, fuel taxes, and loans.

**ENERGY**

We may be lucky this winter, but it has been clear for a



considerable time that shortage of electricity was coming — it is not “if” but “when” it would happen.

Since I have been in local government there have been several reforms of the industry — the major reform in the early 1990s which the architects said “was putting in place policy that would ensure sufficient supply would be available to meet the future needs along with a fair pricing structure for all New Zealand.”

Many will recall the battles that took place, especially the significance of the Cook Strait cable to the reticulation needs. The agreements that were in place with the cable were perceived to have an unfair advantage to the South Island and were virtually thrown out the window with the assurances that future supply would be secured along with continuing low cost of electricity.

The upheaval in the industry during 1996-97 widely known as “Max Bradford’s reforms” is still being felt.

The electricity reform processes have generally been unsatisfactory. Many of the Minister’s officials and advisers lacked the required capability and experience, rather being driven by a market ideology. The electricity

industry is complex and the industry must accept some responsibility in the lack of leadership direction and guidance that has been needed. While they may be operating efficient businesses, there is no big picture vision being shared.

A combination of these failings is fundamental to the present crisis.

There is a shortage of electricity-generating capacity. There has been no new large hydro power station built in New Zealand for 20 years.

No new coal fired power station has been built since Huntly 20 years ago, even though there is plenty of coal.

There is a shortage of fuel stockpile for thermal generation.

There is a serious shortage of proven gas reserves available.

Our storage capacity relies heavily on continuing good inflows.

These underline the importance of co-operation that is needed within the industry.

Because of the business models, there is clear evidence of lack of generator co-operation. There are serious transmission constraints in parts of New Zealand, but there appears little effort to remove or manage these constraints. How many of us can understand some of the pricing complexities of the market.

What we do understand is the market must have surety of supply at the most cost effective method of delivery.

We also appreciate the excellent contribution Ashburton people have made that has placed them among the leaders in saving energy nation-wide.

*Murray Anderson*

MURRAY ANDERSON  
 Mayor

# New home for rifle range?

After more than 100 years on its present site west of the Riverside Industrial Estate Ashburton’s rifle range, or The Butts as it is commonly known, may be in for a move to a new location.

Because of developments taking place the range had a limited life where it was, council property officer John Rooney said. The availability of four-wheel-drive vehicles and the potential for riverbeds to be used more with the introduction of vehicles such as ATVs

Meant the present location of the range was less than desirable.

For that reason range users were limited to firing over a maximum of 700 yards, and more often over shorter distances, in order to keep within a reduced safety zone.

The Ashburton Range Users Association, who the land is vested in, had in the past looked at the possibility relocating but nothing had eventuated. In the meantime the council had looked at the possibility of extending its industrial estate and had approached the range users, asking if they would consider moving.

Their reply was that it was a good idea as long as they could continue with their sport and were not placed in a worse position than they were.

After looking around the district the conclusion was reached that the most “user-friendly” piece of land was at Ashton Beach.

The site was chosen well before the council started looking at adjoining land for waste water disposal, Mr Rooney said.

It adjoins an area known as the Kongutu domain, with the firing point about 1.5 kilometres inland from the Ashburton River mouth.

It was the group’s preferred site, and there was nothing more within a reasonable distance of Ashburton, Mr Rooney said. The police range inspector was also happy with it.

The Range Users Association had contacted the Department of Conservation, the underlying owner of their existing land, saying they would like to move.

Draft plans had been prepared and included in the proposals for waste water disposal, not as a consent issue, but because the council wanted to be open about what was proposed.

The council was now aware of concerns from people living in the vicinity, primarily relating to noise.

Nothing would be done in respect of establishing a new range until the consent process had been gone through. Planting of trees to deaden noise had always been intended but because of the concerns expressed there was a possibility sound baffles would be installed around the firing point, and investigations were being carried out to see how that was done overseas.

“We will do everything we can do to mitigate noise concerns,” Mr Rooney said.

However, it was worth noting that residents living close to the existing range did not seem to have a major problem with noise.

Sound tests would also be done at various points around the proposed range before consents were applied for. Because of the council’s involvement any consent hearing would be before an independent commissioner.

The intention was to build the range to cater for events right up to international level, so occasional tournaments could be held there or overseas teams to use it for practice.

It would not be a military range and therefore would not be used by automatic weapons, and shotguns would not be used on it either, Mr Rooney said.

It was likely the consents would be applied for in four to five weeks and no thought would be given to a construction timetable until after they were completed.

If the range proposal went ahead the intention was to do a land swap, with DOC taking over the council’s Ashton land and the council using the present range site to extend the industrial estate.

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## Recycling reduces waste



District council staff are working actively to minimise the amount of residual waste going to the landfill from the council offices and over a three-month period have achieved a reduction of 40 per cent.

A review has been arranged with the council's waste minimisation contractor, Wastebusters Trust Canterbury, to identify other areas where reductions can be made.

Council property maintenance officer Don McKay is seen unloading recyclables from a week's worth of council office refuse.

## New plaques for trees

A lot of trees in the Ashburton Domain have been planted to commemorate special events or people over the years, and a concerted effort is being made at present to make sure they have appropriate plaques attached to them.

While this has usually been done in the past, some of the plaques have become worn and unreadable while others have been vandalised or even stolen. The oldest tree to receive a new plaque is the King Edward VII Coronation oak.

