

Ashburton District Council

AGENDA

Notice of Meeting:

A meeting of the Ashburton District Council will be held on:

Date: Wednesday 4 February 2026

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Hine Paaka Council Chamber
Te Whare Whakatere, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton

Membership

Mayor	Liz McMillan
Deputy Mayor	Richard Wilson
Members	Carolyn Cameron
	Russell Ellis
	Phill Everest
	Deb Gilkison
	Jeanette Maxwell
	Julie Moffett
	Phill Hooper
	Tony Todd

Meeting Timetable

Time	Item
1.00pm	Council meeting commences
1.05pm	Canterbury Mayoral Forum Chair Nigel Bowen and Principal Advisor Regional Forums Maree McNeilly

1 Apologies

2 Extraordinary Business

3 Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant and to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected representative and any private or other external interest they might have.

Minutes

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Reports

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11	Ashburton Car Club Road Closure – Wakanui Bent Sprint	72
12	Ashburton Car Club Road Closure – Upper Downs Shingle Sprint	78

Business Transacted with the Public Excluded

13	Council 17/12/25		PE 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates remission Mt Hutt Memorial Hall Board Reserve revocation Tinwald Elderly Persons Housing EA Networks Centre Service provider CE & Board Audit NZ Ashburton Contracting Ltd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 7(2)(j) Protection of information for improper use Section 7(2)(a) Protection of privacy of natural persons Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities Section 7(2)(a) Protection of privacy of natural persons Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities Section 7(2)(a) Protection of privacy of natural persons Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities 	
	[Now in open meeting]		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reserve revocation Tinwald (cl1) Rokowhira operating hours 		
14	Executive Committee 19/01/25		PE 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service provider for CE & Board appointments 	Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities	

4. Council Minutes –17 December 2025

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 17 December 2025, commencing at 1.00pm in the Hine Paaka Council Chamber, Te Whare Whakatere, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton.

Present

Her Worship the Mayor, Liz McMillan; and Councillors Carolyn Cameron, Russell Ellis, Phill Everest, Deb Gilkison, Phill Hooper, Julie Moffett, Jeanette Maxwell, Tony Todd and Richard Wilson.

In attendance

Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Helen Barnes (GM Business Support), Toni Durham (GM Democracy & Engagement), Ian Hyde (GM Compliance & Development), Neil McCann (GM Infrastructure & Open Spaces), Sarah Mosley (GM People & Facilities), Tania Paddock (General Counsel) and Phillipa Clark (Governance Team Leader).

Staff present for the duration of their reports: Andrew Guthrie (Assets Manager), Crissie Drummond (Infrastructure Services Support Lead), Shelley Donnelly (Economic Development Manager), Ann Smith (Community Liaison Officer), Mark Low (Strategy & Policy Manager, Michael Wong (Building Services Manager), Femke van der Valk (Policy Advisor), Lou Dunstan (Policy Advisor), Mel Neumann (Policy Advisor), Renee Julius (Property Manager), Jacqui Watson (Senior Legal Counsel), Erin Register (Finance Manager), Shirin Khosraviani (Art Gallery Director), and Richard Wood (Sports Facilities Manager).

1 Apologies

Nil.

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

Public Forum

John McCaw

John McCaw (Mt Harding Farm) spoke about the threat that full closure of Pudding Hill Race would have on Mt Harding Stream. While generally supportive of Council exiting stockwater races, he is concerned about the potential for stormwater flooding of land where races have been closed and filled in. He doesn't support the Council's position that races be closed and flooding be managed retrospectively and suggested that Council should instead wait until a drainage management plan has been developed.

John further commented that the constant flow of Ashburton River supports the ecology of Mt Harding Stream and not being able to augment flow from the Pudding Hill race will have a devastating effect on the ecology (vegetation will take over the riverbed increasing the risk of flooding).

He asked Council to consider Mt Harding Stream as more than just a water race and look at all of its potential and opportunities, including augmenting flow in Mt Harding Stream with clean Pudding Hill race water.

In conclusion, John suggested a hybrid model of Council and the community working together to manage ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the race, taking into consideration the need to also manage drainage and flood management.

Concluded at 1.13pm.

Barrhill Chertsey Irrigation Ltd

Nick Daniels, Chief Executive presented his company's position. BCI Ltd are supportive of Council exiting stockwater delivery and also supportive of exploring the best transition to alternative sources, while mindful of resources that this may require.

BCI Ltd are concerned about 'community readiness' – specifically upfront costs of new infrastructure. The company would like Council to modify its timelines to allow some transitional planning and to ensure Council is resourced to progress the transition plans.

From BCI Ltd's perspective, particularly for the Methven auxiliary, the Company is not currently in a position to present a business case to determine viability. They would first need to know Council's requirement (cost) and how many are willing to commit to cost share. This should be done as quickly as practicable so that landowners know whether they can look to BCI, or need to look elsewhere. BCI Ltd are unable to commit to a timeline that would work for them at this stage.

Concluded at 1.20pm.

4 Confirmation of Minutes – 3/12/25

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 3 December 2025, be taken as read and confirmed.

Ellis/Hooper

Carried

5 Biodiversity Advisory Group – 1/12/25

That Council receives the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting held on 1 December 2025.

Wilson/Moffett

Carried

- **Biodiversity Advisory group terms of reference**

That Council adopts the Biodiversity Advisory Group Terms of Reference for the 2025-28 term.

Wilson/Gilkison

Carried

- **Biodiversity Strategy Actions – Environmental Champions Award**

That Council approves the establishment of an Environmental Champions Award and includes this award category in Council's Community Honours Awards.

Cameron/Moffett

Carried

6 Stockwater Transition Working Group – 4/12/25

That Council receives the minutes of the Stockwater Transition Working Group meeting held on 4 December 2025.

Cameron/Wilson

Carried

7 Pudding Hill Race Network – Proposed Closure

John Wright, Consultant Melius Ltd present for this discussion.

That Council approves:

1. The closure of the Pudding Hill race network from its connections to Mt Harding Creek at Scarness gate and Drayton's gate, to its terminal discharge points.
2. The date of closure being:
 1. For Rating purposes effective from 30 June 2026.
 2. For Operational purposes effective from 30 September 2026.
3. **That** officers commence discussions with Environment Canterbury on the utilisation of the Pudding Hill intake for potential future environmental augmentation of Mt Harding Creek (by others).

Wilson/Cameron

Carried

Crs Everest and Maxwell recorded their votes against the motion

Heads of Agreement between Barrhill Chertsey Irrigation Limited and ADC

That Council approves the signing of the Heads of Agreement between Barrhill Chertsey Irrigation Ltd and Ashburton District Council.

Wilson/Cameron

Carried

8 Economic Development Strategy – six month report

That Council receives the Economic Development Strategy six monthly progress report.

Mayor/Todd

Carried

9 Community Grants & Funding Policy review

That Council adopts the Community Grants and Funding Policy 2025.

Moffett/Ellis

Carried

10 Dangerous, Affected and Insanitary Buildings Policy

That Council adopts the Dangerous, Affected & Insanitary Buildings Policy 2025.

Hooper/Maxwell

Carried

11 Elected Members' Allowances and Reimbursement Policy Review 2025

That the travel time allowance be removed from Council's Elected Members' Allowances and Reimbursement.

Cameron/Wilson

Carried

That Council

- a) adopts the Elected Members' Allowances and Reimbursement Policy 2025, as amended to remove the travel time allowance; and
- b) rolls over the Elected Members' Attendance at Conferences, Training Courses and Seminars Guidelines.

Cameron/Hooper

Carried

12 Gambling Venue Policy 2025

That Council adopts the Gambling Venue Policy 2025.

Hooper/Wilson

Carried

Cr Cameron recorded her vote against the motion

13 Reserves and Memorial Hall Boards – Triennial Appointments

That Council approves the appointments submitted by each of the Boards.

<i>Board</i>	<i>Members</i>
Tinwald Memorial Hall	Thorsten Windhorst (Chair) Murray Reeves (Dep Chair) Karen Jones (Tres) Jenny Proctor Ponty Proctor Richard Ward Richard Pearce
Ruapuna Reserve Board	Robbie Watson (Chair) David Whillans (Sec/Tres) Rebecca Whillans Duncan King Fraser Tasker Johnny Bell
Lagmhor/Westerfield Memorial Hall Board	Shannon Johnson (Chair) Daryl Oldham (Sec/Tres) Mike Spence Rhys Roberts Nicola Sim Jane Tait Jacob Holdaway
Mt Somers Reserve Board	Nathan Huggins (Chair) David Mathhews (Tres) Rhonda Huggins (Sec) Heath Heaven Maryann Heaven Colleen Stanley
Pendarves Reserve Board	Andrew Sparks (Chair) Justin Watson (Tres) Chris Keenan Warrick Sparks Paul Stuart Jake Sparks
Hinds Reserve Board	Garry Brown (Chair) Dean McConnell (Tres) Dave Kingsbury Angela Cushnie Jock Moore Damian Perriton Rodrick Sowman

Tinwald Reserve Board	Leen Braam (Chair) Ainsley Braam-Smith (Tres) Graham Ackroyd Michelle Box Raymond Nicholson Mark Scammell	
Mayfield Reserve & Memorial Hall Board	David Greenslade (Chair) Brent Murdoch (Tres) John Milne Helen Saxelby Tim Boyd Paul Dalgety Aafke Baxter Reon Blake	
Rakaia Reserve Board	Bruce Perry (Chair) Margaret Crozier (Sec/Tres) David Boag Alistair Sutherland Michelle Scrivenor	
Methven Reserve Board	Colin Maw (Chair) Graeme Smith (Tres) Murray Holmes Chris Lock Charles Whitehead Mark Smith	
Alford Forest Reserve Board	Richard Ellis (Chair) Carol Jones (Sec/Tres) Malcolm Cretney Danny Symons Matt Symons Martin Armour Katrin Geilfuss	
	Cameron/Ellis	Carried

14 Mayor's Report

That Council receives the Mayor's report.

Mayor/Hooper Carried

- Biodiversity Champions Group**

That Councillor Deb Gilkison be appointed as Council's representative on the Biodiversity Champions Group.

Maxwell/Wilson Carried

Welcome to Staff – 2.30pm

People & Capability Manager Katie Perry introduced new staff – Eli Sinclair (Digital Programmes Assistant), Philippa Hadley-Chinn (P&C Officer), Jackson Lattimer (Lifeguard) and Emily Willis (Horticulturist).

Council also acknowledged the long service – for 10 years of Jill Cullimore (EANC Customer Service) and Matthew Lucas (IS Application Specialist).

Business transacted with the public excluded - 2.35pm

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely – the general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

Item No	General subject of each matter to be considered:	In accordance with Section 48(1) of the Act, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter:	
15	Council 3/12/25	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities
16	Rates Remission	Section 7(2)(j)	Protection of information from improper use
17	Mt Hutt Memorial Hall Board	Section 7(2)(a)	Protection of privacy of natural persons
18	Reserve Revocation	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities
19	Elderly Persons Housing	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities
20	EA Networks Centre	Section 7(2)(a)	Protection of privacy of natural persons
21	Rokowhiria Operating Hours	Section 7(2)(a)	Protection of privacy of natural persons
22	Service Provider for CE review & Board appointments	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities
23	Audit NZ	Section 7(2)(a)	Protection of privacy of natural persons
24	Ashburton Contracting Ltd – quarterly report	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities

Mayor/Ellis

Carried

Council adjourned for afternoon tea from 2.35pm.

Business transacted with the public excluded now in open meeting

- Reserve Revocation and Land Disposal – Tinwald**

- That** in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 24 of the Reserves Act 1977, Council resolves that the area of land being 0.324 hectares of land shown as Section 2 on SO Plan 613500, being part of Lot 2 Deposited Plan 68747 comprised in Record of Title CB39D/1008, is surplus to requirements as it is no longer being used for its classification as recreation reserve and as the land serves no other reserve purpose and further that the Council requests that the Minister of Conservation revokes the reservation over the land.