Another project under way in the domain is fixing tags to many of the trees with the name of the tree and some information about it. These polycarbonate or metal tags replace painted wooden signs that were put in place many years ago.

## Leaks located in water system

A programme to detect leaks in the Ashburton water supply has found 162 leaks throughout the system.

The programme began with what was termed a "coarse survey" with listening equipment used to detect leaks. When leaks uncovered at that stage had been repaired a second survey was carried out to detect smaller leaks that had been masked by the sound of the larger ones.

The council decided to embark on a programme of leak detection after it was discovered the minimum night flow in the system was 47 litres per connection an hour, well above the five to 10 litres achieved in other systems with well-controlled leakage and no major night time industry. It is a requirement of the consents the council has on its schemes to use the water efficiently. Over a five-year period the Ashburton District Council hope to achieve a minimum night flow rate of six to eight litres per connection per hour.

To achieve this it has been necessary to spend a certain amount of money up front on detection so the best returns can be achieved. From that point on the expenditure will even out in terms of the results achieved, although it will never be possible (or cost-effective) to get the last leak. Once the current crop of leaks have been repaired however there should be little leakage and the problem will be much easier to keep on top of.

The majority of the leaks discovered are in stop cocks and water meters. The council's contractor has been given the complete list and asked to prioritise them, with the larger ones being repaired first. At this stage the major leaks detected in the first round of testing have been repaired and some from the second round.

People may wonder why the contractor is digging up the road or the footpath at what is apparently a dry site. Ashburton's free-draining soils allow the water from the leak to drain away, and unless there is a clay pan or an unusually large flow from the leak it can be a long time before it pushes up the road surface and becomes apparent.

The list also contains a number of leaks detected on private property, and the council will be following these up with a letter to property owners asking them to have the leaks repaired.

The detection programme is not a one-off, but will now become an ongoing thing in Ashburton and will be applied to other schemes. It is something other councils have been doing and Ashburton is now catching up. The problem is a sign of the age of the network.

## What's on

### Ashburton Library

#### New Books at Library

##### Fiction

Louise Bagshawe	The devil you know
T.C. Boyle	Drop city
Marika Cobbold	Shooting butterflies
Janet Gleeson	The serpent in the garden
Penelope Lively	The photograph
Jill Mansell	Nadia knows best
Jenny Patrick	The Denniston rose
Robert Ryan	The blue noon
Daisy Waugh	Ten steps to happiness
Gillian White	Copycat

##### Non-fiction

Diary of an ordinary woman, by Margaret Forster
Eyewitness travel guide to Turkey
Fearless interviewing, by Marky Stein
Generals die in bed, by Charles Yale Harrison
Good as Goldie, by Karl F. Sim (C.F. Goldie)
Indulgence, around the world in search of chocolate, by Paul Richardson
Looking for trouble, behind the scenes of the N.Z. media, by Glenda Hughes
A manager's guide to creative cost cutting, by David W. Young
Private Paton's pictures, by Harold Paton
Salt, a world history, by Mark Kurlansky

### Ashburton Art Gallery

#### Upcoming exhibitions at the gallery

Venus on a Beach Towel: The Paintings of Lindsay Crooks. Exhibition: 8 May – 15 June

Venus on a Beach Towel sees the return of Dunedin artist Lindsay Crooks in his fourth solo exhibition at the Gallery. His work has been influenced by human activity in the New Zealand environment. Local history and his close relationship to the sea are reflected in his paintings through coastal themes depicting snapshots of everyday life. This is a significant exhibition that coincides with the release of his new book of the same title.

Claire Beynon: Altered Ground Exhibition: 10 May – 15 June

Altered Ground presents a series of large scale pastel and charcoal drawings by South African born artist Claire Beynon. Using the abstracted landscape as a theme, the exhibition celebrates the medium of drawing and the versatility of the drawn mark. These works have as much to do with the creative process as they do with an exploration of physical and spiritual terrain, surface and substrate, things known and things mysterious.

Ashburton Society of Arts Annual Exhibition Opening: Monday 23 June, 7pm Exhibition: 24 June – 11 July

In June the Gallery features the ever popular Ashburton Society of Arts Annual Exhibition. The exhibition showcases the work of both our local and national artists, as well as selected guest artists from around the country. It features work in a wide variety of media and styles, and carries a top prize of \$3,000 for the Premier Art Award and \$750 for the Applied Art and Craft Award. The Gallery will be open extended hours on Friday 27 June and Friday 4 July, until 7pm.

Zero Waste Art Awards 16 July – 7 August

The Zero Waste Art Awards return in July, presenting a variety of original and inventive creations made out of waste material. This is an opportunity to design and make innovative creations by re-using or re-cycling materials and objects that might otherwise be land filled. This year's awards include three categories – kiwi ingenuity award, artistic award and garden art award – each with a top prize of \$500. Entries close 1 July.

Footprints of the Spirits: The Burringa Collection 26 July – 23 August

Unique touring exhibition of 24 works by some of Australia's leading Aboriginal artists, selected from one of Australia's major collections of Aboriginal and Oceanic art. The exhibition features both traditional and contemporary works, in a wide variety of regional styles from Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory. There are paintings by established Aboriginal artists such as Rover Thomas, the first indigenous Australian to exhibit at the Venice Biennale in 1990; Lin Onus, who was well-known as a painter, cultural ambassador, and Aboriginal activist; and veteran women artists such as Queenie McKenzie and Maggie Watson. Supported by Creative Communities NZ.

### Ashburton Museum

A new display at the Museum proves the people-traffic across the Tasman is not all one way. Ashburton has several Australian immigrant families who have loaned items. Do take the opportunity to come and see the material and find out why they chose Ashburton as their new home.

We have had two classes from Hinds School who were studying clothing and kitchens of their great-grandparents' era. The children were a very well prepared, well behaved group, and a pleasure to deal with. Rita spoke to Rural Women NZ at the Westerfield Hall, the subject being the care and conservation of family heirlooms such as clothing and photographs. It is so important that people are aware how to protect their precious items from damage by ensuring storage facilities are of a suitable standard.

Derek Prebble addressed the May meeting about his trip to Beijing — a very interesting personal view of a fascinating city.

Alister Perkins will be talking about astronomy at the July 23 meeting at 7.30pm at the Museum — visitors are very welcome, please use the rear entrance.

# Keeping the water quality high

Many Ashburton District families rely on public supply schemes for their household water and making sure the water supplied meets the appropriate health standards rests on the District Council, specifically with monitoring officer Richard Durie and environmental health officer Dennis Burridge.

The first part of the job is to collect samples from the various supplies according to a schedule that is based on the requirements of the Drinking Water Standard.

Two draw-off points on each scheme are visited and 100ml of water collected in a sterile pottle from each. One sample, called the plant sample, is taken as the water leaves the treatment plant. The other sample, the zone sample, is taken from a remote point in the system, the same place each time to maintain continuity.

A plant sample for Ashburton is taken each day while the Ashburton zone sample and Methven and Rakaia samples are taken weekly. All other supplies are sampled monthly.

The timing of sampling for each scheme is determined by the population drawing from it, Richard said.

Once the samples are in the chilly bin they are taken to the council office where a Ministry of Health approved level two drinking water laboratory has been set up. They are analysed using a method that indicates the presence or absence of faecal coliforms. The method used does not provide a level of any contamination found, but simply indicates if any is present, which is the test required by the standard.

If the presence of e-coli is found in a sample the owner of the system is immediately notified. In the case of council schemes that notification goes to the water services section of the council who in turn ask their contractor to fix the problem.

Of the many hundreds of samples tested each year about six or eight will give positive readings, Richard said. The cause is usually found to be contamination from some sort of animal faecal source.

At the same time as the system owner is notified Dennis Burridge is also notified as council environmental health officer. A boil water notice is usually issued and the Ministry of Health is notified. The cause is also investigated at the same time and depending on what is found remedial action is taken.

Before a boil water notice can be lifted three consecutive daily clear samples are needed

The laboratory is fully accredited annually by a contractor employed by the Ministry of Health who looks at operating methods and procedures and such things as record keeping.

"Everything is done to maintain accreditation," Richard said.

As a check on the system two samples which may or may not be contaminated are supplied monthly by Agriquality for testing at the laboratory.

An indication of the high standards of the council's water testing service is the fact they are contracted to test a number of privately owned supplies including schools, golf clubs, food processors, ski fields and education camps.

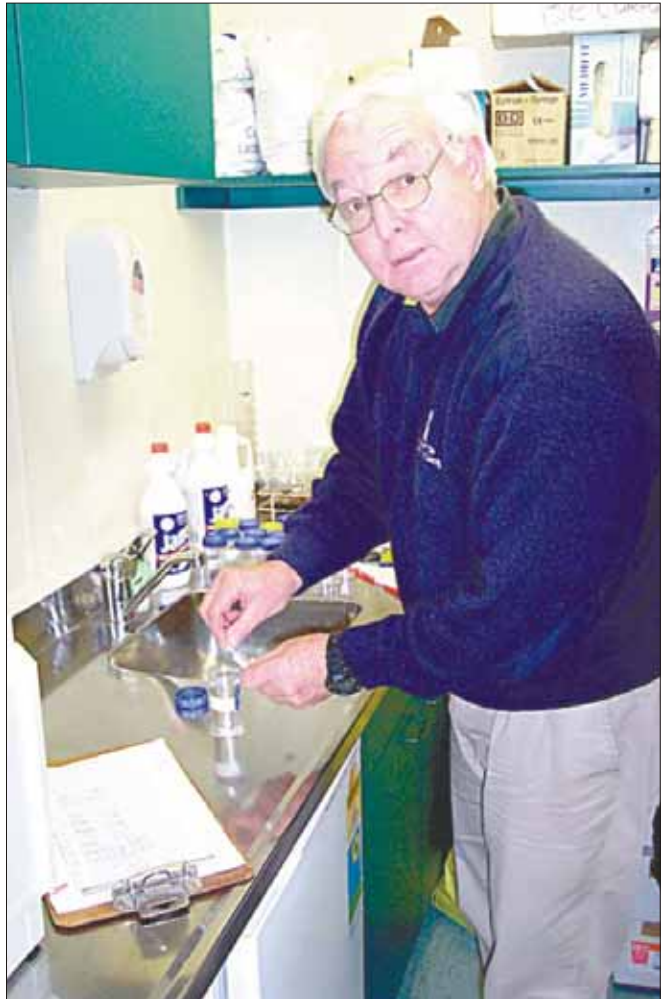
It is seen as a cost-effective method of monitoring water quality as well as building up a useful testing history to satisfy health regulatory requirements, Richard said.