Ellis/Gilkison

Carried

- Change to late night hours at Rokowhiria**

That Council cease the weekly late-night Wednesday hours at Rokowhiria, instead using this for events as needed.

Cameron/Ellis

Carried

The meeting concluded at 6.01pm.

Confirmed 4 February 2026

MAYOR

5. *Canterbury Local Authorities Triennial Agreement 2025-2028*

Author *Tania Paddock; GM Legal & Democracy*
Executive Team Member *Hamish Riach; Chief Executive*

Summary

- The Canterbury Mayoral Forum adopted the Canterbury Local Authorities' Triennial Agreement 2025-2028 (**the Agreement**) in November 2025. The Mayoral Forum requires the member councils to ratify the Agreement by 1 March 2026.
- The Canterbury Mayoral Forum terms of reference form part of the Agreement.

Recommendation

1. **That** Council ratifies the Canterbury Local Authorities Triennial Agreement 2025-28.

Attachment

Appendix 1 Draft Agreement and Mayoral Forum terms of reference documents

Background

The current situation

1. Not later than 1 March after each triennial general election of members, all local authorities within each region must enter into a triennial agreement under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 2002 (**LGA**).
2. The Agreement mandates the work of the Mayoral Forum, the Chief Executive Forum and other regional forums and working groups. The parties to the Agreement are the 11 local authorities of Canterbury.
3. The purpose of this Agreement is to ensure that appropriate levels of communication, co-ordination and collaboration are maintained between local authorities within the region. Section 15(2) of the LGA states this agreement must include:
 - protocols for communication and co-ordination between councils
 - the process by which councils will comply with [section 16 LGA](#), which applies to significant new activities proposed by regional councils
 - processes and protocols through which all councils can participate in identifying, delivering and funding facilities and services of significance to more than one district.
4. Triennial agreements may also include commitments to establish joint governance arrangements to give better effect to the matters set out above (section 15(3) LGA).
5. A triennial agreement may be varied by agreement between all the local authorities within a region and remains in force until local authorities ratify a new agreement.
6. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum adopted the draft Agreement at their meeting on 28 November 2025.
7. The Agreement includes terms of reference for the Mayoral Forum and mandates it as the primary mechanism for implementing the Agreement in Canterbury (Agreement, paragraph 14). The Agreement (paragraph 16) also mandates the Chief Executives Forum and other regional forums and working groups.
8. Paragraph 12 of the Agreement refers to the purpose of local government under section 10 of the LGA. The Local Government (Systems Improvements) Amendment Bill proposes to make changes to the purpose of local government in the LGA. However, as this Bill this is not yet enacted (but is likely to be enacted in the coming months), paragraph 12 of the Agreement will be updated at the time the Agreement is ratified to reflect the legislation in force at the time.

Options analysis

Option one – Do not ratify the Triennial Agreement

9. This is not a viable option. Section 15 of the LGA requires all councils to enter into a “triennial agreement” that sets out how they will work together.

Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no identified advantages.	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council will not meet its statutory requirement
Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reputational risk from failing to comply with Council’s statutory obligation and perceived to not be working with other councils.	

Option two – Ratify the Triennial Agreement 2025/28 (Recommended)

Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council meets its statutory requirement• The Agreement mandates the work of the Mayoral & CE Forums, and other regional forums and working groups	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No apparent disadvantage
Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No apparent risk. The Parties may enter into other agreements and the Triennial Agreement may be varied.	

Legal/policy implications

Legislation

10. The Agreement complies with requirements in [section 15](#) of the LGA, as discussed above.
11. The Agreement needs to be ratified by the parties to the agreement – the 10 territorial authorities in Canterbury and the regional council – no later than 1 March 2026.

Climate change

12. Council shares in a collective duty of care to safeguard the natural environment. Council’s approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation will benefit from the consistency and alignment that can be achieved through collaboration with other councils in the region.
13. In 2024, the Canterbury Mayoral Forum adopted the [Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan \(CCCP\)](#) which sets climate change actions for Canterbury for 2024-27. The purpose of the CCCP is to set out how the 11 councils intend to work together, and

with others, to support the transition to a thriving, climate-resilient, low-emissions region. Through the Long-Term Plan 2024-37, Council committed to spending \$50,000 annually over the first three years of the LTP on CCCP initiatives.

Strategic alignment

14. The Agreement demonstrates that Council collaborates with its partners and therefore relates to Council's community outcome of "residents are included and have a voice".

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic	✓	The Agreement enables work to take place that will benefit all four community wellbeings.
Environmental	✓	
Cultural	✓	
Social	✓	

Financial implications

15. Member councils meet their own costs for meeting attendance (travel, accommodation and Mayoral Forum working dinners).
16. The Chief Executive's Forum has a regional forums budget for approved collaborative projects. This is funded by a levy on member councils to an agreed formula. The Mayoral Forum may also choose to levy councils for specific project work if required, over and above the Chief Executives regional forums budget. This is decided on a case-by-case basis.
17. ADC's total Mayoral Forum levy for 2025/26 is \$6,948.04 plus GST. The proposed levy for 2026/27 is \$45,374, which comprises of a contribution to Energy Inventory project, Regional Deal Proposal and the Regional Forums budget. This proposed levy will be discussed in the Annual Plan 2026/27 budget discussions.

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	Ancillary costs associated with travel, accommodation and Mayoral Forum working dinners, along with the annual levy.
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	Yes
Where is the funding coming from?	Within existing budgets
Are there any future budget implications?	No
Reviewed by Finance	Erin Register; Finance Manager.

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No. Adopting and ratifying a triennial agreement, as required by the section 15 of the LGA, is not considered significant.
Level of significance	Low - not significant
Rationale for selecting level of significance	N/A
Level of engagement selected	Inform.
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	This level of engagement is appropriate given the significance assessment.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

Canterbury Local Authorities' Triennial Agreement 2025-2028

Background

1. Section 15 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) requires local authorities within a regional council area to enter into a Triennial Agreement (the Agreement) by 1 March following triennial local body elections.
2. The purpose of the Agreement is to ensure appropriate levels of communication, co-ordination and collaboration between local authorities within the region. The agreement must include:
 - protocols for communication and co-ordination between the councils
 - the process by which councils will comply with section 16 of the Act, which applies to significant new activities proposed by regional councils
 - processes and protocols through which all councils can participate in identifying, delivering and funding facilities and services of significance to more than one district.
3. Agreements may also include commitments to establish joint governance arrangements to give better effect to the matters set out in paragraph 2 above.

Parties to the Agreement

4. The Parties to the Agreement are the Kaikōura, Hurunui, Waimakariri, Selwyn, Ashburton, Timaru, Mackenzie, Waimate and Waitaki District Councils, the Christchurch City Council, and the Canterbury Regional Council (Environment Canterbury).

Standing together for Canterbury

5. The Parties agree to work collaboratively and in good faith for the good governance and sustainable development of their districts, cities and region.

Communication

6. The Parties value and will maintain open communication, collaboration and trust. In the interest of "no surprises", the Parties will give early notice of potential disagreements between, or actions likely to impact significantly on, other Parties.

Significant new activities

7. When a Party is considering a major policy initiative or proposal that may have implications for other Parties, they will give early notification to the affected Parties and share the information with the Canterbury Mayoral Forum and the Canterbury Chief Executives Forum.
8. The Canterbury Regional Council will provide early advice to the Canterbury Chief Executives Forum and the Canterbury Mayoral Forum of any significant new activity, in addition to other requirements specified in s.16 of the Act.

Local government structure in Canterbury

9. Notwithstanding the spirit of co-operation and collaboration embodied in the Agreement, the Parties, individually or collectively, reserve the right to promote, consult and/or research change to the structure of local government within the Canterbury region.
10. This right is consistent with the intent to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local government (Local Government Act 2002 s.24AA), having regard to communities of interest and community representation.

Regional Policy Statement review

11. The Agreement applies to any change, variation or review of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement.

Collaboration

12. The Parties commit to working collaboratively to:
 - enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities
 - [promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future (Local Government Act 2002, s.10)].

[or]

 - *[to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses; and to support local economic growth and development by fulfilling the purpose set out above (Local Government (Systems Improvement) Amendment Bill (clause 6)]*
13. Collaboration may be undertaken on a whole-of-region, or sub-regional, basis.
14. The primary mechanism to implement this Agreement is the Canterbury Mayoral Forum. The Forum will meet quarterly and operate in accordance with its agreed terms of reference, which are attached as **Appendix 1**.
15. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum will:
 - continue to provide governance of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy
 - develop and lead implementation of a sustainable development strategy for Canterbury region for the local government triennium 2025-2028
 - advocate for the interests of the region, its councils and communities.
16. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum will be supported by the Canterbury Chief Executives Forum and other regional forums and working groups as agreed from time to time.
17. The Chief Executives Forum will:
 - report quarterly to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum on delivery of its work programme to implement and manage collaborative projects and agreed actions of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum
 - identify and escalate to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum strategic issues and opportunities for collaboration from the Policy, Corporate and Operational Forums and other regional and sub-regional working groups.
18. As requested by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, Environment Canterbury will host a permanent regional forums secretariat and resource this from the regional general rate.

Commented [MM1]: This bullet point will be updated to reflect the legislation at the time of ratification.

Other agreements

19. This Agreement does not prevent the Parties from entering into other agreements among themselves or outside the Canterbury region. Any other such agreement should not, however, be contrary to the purpose and spirit of this Agreement.

Agreement to review

20. A triennial agreement may be varied by agreement between all the local authorities within the region and remains in force until local authorities ratify a new agreement.
21. Any one or more of the Parties can request an amendment to this Agreement by writing to the Chair of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum at least two weeks before a regular quarterly meeting of the Forum.
22. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum will review the Agreement no later than the final meeting before triennial local body elections and recommend any changes to the incoming councils.

Authority

23. This Canterbury Local Authorities' Triennial Agreement 2025-2028 is signed by the following on behalf of their respective authorities:

COUNCIL	SIGNATURE	DATE
Ashburton District Council Mayor		
Canterbury Regional Council Chair		
Christchurch City Council Mayor		
Hurunui District Council Mayor		
Kaikōura District Council Mayor		

Mackenzie District Council Mayor
Selwyn District Council Mayor
Timaru District Council Mayor
Waimakariri District Council Mayor
Waimate District Council Mayor
Waitaki District Council Mayor

Appendix 1: Canterbury Mayoral Forum terms of reference

1. Name

The name of the group shall be the Canterbury Mayoral Forum.

2. Objectives

- (a) To provide a forum to enable Canterbury councils to work more collaboratively with each other and with central government and other key sector leaders in Canterbury to identify opportunities and solve problems together.
- (b) To identify and prioritise issues of mutual concern and foster co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration to address these issues (including where appropriate joint work plans).
- (c) To formulate policies and strategies on matters where all member councils may act collaboratively in determining plans for the co-ordination of regional growth.
- (d) To ensure increased effectiveness of local government in meeting the needs of Canterbury communities.
- (e) To act as an advocate to central government or their agencies or other bodies on issues of concern to members.
- (f) To develop and implement programmes, which are responsive to the needs and expectations of the community.

3. Principles

In pursuit of these objectives the Canterbury Mayoral Forum will observe the following principles.

- (a) Establish and maintain close liaison with other local government networks to ensure as far as possible the pursuit of common objectives and the minimisation of duplication.
- (b) Establish and maintain close liaison with Ministers of the Crown and local Members of Parliament.
- (c) Establish and maintain close liaison with a wide number of diverse stakeholders and key sector organisations within the region.
- (d) Exercise its functions with due regard to the tangata whenua and cultural diversity of the Canterbury community.
- (e) Keep the local community informed about its activities by proactively releasing information about key projects in a timely manner, as agreed by the member councils.
- (f) Encourage member councils to promote and apply cross-boundary structures and systems.
- (g) Establish a provision for reporting back to its respective Councils.