Anyone can have water sampled although without a history for the supply it must be remembered that a certificate is only applicable to the day the sample was taken.

Testing can only be carried out for the presence or absence of total coliforms and faecal coliforms.

"We can't step outside what we are accredited to do," Richard said.

If you have any concerns about your water supply, private or public, don't hesitate to get in touch with either Richard Durie or Dennis Burridge at the District Council office.



Richard Durie working in the District Council's water testing laboratory

## Council's performance the subject of district-wide survey

The district council is about to embark once again on its annual survey of residents.

For a week from June 20, representatives from National Research Bureau will be phoning 400 households throughout the district. Households will be selected randomly and asked questions about to the council's performance in a number of areas, such as social services, water supplies, parks

and recreation, roading and footpaths, support for the museum and art gallery and many others.

Also surveyed will be the performance of councillors and staff.

The survey has been carried out annually since 1993, corporate services manager John Rollinson said. It is a most useful way of establishing the public's perception of the

council, and giving the council an indication of areas it may need to look at changing.

"We have a responsibility to track how well our efforts are carrying through to our residents.

The best way to do this is to interview a representative cross-section of people, and have this done by an independent group to ensure impartiality.

While some may say the sample of 400 households is small, the integrity of the survey has been proved over the years by the consistency of the results obtained.

The survey is in the spirit of changes in local government whereby councils are urged to take a pro-active stance in understanding and meeting the wishes of residents, Mr Rollinson said.

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# Coming soon — the ADC website

<http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz>

Coming soon, to a computer near you — the Ashburton District Council's new website. With 2946 of Ashburton's 10,227 homes having internet access (2001 figures) the time is certainly right for the District Council to make its services more widely known. This it will be doing from about the end of June at <http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz>.

Driving the project is council information systems manager Steve Allen and his team from the information systems department.

A unique way of constructing the site has been adopted, Steve said. Instead of the council's computer staff loading all the information steps have been created to allow individual staff within each department to do the work. They are after all the experts in their respective fields and know the sort of information the public commonly asks about, he said. After they put their material up their head of department checks it and approves it before it goes live.

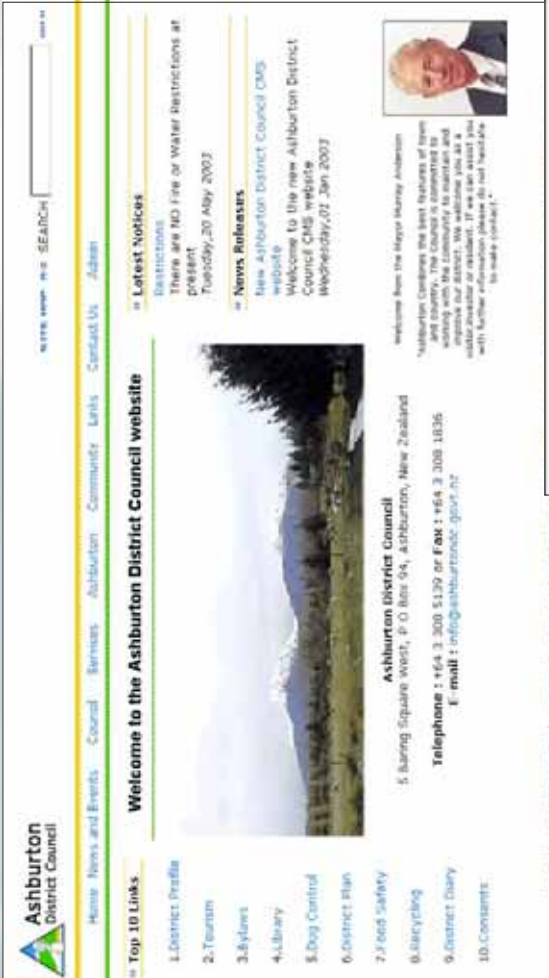
The aim is first to keep the look of the site simple. It will have the same standard green and gold colour scheme that other sites relating to the council have, such as the rates, library and cemetery information databases available at the Ashburton website, or the general information finding services, also available on the Library's public terminals.

Photos and graphics at this stage are limited. There will be plenty of time to make it look pretty later, Steve said. The council also wants to keep the size of the site small to cater for the rural internet users who may have slow internet connections.

The site will be very easy to navigate and to find information on. It will have an A to Z index and a site map which lists all available pages.

Navigation within the site will also be quick with drop down menus displaying greater choices and faster access to information.

The diversity of content to be found on the council website is based on that typically found on other government sites. This information was derived from the Government's general information site <http://www.govt.nz> which is designed to make a wide variety of information available even when the searcher is not sure where to look. It has a search engine with an inbuilt thesaurus that will search for appropriate word even when the one typed in is only distantly related e.g. search for canine licensing and it will take you to dog registration.



to improve the interactivity of the site, the first being the introduction of online forms. This will allow the public to download common forms such as building consent applications, LIM requests and dog licensing renewals. In the longer term the public will be able to submit this information online, but initially it will be a case of printing out a form, filling it out and mailing it in or delivering it to the council.

The next stage will enable these forms to be filled in online and e-mailed directly to relevant council staff. Once the forms side of the web page is fully developed secure online payment options will also be provided through a central clearing bank. This is made possible with the InterGen project grouping the councils collectively to remove the costs associated in acquiring individual credit card facilities.

The home page will carry information that needs to be available quickly to the public, such as housing and fire restrictions and information regarding interruption to council services. There will also be a top 10 list which displays the most frequently visited pages.

The main headings of the site are News and Events which will contain everything from the District Diary to job vacancies; Council, under which appears policies, minutes, reports and management details; Services which has the full range of council regulatory and operations services; Community, containing information about awards, community groups and funding;



and a page simply called Ashburton that looks at history, parks and reserves, the airport and public facilities. There will be links to other sites based in Ashburton and to Government agencies, and the ability to email the council directly.

Over the next six to 12 months, as the council's own computer system is upgraded, more areas will become available on the website, including such things as rates information, cemetery information and council meeting minutes.

The whole system is designed to give Ashburton people the same facilities as a big city council on a fraction of the budget, Steve said.

to set it up. For instance, the council on its own could not afford the tools needed to allow individual staff to put up their own material, but working through InterGen has allowed that.

The cost has been remarkably low at \$3000 to join InterGen and somewhere between \$5000 and \$10,000 to develop the site. The ongoing cost will be \$230 a month, which includes research into developing interactivity for the public to use.

There will be a series of upgrades over the next 18 months

The two sites will be linked and inquiries relating to Ashburton on the national site will be directed to the council's site.

The Council's site is being set up in collaboration with InterGen, a Wellington based internet company which has successfully grouped 20 councils together to develop similar sites. There has been an economy of scale in working this way, Steve said, as well as a minimising of the effort involved

# Intersection changes on the way. . .

Four intersections in the Ashburton District are to be revamped to improve their safety.

The first is the intersection of Maronan Road with McDougalls, Maronan-Ealing and Lismore-Mayfield roads, known as Clucas Corner.

The work there will involve the installation of splitter islands, additional signage and street lights and a minor realignment turning Maronan-Ealing Road into McDougalls Road before it reaches the intersection.

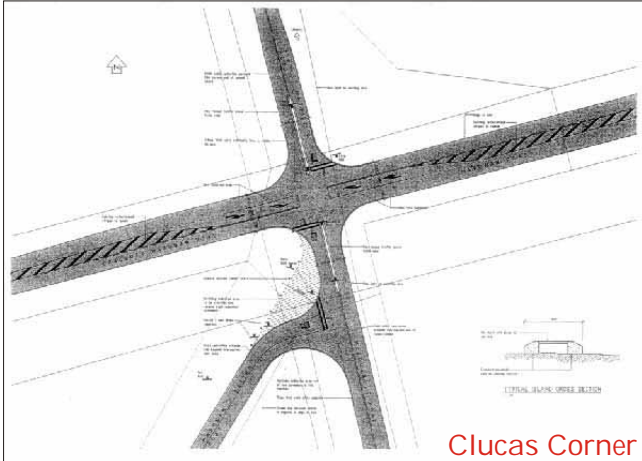
In Rakaia a 'poached egg' type roundabout will be installed on Elizabeth Avenue where it intersects with Railway Terrace East and Chapman Street. The roundabout will be able to be driven over. Give way signs will be installed on splitter islands on all legs of the intersection.

The entrance to Mount Somers from Highway 72 is to be improved. Highway 72 will

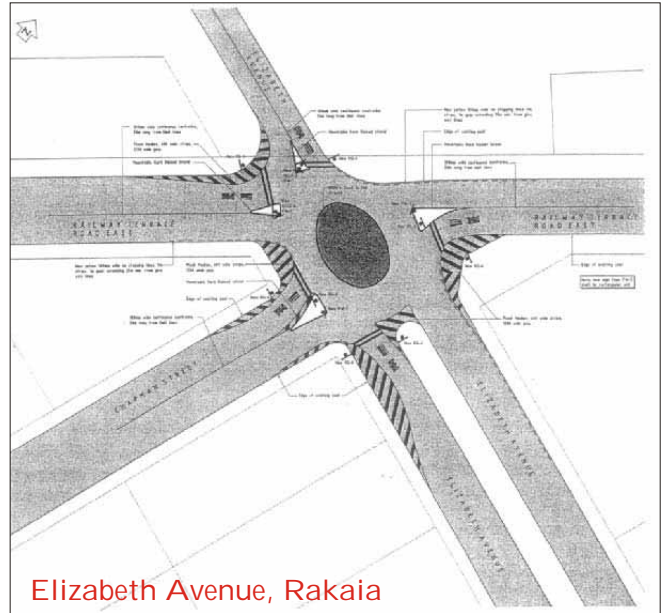
be widened to provide right-turn bays and Tramway and Ashburton Gorge roads will be angled to enter Highway 72 more squarely to control turning traffic.

In Ashburton the intersection of Harrison Street and Farm Road will receive attention with splitter islands on Farm Road with Give Way signs on them.

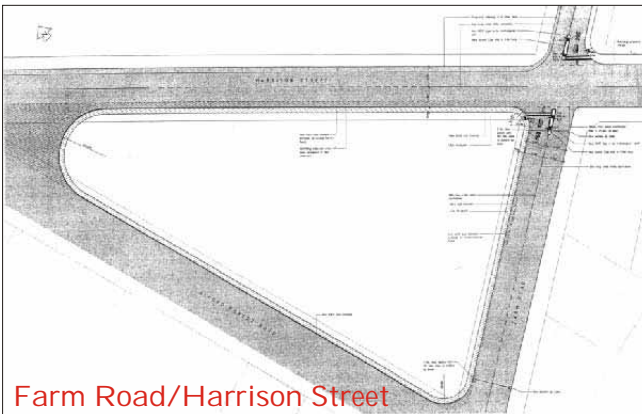
Work on the improvements is expected to start about the middle of this month.