4. Powers

- (a) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall have the power to:
 - (i) levy for any or all of its objects in such amount or amounts as may be mutually determined and acceptable to individual local authorities
 - (ii) determine and make payments from its funds for any or all of the purposes of its objects
 - (iii) receive any grant or subsidy and apply monies for the purposes of such grant or subsidy
 - (iv) fund appropriate aspects of the Forum's activities regionally.
- (b) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum does not have the power to legally bind any council to any act or decision unless that act or decision has been agreed to by decision of that council.

5. Membership

- (a) Membership of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall be open to the following councils:
 - Ashburton District Council
 - Canterbury Regional Council
 - Christchurch City Council
 - Hurunui District Council
 - Kaikōura District Council
 - Mackenzie District Council
 - Selwyn District Council
 - Timaru District Council
 - Waimakariri District Council
 - Waimate District Council
 - Waitaki District Council
- (b) Each member council shall be represented by its Mayor (or Chair in the case of Canterbury Regional Council) and supported by its Chief Executive. On occasions where the Mayor or Chair cannot attend, a council may be represented by its Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair.
- (c) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall have the power to invite people to attend and participate in its meetings on a permanent and/or issues basis.
- (d) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall extend an invitation to the Chairs of the ten Waitaha Papatipu Rūnanga to meet at least annually with the Forum

6. Chairperson

- (a) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall select a Chair at the first meeting immediately following the Triennial Elections. This appointment may be reviewed after a period of 18 months.
- (b) The Chair selected will preside at all meetings of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum.
- (c) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum shall select a Deputy Chair at the first meeting immediately following the Triennial Elections.
- (d) The Canterbury Mayoral Forum may appoint spokespersons from its membership for

issues being considered, in which case each member council agrees to refer all requests for information and documents to the duly appointed spokespersons.

7. Meetings

- (a) Meetings will be held as required with an annual schedule, covering a calendar year, to be determined by the members. Meetings will be held quarterly at venues to be determined.
- (b) Special meetings may be called at the request of four members.
- (c) The secretariat will prepare an agenda for Mayoral Forum meetings in consultation with the Chair and the Chief Executives Forum.
- (d) Agendas for meetings will be issued, and minutes will be taken and circulated.
- (e) A summary of each meeting will be drafted and shared on the Canterbury Mayoral Forum website for members to distribute within their councils as a high-level record of the meeting.
- (f) Approved minutes and approved final reports and papers will be made available via the Canterbury Mayoral Forum website as agreed by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum.

8. Decision making

- (a) The practice of the Forum will be to determine issues before it by consensus.
- (b) If the consensus is to determine issues by voting, the determination shall be determined by a majority of votes of the authorities represented at the meeting through the Mayor or Chair or their nominated representative.

9. Secretariat

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum will appoint Environment Canterbury to carry out the secretariat function on such terms and conditions as it shall decide for the discharge of duties. This includes taking minutes, keeping any books and accounts and attending to any other business of the forum.

6. Cameron Street parking (former Polytechnic)

Author *Rick Catchpowle*

Executive Team Member *Ian Hyde, Group Manager, Compliance and Development.*

Summary

- The purpose of this report is to request Council's direction on parking arrangements for the former Polytechnic site on Cameron Street and specifically on whether paid parking should be implemented at this site as it reopens for public use. This follows Council direction in February 2025.
- If Council were to resolve for the site to be used for paid parking purposes, for consistency and clarity it would be preferable for this to be in place before the site was reopened to the public.
- Redevelopment of the former Polytechnic site (the site) to remove buildings and form a carpark began in August 2025 and work is currently ongoing.
- The current cost of a "paid parking" unit without a coin/cash system is \$6,899.00 (ex GST) and it is considered that two units will be needed to cover a site of this size.
- Using the return from the "Eastfield" carparking site on Cass Street in the CBD, parking revenue is conservatively estimated to be around \$34,500 per annum, exclusive of GST.

Recommendation

1. **That** motorists parking at the Balmoral Hall and former Ashburton Polytechnic carpark on Cameron Street, Ashburton, shall be required to pay for all day parking at a rate of \$3.00 (incl GST) per day; and
2. **That** the required changes to Council's adopted Fees and Charges be made.

Attachment

Appendix 1 Aerial photograph of site

Background

The current situation

Demolition of the Balmoral Hall and former Ashburton Polytechnic site

1. As part of the 2024-34 Long Term Plan deliberations, resolutions were passed at the Council meeting of 23 May 2024 to sell or demolish the Balmoral Hall and former Ashburton Polytechnic site and construct an unsealed carpark (the carpark).

That Council retains the Balmoral Hall and the site for two more years, or until the Hall becomes unusable, whereby the hall is sold or demolished.

Wilson/Mackle

Carried

A show of hands gave 6 for and 3 against, 1 abstained

Cr Cameron recorded her vote against the motion

That Council retains the Polytech site, demolishes or sells the buildings and invests in the redevelopment of an unsealed carpark on the site at an estimate of \$1.5m.

McMillan/Braam

Carried

2. Demolition of the former Polytechnic buildings commenced in August 2025 and, at the time of writing, the site is currently fenced off and unavailable for parking, works are expected to be completed in early April. An associated project for the demolition of Balmoral Hall is expected to commence mid-2026.

Other related reports

3. A report on Parking Activities in the Ashburton Central Business District was considered by Council on 19 February 2025. Following consideration of this report staff were directed to continue to monitor parking activities and report back to Council in August 2026 as well as to prepare a report on whether parking on the site is to be paid for. The resolution was as follows:

Parking in Ashburton CBD

Council asked for a review of the short-term parking time restrictions still in existence on Havelock Street (adjacent to the old Library) and an update on the parking space adjacent to Balmoral Hall, i.e. timeline for demolition and if parking is to be paid. Officers will prepare a report.

1. **That** Council receives the report.
2. **That** Council continues to monitor the situation and directs staff to undertake further investigation, including appropriate technical reports on parking in the Ashburton Central Business District, reporting back to Council in August 2026.

McMillan/Braam

Carried

4. The costs of the site following completion of demolition and resurfacing works are expected to be approximately \$30,000 per year. This includes approximately \$10,000 associated with the change in rateability associated with conversion of the site to a carpark. It is noted that this is unrelated to whether parking offered is free or charged.

5. The Council has two other pieces of land currently used for parking on Burnett Street between Cass and William Streets which are currently free to use. These have not been included within the recommendations of this report.

Parking proposal and options

6. Prior to its recent closure, the central part of the site was used by members of the community, businesses and, since the move of the Council to Te Whare Whakare, Council staff, who took advantage of its unrestricted nature.
7. The impact from the closure of the site from August 2025 has been informally monitored by Council parking staff who report that there have been no significant issues from vehicles which have been displaced, beyond what are found elsewhere. This indicates that users are currently making alternative arrangements without significant disruption to parking in the area.
8. The number of proposed/available parking spaces is estimated at 100 at the conclusion of works (including the Balmoral Hall site area, this would increase to around 123). This conclusion was reached by applying a formula based on the site area and public parking spaces available at the Eastfields car park (Eastfields) in the central CBD.
9. In the Eastfield carpark, annual returns are approximately \$3600.00 (ex GST) per month or \$43,700.00 per annum. The yield of the larger Cameron Street site could be expected to generate income at a conservative estimate of \$34,500 per annum. This estimate includes a 50% reduction in expected activity compared to Eastfields due to its greater separation from the town centre and the various other parking opportunities available for users. It is noted that in other parking areas in the Ashburton CBD (Eastfields and the private parking lot opposite Baring Square on Cameron Street) use has increased over time.
10. Dependent on demand, longer term options for parking could also be investigated.
11. The parking units proposed to be installed are solar powered and the selected system will operate on a **Pay By Plate** basis, as opposed to the existing **Pay and Display** units currently used at Eastfields. The recommended option proposes all day parking, as already exists at the Eastfields carpark. Given the size of the site, 2 payment units are proposed, also as provided at Eastfields.
12. The operational cost of a “Paid Parking” unit to serve the parking spaces will depend on the payment option offered. Cashless payment units cost \$6,899.00 (ex GST) per unit.
13. An alternative is to obtain cashless payment units, with the additional option of payment by coin, at– \$8,946.00 (ex GST) per unit. This option would also attract additional costs of \$80.00 per fortnight (\$2,080.00 per annum) for coin collection from the two units.

- 14.** It is not proposed that the units will have this additional cash payment option, and it is concluded that this should not unduly inconvenience users wanting to pay cash as they can use the Eastfields site which currently provides this facility.
- 15.** Implementing Pay By Plate units will also eliminate the ongoing expense of supplying ticket receipt rolls required by Pay and Display machines, which currently cost \$550.00 annually.
- 16.** Maintenance costs are estimated at \$500.00 per unit per year. Additional one-off costs for signage to indicate this is a “Paid Parking” facility are estimated at \$1000.00 and ongoing “eftpos” and systems charges are estimated at \$1700.00 per unit per year.
- 17.** Delivery of units is currently estimated at 3-4 weeks.
- 18.** If paid parking is introduced, users will enter the site, park their vehicle, and make payment at the designated Pay By Plate unit before leaving on foot. Staff will investigate alternative payment methods such as mobile “Payment Apps” linked to the units which may be introduced subsequently.
- 19.** The site will be patrolled by Council staff to oversee and enforce parking compliance as part of their regular duties.
- 20.** All fees for parking on this site would be kept in line with the Council’s Fees and Charges. This would require amendment to its wording which currently reads as follows:

22.1	<i>Cass St car park pay and display meter (per day)</i>	\$3
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- 21.** Given that the site is anticipated to reopen prior to the introduction of changes to fees and charges through the 2026/27 annual plan process, alterations to this charge form part of the recommended resolution.
- 22.** It is possible that payment for parking would generate a higher level of expectation from visitors in terms of the maintenance and condition of the parking area, however as it’s use would be discretionary, it is considered that the risks associated with this would be low.
- 23.** The closure of the site has allowed assessment of parking behaviour in its absence. The conclusion reached is that the current unavailability of the parking area has not caused significant disruption, and therefore if paid parking was to be introduced with low use initially, it would not cause significant additional issues for parking in the area.

Options analysis

Option one – that the carparking area on the site of the former Ashburton Polytechnic on Cameron Street, Ashburton, continue as a free parking area.

24. This option would result in a continuation of the predevelopment situation with cars being able to park in an unrestricted fashion on the site.

Advantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No change from previously existing situation.• Limited expectation for increased or improved service from the community.• No comms required• No resource required for monitoring or enforcement.	Disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site does not generate a financial return.• Would do nothing to encourage non-car based transport or car sharing options.
Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be more difficult to implement a paid solution at a later date.	

Option two – that motorists parking in the Balmoral Hall and former Ashburton Polytechnic carpark on Cameron Street Ashburton, shall be required to pay for all day parking at a rate of \$3 per day; and the required changes to Council’s adopted fees and charges are made. (Recommended option)

25. This solution would provide parking in a similar way to the “Eastfields Carpark” with the exception that customers would use “pay by plate” technology which would allow for more efficient monitoring through emerging technologies.
26. This option would also require amendment to adopted Fees and Charges to allow for parking to be charged.

<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site would generate a return. • Comms around charging for parking in the location would be clear from its reopening. • May encourage some people to use non-car based transport or to car share. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incurred costs associated with administration and systems. • Will require active monitoring to ensure paid parking requirements are met and enforced.
<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be seen to disadvantage workers or businesses in the CBD or surrounds. • Low level risk of under-utilisation, increased on-street parking and conflict in the future. <p>Consumers may expect a higher level of service (e.g. No potholes) if paying to park.</p>	

Option three – That staff are directed to investigate other options for time limited parking.

27. This option would consider other potential parking solutions which could include a certain level of parking which would be free, after which a charge would be required. For example, under 3 hours would be free and beyond this a payment would be required.

<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for short term free parking for customers within the CBD. • Would encourage circulation of traffic. • Would allow for recovery of costs associated with the redevelopment of the site. • May encourage some people to use non car based transport or to car share. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be more complex to administer than other options. • Communication of parking standards would be more complex. • More time and research. • Likely to not be ready by the time of reopening of the site.
<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be seen to disadvantage workers or businesses in the CBD and surroundings. • Time taken for further research may not align with conclusion of works onsite causing delays. • More complexity could cause confusion to users. 	