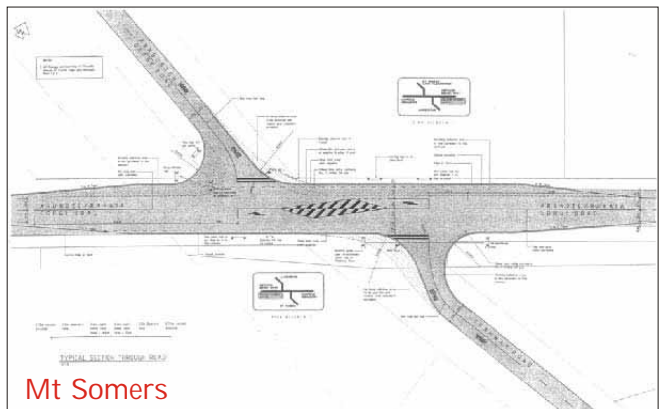
Clucas Corner



Elizabeth Avenue, Rakaia



Farm Road/Harrison Street



Mt Somers

# . . .and speed limit changes

Changes to speed limits on several roads on the perimeter of Ashburton were gazetted on April 3. The changes extend the 70 km/h speed limit area to the following roads:

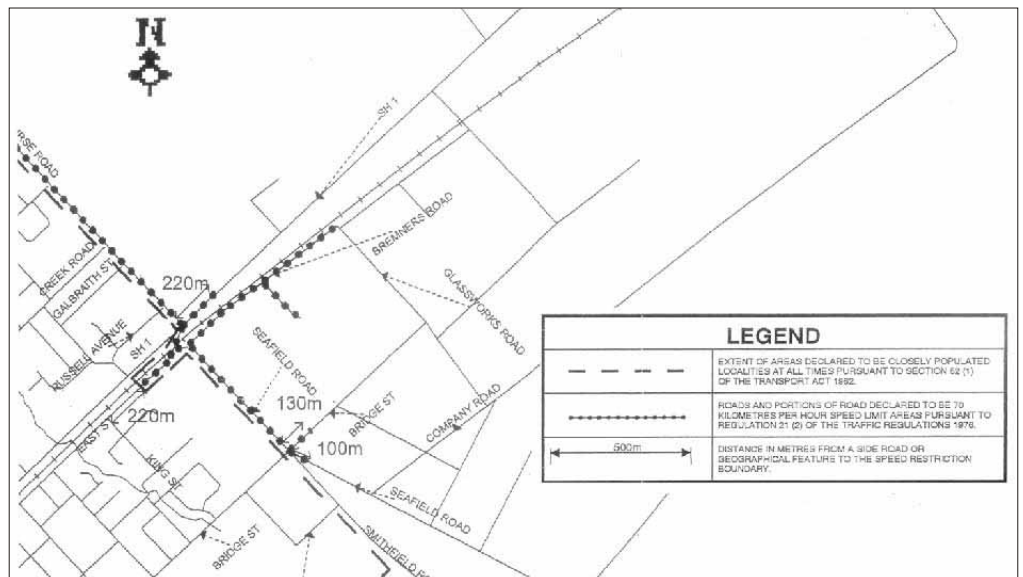
Seafield Road — Bremners Road to 100 metres east of Bridge Street.

Bridge Street — Seafield Road to 100 metres north of Seafield Road.

Bremners Road — Seafield Road to Glassworks Road

Malcolm McDowell Road — full length.

70 km/h speed limit signs will be posted on these roads this month.



# A fairer system of rating

Recent changes to the District Council's rating policy will result in some properties being levied for additional rates in the coming year.

This is where a property has more than one separately used or inhabited portion. Previously the property would have been rated as one, but now each separately used or inhabited portion of the property will be rated as if they are each separate properties.

Properties affected are elderly persons housing units, larger houses split into flats, baches at Rakaia and Rangitata mouths and lower Hakatere, businesses in rented buildings and farm cottages.

The new Local Government (Rating) Act gives Councils two options — to charge a fixed amount per rating unit or a fixed amount per separately used or inhabited part of a

rating unit.

It is the latter option that has been included in the council's draft annual plan for the next financial year. It applies to the Council's uniform annual general charge (UAGC), the separate library rate and to rates for services such as water, waste water and refuse collection.

Previously such charges were applied once only to each property but the new system will see them applied to each separately occupied part of a property.

It may have a significant effect on some ratepayers. For instance the town's 104 elderly persons housing units will face a rate liability of more than \$40,000 in rates for water, waste water, library, refuse collection and UAGC instead of the \$2347 collected under the old scheme.

If the additional charges are passed onto tenants, this will result in a rental increase of \$6.30 per week. Similar increases will apply in Methven and Rakaia.

At the three river mouth settlements each of the group of baches are currently treated as one property for rating purposes.

Under the proposed policy they will each become liable for the UAGC and a library charge. The rates for the 73 baches at Rakaia Mouth for example will rise from \$36 to \$111 each.

Farms with more than one dwelling would also be caught and each will be liable for the UAGC and library charge.

All shops will become a rating unit and be liable for the UAGC, library, water, wastewater and refuse charges. In some cases they may not receive the wastewater charge if they

are in complexes where a pan charge is already being levied.