Legal/policy implications

Ashburton District Parking Strategy

28. In November 2021, Council adopted the Ashburton District Parking Strategy¹. The purpose of this strategy was to set out Council's approach to managing parking for vehicles in the district.
29. The Strategy identified the need for Parking Management Plans for town centres (Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia). The Strategy anticipated that these Parking Management Plans would address parking supply and demand needs well as recommending short-, medium-, and long-term parking management measures.

Ashburton Town Centre Parking Management Plan

30. Council also adopted the Ashburton Town Centre Parking Management Plan² in November 2021.
31. The Parking Management Plan concluded a potential future increase in demand for parking in the town centre. It also referred to revisiting paid parking as a parking management option open to Council if it becomes appropriate. For this reason, progressing the development of this car park for paid parking purposes is seen as consistent with the short-term actions in the Management Plan.
32. It is therefore considered that the proposed recommendation in this report to proceed with a paid option for this car park is consistent with the Management Plan.

Ashburton Walking and & Cycling Strategy 2020-2030

33. The Walking and Cycling Strategy provides a framework for making walking and cycling (for transport and recreation) safer and more attractive, with the aim of increasing the number of people using the walking and cycling network. While the use of paid parking is not specifically referenced as a mechanism for encouraging people to use alternative modes of transport, the recommended option in this report is consistent with the intentions of the document.

Ashburton District Plan 2014

34. Policy 10.1E, relating to Objective 10.2 (the maintenance and enhancement of transportation systems) seeks to encourage and enable walking and cycling as sustainable forms of transportation. As above, requiring payment to park may encourage people to investigate other options for travel.

¹[Ashburton District Parking Strategy](#)

²[Ashburton Town Centre Parking Management Plan](#)

Climate change

- 35.** The Ashburton Town Centre Parking Management Plan has found there is likely to be a future increase in demand for parking in the town centre. However, if there are financial payments required to park close to the town centre, such as the recommended option within this report, people may choose alternative forms of transport such as walking, biking or car-pooling, thereby reducing vehicle emissions.

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel

Tania Paddock; GL Legal & Democracy

Strategic alignment

- 36.** The recommendation relates to Council's community outcome of a district of great places and spaces because the proposed car park provides infrastructure that is planned and developed to meet current and future needs.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic	✓	The charging for parking in this carpark will generate a user pays based return for the land, lessening the load for the ratepayer.
Environmental	X	May encourage the use of non-car forms of transport or car sharing.
Cultural	X	
Social	✓	Paid parking will encourage non car solutions such as walking or cycling which have health benefits.

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	Total cost for two Pay By Plate units is estimated at \$14,000.00 to \$18,000.00 (ex GST), depending on payment options offered for parking. There will also be additional one-off costs for signage estimated at \$1000.00
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	Yes
Where is the funding coming from?	Parking Reserve
Are there any future budget implications?	Yes Maintenance costs of approximately \$1,000.00 for the two additional units per annum. Systems charges of \$3,400.00 for the two units per annum. Coin collection costs at \$80.00 per fortnight (\$2,080.00 per annum) if required.
Reviewed by Finance	<i>Erin Register; Finance Manager.</i>

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Low
Rationale for selecting level of significance	N/A
Level of engagement selected	Inform.
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	Residents will be informed of Council's decision through standard Council Comms and advisories directly to those wishing to use the parking area.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

Appendix 1



Key

Red – Buildings to be removed

Green – Grass buffer area between the new carpark and the residential houses

Blue – Tree & Shrubs to be removed

Purple – Heritage Tree to remain in place

Where possible, asphalt will remain in place with the balance areas to be unsealed (basic gravel carpark).

7. *Request to change the naming of McKenzies Road to Millers Road*

Author	<i>Brad Thomson; District Planning Manager</i>
Activity Manager	<i>Brad Thomson; District Planning Manager</i>
Executive Team Member	<i>Ian Hyde; Group Manager Compliance & Development</i>

Summary

- The purpose of this report is to present a road naming application to change a section of McKenzies Road, Anama. This section of road having been renamed from Millers Road by Council in 1998.
- Council's Naming Policy allows for applications to be made requesting Council to rename roads and provides matters to consider in proposals.
- The Australia/New Zealand Standard for Rural and Urban Addressing (the Standard) is also applicable when considering naming applications.
- There are similar existing names in the District being "Millars Road" near Lagmhor and "Miller Avenue" in Ashburton.

Recommendation

1. **That** Council declines the request to change a portion of McKenzies Road to Millers Road.

Attachments

Appendix 1	Location maps
Appendix 2	Former dwelling location
Appendix 3	Road naming application

Background

The current situation

1. A member of the public has made an application to change the name of a section of McKenzies Road (identified on **Appendix 1**) in Mayfield to its previous name of Millers Road.
2. The relevant section of McKenzies Road appears to have been renamed from Millers Road sometime in 1998 but the Council archivist has been unable to find the records of the Council resolution. The balance of Millers Road was changed in 2001 to Hewsons Road, but the Special Order does not detail the reasoning.

Historical information

3. The application states that the Millers built a home in the area in the 1880s and multiple generations attended Anama School. The applicant also mentions that the Miller family was in the area prior to the MacKenzies and it was the Millers who first attended the Anama school in 1902.
4. It appears the Mackenzies were also historic owners in the area, with multiple building permits in the 1960s and 70s being applied for by the MacKenzie family on the site the Miller homestead was located on.
5. Council officers have been informed by the applicant the original Miller homestead has been recently demolished as part of a dairy conversion.
6. It is unclear if the Road name McKenzie and the MacKenzie family is a coincidence or there was a mistake in the spelling of the Road name at the time, however it is possible that the name may also have a historic connection to the area.
7. The Miller Avenue name in Ashburton is understood to relate to Dr George Inglis Miller, originally from Otago, who was Ashburton Borough Mayor from 1938 until his death in 1940.

Assessment of the request

8. Council's Naming Policy sets out considerations in assessing renaming of roads, these including suitability, potential for confusion and relevance. Applicants are also requested to document any engagement they have had with potentially affected parties.
9. The applicant has noted some discussion with parties in their application but does not appear to have undertaken detailed consultation with the current owners of properties on the road. Staff are not aware of any other requests or interest in renaming this road.

10. Road naming and renaming is important as names should be relevant to their location and the Naming Policy acknowledges that applicants may wish to explain why the proposed name has a greater value in terms of history than the current one. However, names must also be distinctive and identifiable for visitors and particularly emergency services. Names which are the same or similar can cause confusion and delay, for example through phone conversations or by mistakes in spelling during written communication, particularly in times of stress.
11. Council staff have considered the request against Council's adopted Naming Policy (2023) and the best practice AS/NZ Standard for naming and have found that the similarity between Millers Road and Millars Road (a short road near Lagmhor) could be expected to cause confusion due to their similarity. The assessment against the Standard and Council's Policy are explained subsequently in this report.
12. Council staff, in investigating this matter have noted that some older printed maps do still show outdated names including Miller Road in this location and it is intended that physical records will be reviewed and updated as appropriate to correct this.

Options analysis

Option one – That Council declines the request to change a portion of McKenzies Road to Millers Road.

13. The application to change the name of the Road would be declined and the road would continue to be known as McKenzies Road.
14. This position does not take a view on the merits of the case for recognition of the name as put forward by the requestor but rather acknowledges the risk associated with adopting a name which would be likely to cause confusion and risk with another existing name in the District.

<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids confusion with other names, • Consistent with the Council Policy, National Standard and best practice. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not the outcome the applicant has requested.
<p>Risks:</p> <p>None identified.</p>	

Option two – That Council directs staff to undertake further work to investigate renaming McKenzies Road to Millers Road.

15. This option would direct Council officers to undertake further research relating to the potential renaming of the road. This would be likely to include further archival research of previous Council decisions and direct consultation with potentially affected land

owners. It is anticipated that this would also include investigation into changing the name of Millers Road.

<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would allow better understanding of community view of the situation and background. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would likely require diversion of work from other projects.
<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be seen as an inefficient use of resource. • May disruptive to potentially affected parties. 	

Option three– That the request to rename part of McKenzies Road to Millers Road is declined and the information be retained as a historical record so as to be available for consideration if a suitable naming opportunity in the vicinity of McKenzies Road becomes available in the future.

16. Council, through its naming policy, retains the ability to name items of importance to the community such as parks, reserves and public gardens. The Miller name and the details in this application could be set aside and considered as an option should an appropriate facility requiring a name be developed in the area.

17. It is noted that [Miller Avenue Park](#), off Miller Avenue, currently exists in the District,

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Application and supporting documents are available to be considered in the future.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>None identified</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>May raise expectations for future recognition if no infrastructure requiring naming is expected to occur.</p>	

Legal/policy implications

Australia/New Zealand Standard – Rural and urban addressing (AS/NZS 4819/2011)

18. Council uses the above standard in assessment of road naming applications this is best practice for naming in New Zealand and Australia.

19. Section 4 of the Standard relates to road definition and naming, the introduction states:

Road names are needed to uniquely and clearly identify roads as well as the related address. The road names themselves need to be clear and unambiguous.

20. Part 4.4.7 of the Standard, when referring to duplication of road names says the following:

The name element of a road name, regardless of any difference in the road type, shall not be –

- (a) the same as an existing road name;*
- (b) similar in spelling to an existing road name; or*
- (c) similar to an existing road name,*
where the existing road name is –
 - (i) in the same locality; or*
 - (ii) in an adjoining locality; or*
 - (iii) in the same local government area*

It is considered that the proposed renaming, because it is similar in spelling and sound to an existing name (Millars Road, and possibly in Miller Avenue) in the same local government area and locality, would be inconsistent with the intentions of the Standard.

Council Road Naming Policy

21. The [Ashburton District Council Naming Policy 2023](#) provides guidance to applicants on naming and renaming within the District, the process to be followed and the matters that will be considered in considering proposals.
22. Alongside the relevance of the names to the District or area, the Policy requires names to avoid confusion with other names. The statement in the Policy is as follows:

Assessing Proposed Names

The decision on any road name or name change will be made in conjunction with the Australia/NZ standard for Addressing as well as:

- The suitability of the name with respect to roads and private rights-of-way under the road naming standard used by the Council
- The potential for confusion with other names within the District, whether it be by duplicating or sounding similar to an existing name.
- Other matters Council may consider include (but are not limited to) whether the name:
 - reinforces a theme already associated to an area;
 - includes references to traditional or historical names significant to the local area or the District;
 - recognises events that have had a significant impact on the community;
 - honours local residents who have made significant contributions to the community; and/or
 - relates to landscape and topographical features.

23. As in the previous comments, officers are concerned that there is potential for confusion with other names in the District by duplicating or sounding similar to the existing Millars Road.

Climate change

24. This road naming report does not have a direct impact on climate change

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel

Jacqui Watson; Senior Legal Counsel

Strategic alignment

25. The recommendation relates to Council's community outcome of Social because of the following

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic		
Environmental		
Cultural	✓	The appropriate naming of roads has benefit to the character of the area and the identity of the District
Social		

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	<p>If Council accept the recommendation, then there will be no changes required.</p> <p>If an option to investigate further was adopted, additional time and cost would be required from staff and archivists as well as consultation with potentially affected stakeholders.</p>
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	Costs would be covered through existing budgets.
Where is the funding coming from?	N/A
Are there any future budget implications?	N/A
Reviewed by Finance	Erin Register; Finance Manager.

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Low
Rationale for selecting level of significance	N/A
Level of engagement selected	Inform
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	<p>The recommended option will not require any action to be taken. The applicant will be informed of Council's decision following the Council meeting</p> <p>If an option to research further was adopted, staff would conduct targeted consultation with potentially affected parties.</p>
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

Appendix one – Location maps

Current Aerial Photograph



Area of interest highlighted in yellow.

Map showing previous name on historic map(1999)



Area of interest highlighted in Pink

Appendix two – Approximate location of homestead (now removed).