Granny flats will not be treated as separately used portions of a rating unit if immediate family members are the occupants of the granny flat. Sleepouts without bathrooms and kitchens are not caught under the changes, and will continue to be treated as part of the rated dwelling.

The overall effect of the change will be a fairer system of rating which will put all dwellings on the same basis.

As a result of the change there will be a slight reduction in rates to existing ratepayers with the rating base being expanded by an estimated 1150 users. In town this will result in the wastewater rate increase reducing from \$120 to \$112 and the water rate from \$168 to \$157.

## Valuation update

### REVALUATION

The Ashburton District revaluation has begun.

Rating valuations are primarily undertaken to allow the council to determine rates. Revaluations are carried out every three years and are independently audited under strict requirements by the Office of the Valuer General. The valuations will be completed in October 2003 and will be effective as of 1 July 2003. This valuation will remain valid for the next three years unless changes are made to the property through a building consent or subdivision. The council will use the valuations for rating from 1 July 2004.

Rating valuations are calculated by analysing property sales to determine movement levels per type and location. Rental levels, production, and yield rates are also collated through the market place. Property owners will soon receive questionnaires asking for specific information relating to rental levels for commercial/industrial properties and production

numbers such as stock levels for rural properties. This information is important for an accurate revaluation assessment and will remain confidential to the council. Any questions about the revaluation process can be made to Beca Valuations toll-free on ph 0800 423 22825 or by email at [ratingvaluation@beca.co.nz](mailto:ratingvaluation@beca.co.nz)

### RATING UNIT

For the first time valuations are assessed on each "rating unit", ie a separate title, instead of on each owned property. It is important to note that this is a national requirement driven by the Office of the Valuer General. Property owners in the past would have received only one valuation notice covering the whole property. Now the council is required to send a separate valuation notice for each certificate of title that falls within the Valuer-General's definition of rating unit.

In the Rating Valuation Rules, Version 3.0 dated 9 August 2002 (Rule 5.4) a rating unit is defined as, "the

smallest area of land representing a property that is capable of being alienated and utilised independently. This will normally be a certificate of title for land held under the Land Transfer Act 1952". Exceptions are where a substantial improvement straddles the title boundaries, where titles are legally required to be sold together or used as a farm and likely to be sold as a farm or a large holding such as a reserve, airport, port, or rail yard.

Property owners affected by the new ruling will receive a letter from Beca Valuations Ltd when they receive new valuation notices. All valuations will be posted in June 2003 and will be rated from 1 July 2003. Residents wishing to know more about this should direct any questions to the Ashburton District Council on (03) 308 5139 or email Tania Mansfield at [taniam@ashburtondc.govt.nz](mailto:taniam@ashburtondc.govt.nz). The latest version of the rating valuation rules are also accessible online at [www.lin.govt.nz](http://www.lin.govt.nz)

## Rates accounts that are easier to understand

Remember how your rate instalment notice used to arrive?

A jumble of figures that really didn't tell you what you were getting for your money. District Council, and Regional Council rates on the same invoice. The first payment for the financial year based on the previous year's figures.

Well, not any more. From this year the whole process will become a lot clearer, thanks to a new Act of Parliament, the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.

All six payments for the year will be for the same amount, no more a small one first up and then playing catchup for the rest of the year.

While the Environment Canterbury rates will still be charged on the same invoice as your District Council rates, the invoice will now be a lot clearer and easier to read, thanks to a lot of information no longer being required.

And, so you know exactly what your rate dollar is being spent on, there will be two sheets, or assessments, in with the first account for the year, one for Environment Canterbury and the other for the District Council. They will be specific to your property and show you exactly what is paid for by each type of rate and how much you will be paying for the whole year.

While the assessments are a requirement under the new Act they are also in line with the Council's desire to make the whole rating process easier to understand.

The Council believes the separation of the information onto district and regional assessments will also make the separation between the two rating authorities clearer and show exactly what each council is responsible for.

## Ascent to the heights



Mayor Murray Anderson pauses with David Brand and Joni, two of the many people to cross the Ashburton railway overbridge on May 29 to mark the 50th anniversary of Sir Edmund Hillary climbing Mt Everest.

# Planning manager retires after 32 years

Over the past 32 years Michael Singleton's name has become well known in Ashburton as a person with a great deal of expertise in planning and resource management matters.

He retired from the council May 30.

Michael came to Ashburton in September 1970 as surveyor for the Ashburton County Council, after five years in Southland, including a year with the Southland County and before that five years working for a Christchurch surveying firm.

His work with the county coincided with a period of development, with a lot of roading being carried out and new bridges being built, to the point where the council employed its own bridge gang to do the work.

The county surveyor's work entailed setting out for the large construction works and all the surveying that went with consequent adjustment of titles. The legislation in force at the time was the Town and Country Planning Act, an act that was not altogether different to the Resource Management Act now in force, Michael said. The old act was however all about activities and not about the effects of those activities, which is the thrust of the RMA.