Area of interest highlighted in shaded box (top right)

Renaming Application

Application Form

Please return this form to: info@adc.govt.nz or Ashburton District Council, PO Box 94, Ashburton 7740

About this form

Council Policy requires that where public assets are to be renamed, the proposed naming follows a formal process.

Application Process

Applications for re-naming **must demonstrate that there is a need for the change**, this might be due to safety, to make a correction or to more appropriately reflect the history or character of the site or area.

Please be aware that due to the cycle of Council meetings, and preparations required by Council staff, a decision on any proposed names may take up to eight weeks.

Assessing Proposed Names

The decision on any road name or name change will be made in conjunction with the Australia/NZ standard for Addressing as well as:

- The suitability of the name with respect to roads and private rights-of-way under the road naming standard used by the Council
- The potential for confusion with other names within the District, whether it be by duplicating or sounding similar to an existing name.
- Other matters Council may consider include (but are not limited to) whether the name:
 - reinforces a theme already associated to an area;
 - includes references to traditional or historical names significant to the local area or the District;
 - recognises events that have had a significant impact on the community;
 - honours local residents who have made significant contributions to the community; and/or
 - relates to landscape and topographical features.

While a name may be suggested by an applicant, applicants should be aware that the final decision on naming will be made by the Council.

Following the Decision

Following adoption of a new name, a map showing any affected road and property numbers (as determined by Council) shall be sent to the applicant, essential service providers and emergency services.

Please note that signs are to be supplied and installed by the applicant in accordance with Council specifications.

Address of site:	Corner of Mackenzies Road and Arundel Rakaia Gorge Road
Council reference:	CRM1600114/23
Date of application:	27-11-2025
Contact Details:	

Signature of applicant:

Please use the following table to list three alternative names for each of the roads you wish to name.

Existing Name	Proposed Name
McKenzies Rd	Millers Rd

Please use this box to provide a justification as to why the current name should be changed and a summary of reasons why the proposed name is more appropriate.

Millers Road was the original name of McKenzies and Hewsons Roads.

In the 1880's the Millers built a home and lived on Millers Road. The Historic Home reflects the history and character of the area and is still there in the renamed McKenzies Road.

Samuel Miller was on the Mayfield School Committee from 1890-1893. His Children and Grandchildren went to the Mayfield School.

The Millers lived in Mayfield before the McKenzies and also the Millars who went to Anama School.

The Ashburton District Council changed part of Millers Road to McKenzies Road after 1996 and another South part of Millers Road to Hewsons Road in 2001.

Millers Rd name should not have been changed and still appears on my GPS.

The proposed Millers Road name is more appropriate as it was the Original Road Name and has the Original 1880's Millers Home on it.

On 7/11/23 I spoke to Mrs Donaldson the owner of the Millers Home and Land.

She said people have come to view and take photos of the Historic home.

When Mrs Donaldson and her husband bought the property, the road was Millers Road and was later renamed to McKenzies Road.

Mrs Donaldson said she did not mind if it was called Millers Road again.

Neil Blake of Blairs Road Anama is also aware of the history of the Millers Home.

If you have needed additional space for names and/or supporting information, please attach the documents to this application form and check this box.

X

8. *Ashburton Fire Museum – Discretionary Grant Request*

Author *Ann Smith; Community Liaison Officer*
Executive Team Member *Toni Durham, GM Community & Open Spaces*

Summary

- The purpose of this report is for Council to consider an application for funding from the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade to support a project for the Ashburton Fire Museum at the Plains Heritage Park.

Recommendation

1. **That** Council allocates \$1,725 (exclusive of GST) from its discretionary grant to the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade to support the production of photographic panels for the Ashburton Fire Museum located at the Plains Heritage Park, Tinwald Domain, Ashburton.

Background

The current situation

1. The Ashburton Fire Museum, located at the Plains Heritage Park in Tinwald, is an important cultural and historical asset for our community. One of the current initiatives aims to create a series of high-quality photographic panels that will enhance the visitor experience by providing engaging visual storytelling and historical context. These panels will not only improve the interpretive value of the museum but also help preserve and share the rich heritage of firefighting in our district.
2. The Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade have requested the sum of \$1,725 to have four panels professionally printed and quotes have been received.

Funding available

3. Council has \$16,913 budgeted in 2025/26 for the Discretionary Grant, as well as \$1,980 of leftover funds from the Community Development, Biodiversity and Event funds. The leftover funds are to be used with the remaining Discretionary Grant funds, as directed by Council.
4. This funding is available from 1 July each year for any purpose by resolution of Council. There is no criteria for the allocation of the Discretionary Grant and therefore in previous years, the Grant has been allocated by Council as applications are received throughout the year.
5. So far, Council has allocated \$6,000 of the Discretionary Grant funding for the 2025/2026 financial year, leaving a remaining balance of \$12,893 available.

Options analysis

Option one – Council Provides Full Funding of \$1,725 plus GST (recommended option)

Advantages: Ensures the project proceeds promptly and to a high standard. Demonstrates strong Council support for local heritage and community initiatives.	Disadvantages: Fully funding the project places the entire financial responsibility on Council and may set a precedent for similar future requests.
Risks: Minor precedent risk for future grant applications.	

Option two – Council Provides Partial Funding

6. Council contributes part of the cost, with the remaining funding to be secured by the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Reduces financial impact on Council.</p> <p>Encourages community ownership and engagement.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>The project may be delayed while additional funding is sought.</p> <p>Increases workload for the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade to secure co-funding.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Additional fundraising requirements may place pressure on volunteer resources.</p>	

Option three – Decline Funding Request

7. Council does not provide financial support for the project.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>No impact on Council's budget.</p> <p>Funds can be prioritised for other projects.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>The project may not proceed, limiting opportunities to enhance the Ashburton Fire Museum and preserve local firefighting heritage.</p> <p>A missed opportunity to strengthen a valued community facility, which could impact its long-term appeal and educational value.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Possible reputational impact if the decision is perceived as unsupportive of cultural and community heritage initiatives.</p> <p>Additional fundraising requirements may place pressure on volunteer resources.</p>	

Legal/policy implications

Community Grants and Funding Policy

8. The [Community Grants and Funding Policy](#) provides that the discretionary grant (along with the other community grants) is budgeted annually through the Annual or Long-Term Plan budget process. Community Grants and Funding are funded by the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) each year. This funding therefore should be spent in the year in which it is rated for the best outcome for the community.

Climate change

9. It is not considered that the recommended option has any impact on climate change.

Review of legal / policy implications	
Reviewed by In-house Counsel	Jacqui Watson; Senior Legal Counsel

Strategic alignment

10. The recommendation relates to Council's community outcome of Grants and Funding for 2025/26 because of the below wellbeing outcomes.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic	✓	Giving funding to our community greatly reduces the downstream social and economic costs to communities and Council.
Environmental		
Cultural	✓	Grant funding for this applicant will enhance the social and cultural wellbeing of the local community.
Social	✓	

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	\$1,725.00
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	Yes - \$12,893 available in the 2025/26 Annual Plan
Where is the funding coming from?	Cost centre 207 Community Development, which is 100% General Rate funded.
Are there any future budget implications?	No
Reviewed by Finance	Erin Register; Finance Manager.

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Low
Rationale for selecting level of significance	Not applicable
Level of engagement selected	1. Inform
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	No wider engagement is required. The community will be informed of the Council decision through the usual media channels.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

9. *Rates Target Model Submission*

Author	<i>Mark Low: Strategy & Policy Manager</i> <i>Tania Paddock: GM Legal & Democracy</i> <i>Toni Durham: GM Community & Open Spaces</i>
Executive Team Member	<i>Hamish Riach: Chief Executive</i>

Summary

- The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the draft submission to the Department of Internal Affairs on the Proposed Rates Target Model.
- The purpose of the proposal is to introduce a target range of rate increases to help keep rates affordable for the community, while ensuring councils can maintain essential services and invest in infrastructure.
- Submissions close on 4 February 2026.

Recommendation

1. **That** Council approves the submission to the Department of Internal Affairs on the Proposed Rates Target Model, as attached in Appendix 1.

Attachment

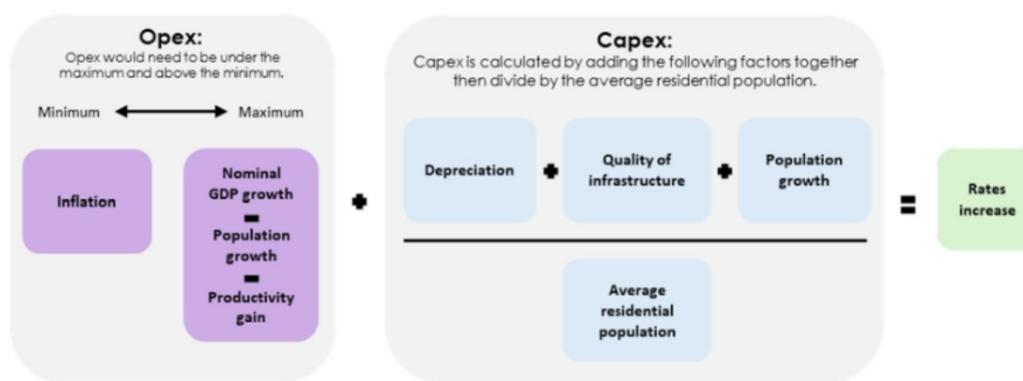
Appendix 1 Draft Rates Target Model Submission

Note: This cover report has been prepared with the assistance of Ai

Background

The current situation

1. Government has proposed a framework to introduce a cap on annual council rates increases. The purpose of the framework is to support more predictable rates growth, improve long-term financial sustainability, and help ensure councils can maintain essential services while managing affordability for ratepayers.
2. The proposed model sets a target range for annual per-capita rates increases, informed by long-term economic indicators. The lower end of the range reflects inflation, while the upper end aligns with GDP growth. Current analysis indicates a potential target range of 2–4% per capita per year, establishing a maximum increase of 4%.
3. A minimum level of annual rates growth is included to ensure councils can continue delivering essential services, such as waste management, local roads maintenance, and the operation of community facilities including parks and libraries.
4. The cap would apply to all forms of rates—general rates, targeted rates, and uniform annual charges—but would exclude water charges and other non-rates revenue such as fees and charges.
5. Councils proposing rates increases beyond the upper end of the target range would require approval from an independent regulator. Approval would be considered only in exceptional circumstances, such as natural disasters, and councils would be required to demonstrate how they intend to return to the target range. Councils seeking to increase rates to address issues such as historic underinvestment in infrastructure would also need to apply for approval and provide justification and a pathway back to the target range.
6. A transition period is proposed, beginning 1 January 2027, to allow councils time to adjust. From this date, councils will need to consider the implications of rates caps in their long-term planning processes and report on key financial performance indicators, including wage and salary costs, rates as a proportion of local house prices, and estimates of local infrastructure deficits.
7. The full regulatory model is planned to be in place by 2029, although national monitoring of rates increases would begin as soon as the legislation is enacted. Councils proposing increases above the proposed cap during the interim period may be subject to intervention under existing legislative provisions.
8. While the details of the proposed model will be developed over the next twelve months, the current approach has been framed as follows:



9. Council discussed the proposed rates target model at a public workshop on the 23 January. This has formed the development of the draft submission.