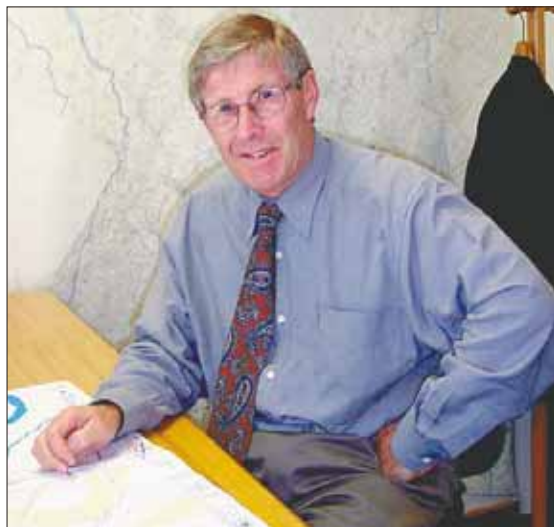
November 1989 saw the amalgamation of the Ashburton Borough and County, with the two councils becoming the Ashburton District Council. For Michael it saw a change of job from county surveyor to district planning manager, and a big change away from surveying.

"I have only done two surveying jobs since then — the Highway 77 deviation on River Terrace from Oak Grove to Moore Street and the council subdivision in Nursery Drive."

The amalgamation took a year or two to gel, he said, and there was time to do such work in the early days. However the planning workload increased as the district developed and the RMA took effect. Reports to council and subsequent discussion had to be more detailed and the whole process more transparent. Not that there was anything underhand with decisions made before, but the reasoning behind council decisions had to become more obvious.

A good relationship existed between staff and elected representatives in Ashburton, he said.

Retirement will bring time for him to indulge in his favourite pastime, fishing, and perhaps a little relieving work in the occupation he has over 42 years become an expert in.



## Eight easy ways for you to reduce your rubbish

1. **RECYCLE** your cardboard, paper, glass, cans and types 1 and 2 plastics.

Call Wastebusters recycling hotline 308-9966 to find out more.

2. Buy **ECONOMY** size products, concentrates and refills.

3. Say **NO** to plastic bags, take your own bag with you.

4. Buy products with **LESS** packaging or **RECYCLABLE** packaging — cardboard, paper, glass, type 1 and 2 plastics.

5. **COMPOST** your garden rubbish and kitchen scraps at home.

6. **MULCH** your lawn clippings and leaves.

7. If you can't **COMPOST** or mulch at home arrange a garden rubbish collection or take it to a composting station.

8. **BUY** durable, long lasting products.

Done all you can **AT HOME?**

Why not look at what you can do **AT WORK.**

## Consents clear way for regional landfill

In recent years Ashburton District people have seen big changes in the way they dispose of their waste.

Now, with the granting of 25 resource consents on April 17, the final part of the change is under way — the disposal of residual waste at a central landfill for much of the Canterbury region.

The philosophy behind the approach is to have all residual waste disposed of in one properly designed landfill, as a more cost-effective and efficient method than each district having its own landfill.

At present residual waste from the resource recovery parks at Ashburton and Rakaia is transported to a landfill at Burwood in Christchurch as a temporary measure until the regional landfill is operating.

The site chosen for the regional landfill is Kate Valley, on a hill country property between State Highway One and the coast near Waipara in North Canterbury.

The project is being organised by Transwaste Canterbury, a public-private joint venture company set up in 1998. It is half owned by six Canterbury local authorities including the Ashburton

District Council, and half owned by Canterbury Waste Services which itself is a joint venture between two waste companies, EnviroWaste Services Ltd and Waste Management NZ Ltd.

The Ashburton share of the overall cost is about six per cent, based on expected volumes of waste to be disposed of.

The consents were granted by Environment Canterbury and the Hurunui District Council after four commissioners considered 3700 submissions and heard from 144 individuals and groups. The commissioners acknowledged there was a significant level of opposition to the proposal and imposed an extensive number of conditions to avoid or mitigate potential environmental effects. The consents are for 35 years and allow the landfill to be operated seven days a week.

Since the consents were granted Transwaste has appealed 13 of the 324 conditions to the Environment Court. Until the appeal is resolved construction of the landfill can not start.

## Irrigation scheme for Domain

Anyone visiting the Ashburton Domain recently will have seen a lot of trenches being dug as pipelines are installed for a new irrigation system.

The system is to be supplied from an existing well in Oak Grove although provision will be made to tap into other wells should they become available. Pipes were laid in Baring Square West earlier this year with the aim of eventually linking to the domain system.

Most domain sports fields already have irrigation hydrants and the oval is already catered for with pop-up sprinklers. The aim of the latest scheme is to water all the main green areas of the domain that are not already irrigated and to cut down on the amount of hosing and hand watering that is carried out at present. The system will be computer controlled and will be able to be operated with a remote unit. It will use pop-up sprinklers.



Digging irrigation trenches in the Ashburton Domain

## New lease for camping ground

The District Council is calling for proposals to lease the Rakaia Gorge Camping Ground.

The lease with the existing lessee, the Rakaia Gorge Society, expires in September.

Council property manager John Rooney said the council was looking for a longer-term lease than had been the

case in the past. The successful person or group would be required to undertake work, especially the provision of showers and toilets, and the lease would therefore have a substantial term with regular reviews.

The lease is being advertised this month and proposals will be required to be in to the council by mid to late July.

## Stadium consultation under way

The second round of consultation in connection with a proposed multi-purpose stadium for Ashburton is about to get underway.

Council personnel and the consultants will be meeting with various sports bodies over the next few weeks to start

talking about the specific needs of the groups.

Based on those needs a generic cost for the facility would be developed. While no thought has been given to siting the complex, it is likely it would be placed as possible to the CBD.