Options analysis

Option one – Do not make a submission

10. This is not the recommended option. Council may decide to stay silent and not make a submission on the Proposed Rates Target Model.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Resource saving: Avoids staff and elected member time preparing and approving a submission.</p> <p>Neutral stance: Avoids publicly aligning the council with a position on a potentially contentious national policy.</p> <p>Reduces risk of misalignment: No risk of submitting a view that may not reflect the final political position of Council.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Missed opportunity to influence: The council loses the chance to provide feedback on a proposal that will significantly affect long-term financial planning and services.</p> <p>Reduced advocacy: The council forgoes the opportunity to raise local implications, such as unique demographic, financial, or infrastructure pressures.</p> <p>Seen as disengaged: May be perceived by stakeholders, residents, or sector partners as a lack of engagement on a major local government reform.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Operational risk: Without input, the final model may create constraints that are more difficult for the council to manage.</p> <p>Reputational risks: Could be seen as abdicating the council's responsibility to advocate for its community.</p> <p>Failure to engage may impact future credibility when raising concerns with central government or regulators.</p>	

Option two – Approve the proposed submission as attached in Appendix One (recommended option)

11. This option would see Officers lodge the appended submission on the Proposed Rates Target Model.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Timely and efficient: Allows the council to meet submission deadlines without additional rework.</p> <p>Clear and consistent messaging: Confirms a unified council position as drafted.</p> <p>Influences policy development: Ensures the council's concerns and insights are formally considered by central government.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Limited tailoring: The submission may not fully capture elected members' priorities or nuances of local issues.</p> <p>Potential gaps: Without amendments, the council may miss an opportunity to strengthen positions or clarify impacts that were overlooked during drafting.</p> <p>Less ownership: Elected members may feel the submission reflects staff views more than their own if no changes are made</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Reputational risk: If the submission contains statements that elected members feel uncomfortable with, it may lead to criticism from stakeholders.</p> <p>Operational risks: Unamended content may inadvertently include assumptions or omissions. Once submitted, the council may be held to positions that weren't extensively debated.</p>	

Option three – Approve the proposed submission with amendments

12. Under this option, Council approves the submission with amendments.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Customisation: Ensures the submission accurately reflects local circumstances, strategic priorities, and elected member perspectives.</p> <p>Improved quality: Amendments can strengthen clarity, evidence, and alignment with council policy or long-term planning needs.</p> <p>Greater ownership: Elected members are more likely to support and stand behind a submission they have shaped.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Additional time and resources: Amendments require extra staff work and decision-making time, which may be constrained by submission deadlines.</p> <p>Risk of over-editing: Extensive changes may dilute the submission's clarity or create inconsistencies.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Operational risk: Significant changes may delay approval and jeopardise the ability to lodge the submission on time.</p> <p>Reputation risks: Amendments may inadvertently introduce inaccuracies or political tone. If the amended submission significantly diverges from community positions it may create misalignment or external pressure.</p>	

Legal/policy implications

Local Government Act 2002

13. The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA02) does not prevent the Council from making a submission on central government proposals. Preparing and lodging submissions is a normal and expected part of council advocacy.

Climate change

14. There is no direct link between climate change and the Council submission on the Proposed Rates Target Model.

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel	Tania Paddock; GM Legal & Democracy
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Strategic alignment

15. The recommendation relates to Council's community outcomes of *'residents are well-represented, included and have a voice'*.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic	✓	The implications of a rates target model could impact across Council activities and services for the community, potentially affecting all four well-beings.
Environmental	✓	
Cultural	✓	
Social	✓	

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	No cost for lodging the submission. Officer resource was required for preparing the submission.
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	N/A
Where is the funding coming from?	Strategy & Policy and Legal & Democracy
Are there any future budget implications?	Not at this point noting this is only a submission.
Reviewed by Finance	Gordon Cruickshank – Financial Performance Manager

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Low
Rationale for selecting level of significance	This has been assessed as low due to the recommendation relating solely to lodgement of the submission.
Level of engagement selected	Inform – one way communication
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	The community will be informed of Council's submission through the usual channels.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Toni Durham: GM Democracy & Engagement

Submission

Rates Target Model (Rates Capping)



PREPARED BY: Ashburton District Council
PO Box 94
Ashburton

SUBMITTED TO: Department of Internal Affairs

Contact: Mayor Liz McMillan
mayor@adc.govt.nz

via upload to:
ratescapping@dia.govt.nz

Ashburton District Council **does** wish to make an oral submission (if opportunity provided)

Introduction

1. Ashburton District Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Rates Target Model proposal that has been prepared by the Government. This feedback reflects the views of the Council and is informed by our governance experience and community context.
2. Located an hour's drive south of Christchurch, more than 36,400¹ residents live in our district. Approximately 50% of our residents live in the main town of Ashburton, with the rest of our residents living rurally or in smaller towns or villages across the district.
3. The Council consists of a Mayor and nine Councillors elected across three wards, along with a Community Board in Methven with five elected and two appointed members.

General Feedback

4. Ashburton District Council is mindful of the financial pressures facing households and communities. Decisions to increase rates are made carefully and only where required to maintain and develop essential services, renew and protect infrastructure, and respond to growth, community expectations and legislative responsibilities. Council remains committed to delivering our services for our community within the prudent financial management parameters of the Local Government Act. It rejects the view that we lack fiscal discipline.
5. Introducing a statutory rates cap would constitute a significant and enduring intervention to the local government funding framework. International experience² suggests that such mechanisms can be challenging to reverse and may give rise to unintended long-term effects, including impacts on asset condition, debt levels, and the equitable distribution of costs across generations.
6. Council notes that the analysis supporting this proposal is limited, particularly when considered alongside the breadth of reforms currently underway in the local government sector. A transparent and comprehensive assessment of the cumulative impacts of a rates cap, resource management reforms, the *Simplifying Local Government* programme, the Local Government

¹ Infometrics, *Regional Economic Profile*, 2024

² *Taituara – Rates Capping Submission*

(System Improvements) Amendment Bill and other reforms would assist stakeholders and the community in understanding the full implications of these changes proposed for their communities. There is a significant lack of alignment between the introduction of a rates cap and the other simultaneous local government reforms currently being considered.

7. Although the intent behind the proposed rates cap is acknowledged, the model is fundamentally impractical in its current state. Substantial changes are needed to ensure it reflects economic reality, supports long-term financial sustainability, and meets the needs of local communities. The Council therefore cannot support the target range or methodology as currently presented.
8. Councils's bottom line is clear: any rates cap must not slow Ashburton District's momentum, degrade essential services or undermine long-term financial sustainability and intergenerational equity.
9. Council acknowledges and endorses the submissions made by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, Local Government New Zealand and Taituara. TBC

Council's Recommendations

10. Council considers that the proposed Rates Target Model requires significant refinement before it can be implemented in a practical and sustainable way. In particular, the model must better reflect the way councils are funded, the nature of long-term infrastructure investment, and the diversity of communities across New Zealand. Council therefore recommends:
 - The Government provide clear definitions, scope, and measurement guidance for all indicators and clarify how the cap will be applied.
 - Replacing GDP and supplementing CPI with indicators that better reflect local demand and infrastructure cost pressures.
 - Including flexibility or variation mechanisms so the model can respond to differing local circumstances, risks, and growth patterns.
 - A straightforward and transparent process to account for costs arising from new legislation, reforms, or other externally imposed requirements.
 - Roading be excluded from the rates cap due to its essential nature and existing national investment oversight.
 - The Government assess and publish the cumulative impacts of the rates target alongside other ongoing reforms.
11. Below we respond to the five consultation questions and recommend essential design changes.

Q1: Do you agree with the proposed economic indicators to be included in a formula for setting a rates target?

12. No, Council has limited confidence in the proposed indicators due to unclear definitions, data limitations, assumptions required and a lack of supporting analysis. Key measures such as population growth, infrastructure quality, and average residential population are not sufficiently well defined or transparent to ensure consistent and reliable application. Greater clarity on how the cap is set and how indicators are measured is essential for effectiveness and credibility.

13. Council does not consider the indicators reflect the true cost of drivers for Council services. Recent rates increases are primarily driven by unavoidable costs associated with core services—particularly transport, water services, and critical infrastructure renewal—rather than discretionary or ‘nice-to-have’ spending.
14. Council is broadly supportive of a transparent framework or target that drives efficiency and productivity and demonstrates accountability. However this rates target, or equivalent, must be realistic, robustly designed, flexible and support long-term sustainability. Indicators must recognise councils’ public-good and wellbeing role, the need to maintain service levels and asset quality, and funding constraints that require councils to bridge gaps through rates. Without this, there is a material risk of suppressed investment, declining infrastructure conditions, restricted economic growth and poor community outcomes.

Q2: If not, what economic indicators do you suggest be included and why?

15. Council does not support the use of GDP as a proxy for growth-related demand on council services. There is no clear evidence that demand for local government services increases in line with national GDP, and this approach fails to reflect the diverse and localised circumstances of local government. Variations in population growth, urban form, disaster recovery, regulatory change, and infrastructure pressures mean GDP is a blunt and inadequate measure.
16. Local indicators—such as population change, development activity, network demand, hazard exposure, and insurance costs—would more accurately reflect service demand. If a rates cap is intended to account for growth, it must be flexible, evidence-based, and responsive to local conditions.
17. Council also considers that CPI understates the true cost pressures faced by local government, particularly for infrastructure delivery and renewal. CPI does not adequately reflect changes in construction, asset, and labour costs, which are the primary drivers of council expenditure. Council supports the inclusion of alternative or supplementary indices, such as the Producers Price Index (Construction) or capital goods price indices.
18. Any rates cap framework must reflect actual cost drivers, allow for flexibility where councils face externally imposed costs (such as new government regulation or reform), and support long-term financial sustainability. Consideration should be given to more frequent review of the cap, or the use of rolling multi-year smoothing mechanisms, to better respond to changing conditions.
19. The timing and interaction of a rates cap with broader local government reforms—including resource management changes and the Simplifying Local Government programme—also require careful consideration to avoid unintended consequences, excessive administrative burden, and undermining councils’ ability to deliver essential public-good and wellbeing outcomes.

Q2a. Does setting the minimum of the target in line with inflation ensure that councils can maintain service standards? If not, why not?

20. No, setting the minimum target in line with inflation will be insufficient to maintain current levels of service. Councils face cost pressures that extend well beyond general inflation, including increasing infrastructure and roading costs, asset renewal backlogs, ‘baked-in’ capital

programmes, and additional central government requirements. These factors—particularly for core services such as transport—mean service levels would decline over time if funding growth is constrained to inflation only. It will add to the cost of renewing or replacing these services when required.

21. An inflation-based minimum implicitly assumes all councils are starting from the same position, with fully funded depreciation, no infrastructure deficits, stable regulatory settings, and constant cost pressures. Councils all face differing legacy issues, growth patterns, timeframes for replacement of significant projects (e.g. swimming pool facilities), environmental and regulatory obligations, and reform impacts (such as emergency management and resource management changes). Without recognising these differences, an inflation-only minimum risks entrenching service shortfalls rather than enabling councils to meet long-term needs of current and future generations.
22. Rather than relying solely on inflation, Council considers that a performance- or outcomes-based framework could better ensure service standards are maintained. Measures linked to service performance, asset condition, and community satisfaction—such as residents’ survey results—would better align with the purpose and principles of the Local Government Act and the Local Government System Improvements Bill. This approach would also support a more meaningful conversation about affordability, which is inherently contextual and not well captured by a single inflation measure.

Q3: Does the maximum of the target account for council spending on core services?

23. No, Council is not confident that the proposed 4% maximum would adequately account for spending on core services. Preliminary modelling indicates that significant savings would be required to remain within the cap based on the Council’s adopted LTP 2024–34 rates path, and it is unlikely this could be achieved without material changes to services. It is likely the scale of the required reductions suggests there is a real risk to maintaining current service levels and asset renewal programmes.
24. Council also notes that the model underpinning the maximum cap is difficult to interpret and apply in its current form, creating uncertainty about its practical operation. The exclusion of water services from the cap is likely to be confusing for the public and will require clear communication. While rate capping may prompt necessary conversations about non-core, fully or partially rate-funded activities, there is concern that an inflexible maximum could limit Council’s ability to meet the purpose and principles of the Local Government Act by constraining investment in essential services and long-term community outcomes.
25. The definition of core services in the Local Government (Systems Improvements) Amendment Bill excludes very few Council services that we currently deliver. This means there are limited ‘non-core’ services that we could reduce or remove our investment in.

Q4: What council spending will not be able to take place under this target range? Why?

26. Infrastructure renewals and maintaining current service levels would be constrained. While it is too early to identify specific spending reductions, the proposed target range would limit Council's ability to fund infrastructure renewals on prudent cycles and maintain current service levels unless additional funding or support measures are provided. Trade-offs would be required, increasing the risk of deferred renewals and declining service performance. Council's are already familiar with making trade-offs and have been doing this since their establishment.
27. Council's debt capacity and financial resilience would be reduced. Restricting rates revenue would reduce Council's debt headroom, as rates are a key determinant of debt servicing capacity. A rates cap could adversely affect Council's credit rating, increase borrowing costs, and limit the ability to fund both core services and long-term infrastructure investment, with flow-on impacts for ratepayers.
28. Under a constrained funding envelope, Council may need to reconsider expenditure across fully or partially rates-funded activities, including unsubsidised roading, airport operations, campgrounds, Lake Hood, parks and reserves, recreational and cultural facilities, and community grants and funding. Any reductions would affect communities differently and raise equity considerations.
29. Capital projects and facility upgrades would become more difficult to deliver. Investment in upgrades to key facilities and new capital projects would be challenging to fund under the target range and may increasingly rely on the outlined exception processes, creating uncertainty and potential delays. It is likely these upgrades would increase in cost when they were finally able to be delivered.
30. Greater reliance on fees and charges would create accessibility risks. To offset constrained rates revenue, Council may need to increase fees for services such as pools, recreation facilities, and libraries. This would risk reduced participation and create accessibility barriers for some members of the community. While Council supports the use of fees and charges to reflect the private benefit of these services, a system that relies too strongly on user-pays could have the opposite effect – lowering demand and ultimately putting the viability of these facilities at risk.

Q5: Are changes to the target needed to account for variations between regions and councils? What changes do you propose and why?

31. Yes — a one-size-fits-all target is unlikely to be appropriate. Council considers that changes are needed to ensure the target accounts for significant variation between regions and councils. A uniform rates cap does not reflect the diversity of local circumstances across New Zealand and risks producing inequitable and impractical outcomes. While Council supports the intent of introducing consistency through a national framework, this must be balanced with sufficient flexibility to reflect local realities.
32. The target must be flexible enough to reflect local conditions and risk profiles. Councils differ substantially in their growth rates, infrastructure needs, asset lifecycles, financial positions, and exposure to risks such as climate impacts and natural hazards. High-growth councils face higher

infrastructure and service demands, while others must prioritise renewal of ageing assets. Councils with significant hazard exposure—including flooding, coastal erosion, and severe weather—must plan for increasing future costs that cannot be absorbed within static funding limits. A rigid target would limit councils’ ability to plan for and respond to these risks.

33. Variation mechanisms, adjustable ranges or customised ranges for every Council based on analysis of their position should be included. Council proposes that these would allow adjustments based on factors such as growth pressures, hazard exposure, debt levels, insurance costs, and externally imposed regulatory changes. This would retain a disciplined national framework while recognising genuine local differences. Clear guidance would also be needed on how specific activities—such as stormwater—are treated within the target to ensure consistency and transparency.
34. Council considers that roading as an activity should be excluded from the rates cap, due to its essential role in enabling economic development, connectivity and community access. Road networks are foundational public infrastructure, and their performance directly influences the efficiency and resilience of local and national economies.
35. Ashburton District Council has the fourth-largest roading network in NZ with over 2,622km of roads. Maintaining this extensive network represents a significant cost for our district, and its condition is central to the functioning of our agriculture-driven economy and wider regional supply chains. Any mechanism that restricts funding for such a critical asset would create unacceptable risks for our district and its economic wellbeing.
36. Roding investment is already subject to a robust national oversight framework through the Waka Kotahi NZTA co-funding regime. This system applies strong investment discipline via the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport, business case requirements, investment audits, and national prioritisation processes. This provides assurance that council roading expenditure is both efficient and well-governed, without the need for an additional constraint through a rates cap.
37. A restricted investment in this network will result in deferred maintenance, increased reliance on costly reactive renewals and accelerating degradation to unacceptable levels that would not meet community expectations or economic needs. Such outcomes would undermine the district’s productivity, increase long-term costs, and compromise the safe and reliable operation of an asset base that residents and businesses depend on daily.
38. Alignment with long-term planning and future resilience is critical. The target should support councils to plan for the future rather than constrain proactive investment in resilience and adaptation. Significant weather events and climate-related impacts are increasing in frequency and scale, and councils must be able to fund mitigations and recovery. Without flexibility, a rates cap could make needed infrastructure investment unaffordable, shifting risk and costs onto future communities.

Concluding comments

39. A one-size-fits-all rates cap is inappropriate without flexibility. While Council supports introducing national guidance on a rates target, a uniform cap does not reflect local differences in growth, risk exposure, infrastructure needs, or financial position. Any target must be flexible enough to respond to local conditions and future planning requirements, including increasing climate-related risks.
40. Rates caps risk under-investment and undermines prudent financial management. Constraining rates revenue would limit councils' ability to respond to external cost pressures such as insurance, interest rates, energy, contractor pricing, and central government-driven inflation. This risks under-investment in infrastructure, reduces debt headroom, and may adversely impact councils' credit ratings and long-term affordability.
41. Council's ability to stay within the rates cap will also be affected by unfunded mandates and legislative changes from central government. In recent years, a series of shifting reforms (such as those relating to three waters and the RMA) have created additional and often unnecessary costs for councils, as have increasingly stringent audit requirements. If this pattern continues, Council will find it increasingly difficult to remain within the rates cap. Any introduction of a rates cap needs to occur alongside Central government commitment to provide financial support to Council's for the implementation of these legislative and policy changes. All Central government policy changes should include a robust and realistic Regulatory Impact Statement that explains the how much it will cost local councils and what financial support the government will fund.
42. Over many years, multiple reports outlining have highlighted that the current local government funding system is inadequate and needs a full review. Council continues to advocate for this to occur, including urging the government to act on recommendations from earlier reviews – such as paying rates on its own properties and removing or refunding GST on rates.
43. The proposed approach conflicts with the purpose of the Local Government Act. A rigidly, centrally imposed rates cap risks prioritising short-term affordability over long-term sustainability and intergenerational equity. This undermines councils' ability to act prudently for current and future communities, as required under the Act.
44. Ratepayers fund the services and infrastructure that support their communities, and councils have a statutory responsibility to make locally informed decisions about how best to meet those needs over time. Imposing a uniform rates cap introduces an ideological constraint that sits uneasily alongside the locally driven, democratic nature of council decision-making. It limits councils' ability to plan responsibly, respond to local challenges and opportunities, and ensure that future residents are not unfairly burdened by under-investment made today.
45. Greater clarity and consistency are required on scope and application. Clear guidance is needed on how the cap would apply to services such as stormwater, how out-of-band inflation or government-imposed costs would be managed, and whether the cap applies to total rates revenue rather than individual rates. Without this clarity, implementation risks confusion and unintended consequences. As outlined earlier, if a rates capping regime were to be introduced, Council requests that roading as an activity is excluded from the cap.

46. Existing local government frameworks already provide accountability. The current Local Government Act planning and consultation framework provides robust mechanisms for financial discipline, community input, and prioritisation. While a credible long-term revenue guide may have merit, it should complement—not override—local democratic decision-making or councils’ ability to support community wellbeing and growth
47. Ashburton District Council appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback and looks forward to continued engagement with the Government.



Liz McMillan

Mayor

Hamish Riach

Chief Executive

10. Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill Submission

Author *Brad Thomson: Planning Manager*
Ian Hyde: GM Compliance & Development
Executive Team Member *Hamish Riach: Chief Executive*

Summary

- The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the draft submission to the Environment Select Committee on the Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill.
- The purpose of the Bills is to replace the Resource Management Act 1991 by creating a clearer dual-framework in which the Planning Bill regulates the use, development, and enjoyment of land, while the Natural Environment Bill establishes a system for the use, protection, and enhancement of the natural environment.
- The Bills were introduced on 9 December 2025 and submissions close on 13 February 2026.

Recommendation

- 1. That** Council approves the submission to the Environment Select Committee on Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill, as attached in Appendix 1.

Attachment

Appendix 1 Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill Submission

Note: This cover report has been prepared with the assistance of Ai

Background

The current situation

1. The Government has introduced two pieces of legislation—the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill—which have passed their first reading in Parliament and are now before a select committee. Together, these Bills outline the framework for replacing the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) with a new national planning system.
2. The current proposals follow the publication of the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 and the Spatial Planning Act 2023. This legislation also proposed repealing the RMA and replacement with two more focussed acts which were broadly similar to the current bills and were widely consulted on. Upon election to power, the current government repealed this legislation and proposed the bills which are the subject of this report.
3. The Bills were introduced on 9 December 2025. They represent a fundamental shift in planning and environmental management in New Zealand and details of the implications and impacts of the changes continue to be discovered and clarified.
4. A significant amount of clarity will only be obtained once subsequent details such as national direction and caps and limits are announced in the future.

Overview of the Proposed New System

5. The new system separates planning and environmental management into two linked but distinct legislative components:

Planning Bill

6. The Planning Bill sets the framework for land use planning, development processes, and regional planning documents. Key features proposed in the legislation include:
 - Consolidation of planning documents: Replacing more than 100 existing council plans with regional combined plans, including defined timeframes for development and implementation.
 - Simplified planning rules: Standardisation of plan provisions and reduced variability between regions, with limited options for departure to address local matters.
 - Reduced need for consents: Enabling more activities to proceed without a resource consent where impacts are considered low.
 - Refined scope of regulation: Councils would focus regulation on specific effects (e.g., noise, shading) with higher thresholds for what can be controlled
 - Consultation processes: Streamlined consultation aimed at focusing engagement where impacts are most significant.

- Planning Tribunal: Establishment of a Planning Tribunal to resolve smaller-scale disputes more quickly and efficiently.
- Regulatory relief mechanisms: Introduction of a framework for relief where planning controls significantly impact reasonable use of land.
- Greater role for Councils in administration, compliance monitoring and reporting.

Natural Environment Bill

7. The Natural Environment Bill provides the environmental management framework that will sit alongside the Planning Bill. Key elements include:
 - Environmental limits and outcomes: Requirements for clear, science-based limits relating to freshwater, coastal water, land, soil, and biodiversity directed through Ministerial limits for matters such as nutrient discharge and water take/use through caps
 - Requirement for Regional Councils to implement caps and management plans to provide meet Government Direction.
 - Increased EPA involvement, including for taking enforcement action against Regional Councils.
 - Proportionate regulatory approach: A preference for voluntary or industry-led approaches where appropriate, with regulation applied when necessary.
 - Allocation tools: Retention of the current allocation approach initially, with provision to adopt more efficient allocation tools—including market-based mechanisms—over time.
 - Biodiversity management: Extension of regulatory relief provisions to apply to biodiversity controls that significantly affect land use.
 - Treaty settlements: Protection of existing Treaty settlement obligations.

Intended System Outcomes

8. The combined purpose of the Bills is to:
 - Consistency between national and local decision-making: Establishment of a clear hierarchy of national to local documents to guide environmental management and create a more consistent national planning framework,
 - reduce duplication and the number of planning documents,
 - improve efficiency in planning and consenting processes,
 - provide clearer environmental standards and limits,
 - clarify roles, responsibilities and regulatory pathways across the planning system.
9. Independent analysis commissioned by central government indicates potential long-term administrative and compliance savings and a reduction in the overall number of resource consents, although these projections will be subject to the select committee process and final system design.

Next Steps in the Legislative Process

10. Both Bills are now before a **select committee**, which will seek submissions from councils, iwi, sector organisations, businesses, and the public.
11. The select committee will consider feedback and may recommend amendments to the Bills.
12. New national planning instruments will be developed following passage of the legislation.
13. The Government has indicated an intention for the Bills to be enacted in **2026**, subject to the parliamentary process.
14. Council discussed the proposed Bills at a public workshop on the 23 January. This has formed the development of the draft submission.

Options analysis

Option one – Do not make a submission

15. This is not the recommended option. Council may decide to stay silent and not make a submission on the Proposed Bills.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Resource saving: Avoids staff and elected member time preparing and approving a submission.</p> <p>Neutral stance: Avoids publicly aligning the council with a position on potentially contentious national policy.</p> <p>Reduces risk of misalignment: No risk of submitting a view that may not reflect the final political position of Council.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Missed opportunity to influence: The council loses the chance to provide feedback on a proposal that will significantly affect long-term financial planning and services.</p> <p>Reduced advocacy: The council forgoes the opportunity to raise local implications, such as unique demographic, financial, or infrastructure pressures.</p> <p>Seen as disengaged: May be perceived by stakeholders, residents, or sector partners as a lack of engagement on a major local government reform.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Operational risk: Without input, the final model may create constraints that are more difficult for the council to manage.</p> <p>Reputational risks: Could be seen as abdicating the council's responsibility to advocate for its community.</p> <p>Failure to engage may impact future credibility when raising concerns with central government or regulators.</p>	

Option two – Approve the proposed submission as attached in Appendix One (recommended option)

16. This option would see Officers lodge the appended submission on the Proposed Bills.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Timely and efficient: Allows the council to meet submission deadlines without additional rework.</p> <p>Clear and consistent messaging: Confirms a unified council position as drafted.</p> <p>Influences policy development: Ensures the council's concerns and insights are formally considered by central government.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Limited time: staff, other Councils and industry bodies are still learning the implications of the Bills, delay would limit ability to learn from others.</p> <p>Limited tailoring: The submission may not fully capture elected members' priorities or nuances of local issues.</p> <p>Potential gaps: Without amendments, the council may miss an opportunity to strengthen positions or clarify impacts that were overlooked during drafting.</p> <p>Less ownership: Elected members may feel the submission reflects staff views more than their own if no changes are made.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Reputational risk: If the submission contains statements that elected members feel uncomfortable with, it may lead to criticism from stakeholders.</p> <p>Operational risks: Unamended content may inadvertently include assumptions or omissions. Once submitted, the council may be held to positions that weren't extensively debated.</p>	

Option three – Approve the proposed submission with amendments

17. Under this option, Council approves the submission with amendments.

<p>Advantages:</p> <p>Customisation: Ensures the submission accurately reflects local circumstances, strategic priorities, and elected member perspectives.</p> <p>Improved quality: Amendments can strengthen clarity, evidence, and alignment with council policy or long-term planning needs.</p> <p>Greater ownership: Elected members are more likely to support and stand behind a submission they have shaped.</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <p>Additional time and resources: Amendments require extra staff work and decision-making time, which may be constrained by submission deadlines.</p> <p>Risk of over-editing: Extensive changes may dilute the submission's clarity or create inconsistencies.</p>
<p>Risks:</p> <p>Operational risk: Significant changes may delay approval and jeopardise the ability to lodge the submission on time.</p> <p>Reputation risks: Amendments may inadvertently introduce inaccuracies or political tone. If the amended submission significantly diverges from community positions it may create misalignment or external pressure</p>	

Legal/policy implications

Local Government Act 2002

18. The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA02) does not prevent the Council from making a submission on central government proposals. Preparing and lodging submissions is a normal and expected part of council advocacy.

Climate change

19. There is no direct link between climate change and the Council submission on these Bills.

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel	Tania Paddock; GM Legal & Democracy
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Strategic alignment

20. The recommendation relates to Council's community outcomes of *'residents are well-represented, included and have a voice'*.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic	✓	The implications of the Bills could impact across Council activities and services for the community, potentially affecting all four well-beings.
Environmental	✓	
Cultural	✓	
Social	✓	

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	No cost for lodging the submission. Officer resource was required for preparing the submission.
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	N/A
Where is the funding coming from?	Strategy & Policy and Legal & Democracy
Are there any future budget implications?	No
Reviewed by Finance	NA

Significance and engagement assessment

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Low
Rationale for selecting level of significance	This has been assessed as low due to the recommendation relating solely to lodgement of the submission.
Level of engagement selected	Inform – one way communication
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	The community will be informed of Council's submission through the usual channels.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Toni Durham: GM Democracy & Engagement

Submission

Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill



PREPARED BY: Ashburton District Council
PO Box 94
Ashburton

SUBMITTED TO: Environment Select Committee

Contact: Mayor Liz McMillan
mayor@adc.govt.nz

via upload to:

Ashburton District Council **does/does not wish** to make an oral submission to the Committee

Introduction

1. Ashburton District Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill which will form the basis for the new planning system.
2. This feedback reflects the views of the Council and is informed by our governance experience and community context. It also includes technical areas identified by Council officers.

Located an hour's drive south of Christchurch, more than 36,400¹ residents live in our district. Approximately 50% of our residents live in the main town of Ashburton, with the rest of our residents living rurally or in smaller towns or villages across the district. Ashburton District covers an area of over 6,000km² and comprises diverse landscapes including mountain gorges, foothill area and large areas of alluvial plain. The District extends from the Southern Alps to the Pacific Ocean and between the braided Rakaia River to the north and the Rangitata to the South.

3. The District's economy and prosperity is largely reliant on agriculture, benefitting from its high quality soils and extensive rural water supply infrastructure.
4. The Council consists of a Mayor and nine Councillors elected across three wards, along with a Community Board in Methven with five elected and two appointed members.
5. Please note A.I has assisted in the development of this submission.

Transitional arrangements and Implementation

5. Ashburton District Council notes that the implementation of the proposed resource management reforms is expected to impose significant additional costs on local government. The Council considers that Central Government assistance will be essential to ensure that these implementation costs are not transferred to local ratepayers, particularly given the already constrained funding environment councils operate and within the potential context of a rates capped environment as proposed by Government.²
6. As currently drafted, the bill imposes implementation periods based around the legislation being introduced Ashburton District Council foresees difficulty in this timeframe given that the timelines, which

¹ Infometrics, *Regional Economic Profile*, 2024

² <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/getting-rates-under-control-ratepayers>

are already short for good policy implementation, rely on important information, including that contained within national instruments and is unlikely to be available immediately. Council request the consideration of a clearly defined implementation period that begins from the point at which the National Instruments are formally introduced rather than from the date legislation is enacted. This approach would provide councils and stakeholders with greater certainty and ensures adequate time for operational planning, resourcing, and transition to the new system.

7. Council is concerned that the consultation and submission periods proposed in the Bill for national instruments are too short to enable councils to provide meaningful and well-informed feedback. The initially released Planning Bill and National Environment Bill defer a significant amount of detail to future natural standards. Council considers that the detail of these standards will potentially have significant, but as yet unclarified impacts on their community and it is vital that the Council can undertake appropriate analysis, coordinate technical expertise, and reflect community impacts. Council therefore requests extending these proposed timeframes as this will support higher-quality input and improve the workability of national instruments particularly so that they can adequately consider and respond to unique and individual situations.
8. Further, Council notes that within the Environment Bill, environmental limits on matters such as nutrient discharge and water take are to be set through subsequent legislative processes. They are to be administered through Ministerial direction and implemented through regional plans.
9. As previously raised in the introduction to this system. The prosperity of Ashburton District is tied to its agricultural activity and is concerned that caps and limits imposed through the Natural Environment Act have the potential to have significant impacts on the Ashburton community. Ashburton Council strongly requests that the Natural Environment Bill is reviewed so as to allow Council to participate in discussion of limits that may be proposed for the Ashburton District. Council considers it vital from the perspective of local democracy that local voices are able to participate in decisions that are so significant for the community.

Financial impact of proposed system

10. Under proposals either in process or signalled, local government will be required to concurrently implement water service reform, a new emergency management framework, changes to development levies and potential structural reforms to local government, as well as proposed rates caps. The Natural Environment and Planning bills do not appear to have considered or been integrated with these wider reforms and Council is concerned that they may generate conflicting obligations, duplicated processes and significant resource and cost pressures. Without system-wide alignment, Council is concerned that the cumulative burden threatens to delay or confound the new planning system. Council requests that consideration is given to the place of this legislation alongside other systemic changes.
11. The Council is concerned that the proposed charging framework appears to restrict local authorities to recover costs once the fixed fee for an application has been exhausted. This creates a significant risk of under-recovery, shifting costs from applicants to ratepayers and undermining the “user pays” principle that has long underpinned resource management funding.
12. Council seeks clarification on Section 191 of the Planning Bill to confirm that local authorities will retain the ability to properly recover the costs where necessary so that they can accurately reflect actual time and costs incurred while carrying out the functions in this act. Without such provision, Council is concerned

that the system will be financially unsustainable and may result in reduced service levels or increased general rates, the latter being particularly concerning when considered in conjunction with the previously referenced “rates capping” proposition.

13. Further, Council is concerned that the expanded monitoring obligations proposed in the Bill will place significant additional pressure on council resources. Meeting these requirements is likely to increase operational costs, which may in turn have an impact on council rates. In a rates-controlled environment, delivering this level of monitoring will be difficult to achieve without either reducing other essential services or securing additional funding mechanisms. The Council recommends that the Bill provide greater flexibility, phased implementation options, or additional central government support to ensure these monitoring expectations are practical and achievable.

Regulatory Relief

14. Ashburton District Council accepts that it is reasonable to consider impacts of limiting private property rights and that in some instances a regulatory relief mechanism will be appropriate; however Council considers that, as written, the legislation lacks clarity on how and when these provisions apply. The terms “reasonably use” and “significant impact” are not well defined in the Bill, creating uncertainty for both councils and applicants. Ambiguity in these thresholds is likely to result in delay and cost arising from differing interpretations, disputes, and potential appeals. Further, Council is concerned that this may discourage Councils from even commencing processes for protection of otherwise worthy and important items or areas. The Council requests that the wording of the bill is amended to provide clearer definitions, guidance, or criteria to support consistent application of regulatory relief and reduce the risk of litigation.

Notified Resource Consent Decisionmakers

15. Ashburton District Council does not support the proposal that all applications must be determined by an independent commissioner in S.136 of the Planning Bill. The Council’s experience includes processing full notified resource consent applications that have not required a hearing.
16. A hypothetical example of this might be a protected building which has been substantially damaged by a fire to the point where it was unable to be repaired and where demolition is subsequently sought. In such a situation, public notification might have occurred without any submissions being received in response and a reasonably clear cut situation. In this instance, the facts would be obvious and an internal decision would reduce timeframes and significantly lower costs for applicants. Requiring independent commissioners in all cases appears unnecessary and risks introducing additional expense and delay without improving decision quality.
17. The Council requests consideration of retaining flexibility, by allowing routine or uncontested applications to be determined internally while reserving independent commissioners for cases where they are genuinely required.
18. Council further notes that a similar provision to Section 100A in the current Resource Management Act could be included which would give the ability for applicants to request use of a commissioner if the wished.

Exceptions For Local Conditions

19. Ashburton District Council supports the general approach to standardisation and consistency in legislative approach across the Country and within regions and further supports in principle the provisions allowing for departure from those standards in order to consider local exceptions. Council is aware that previous exception processes, including “fast track” and “plan stop” provisions have been administratively complex and local experience has been that they have not been advantageous to pursue.
20. Standardised zoning can support national consistency; however, the Ashburton District’s unique environmental, economic, and community factors mean that a one-size-fits-all approach based on national or even regional scale solutions will not always be appropriate. The Council requests that the Bill enable local variations through simple, well-defined mechanisms that are clear and avoid unnecessary complexity or inconsistency in decision making which might occur when decisions are taken at Ministerial level, ensuring that planning provisions remain responsive to local needs.

Retail Distribution Considerations

21. Council is concerned about the proposed limitations on considering retail distribution effects when assessing applications. Significant investment and effort have been directed toward revitalising the Ashburton town centre, and the ability to manage the distribution and location of retail activities is essential to protecting the centre’s long-term viability. Without adequate planning controls, there is a high risk that dispersed or unmanaged retail development could undermine the vitality of the town centre and diminish the economic and social benefits that recent work is intended to deliver. The Council requests that the Bill allow for the consideration of retail distribution effects where these are relevant to maintaining the viability and strategic planning outcomes of established town centres.

Conclusions

22. Council appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on this consultation and looks forward to continued engagement with the Government, including any clarification of any matters raised in this submission.



Liz McMillan

Mayor

Hamish Riach

Chief Executive

11. Ashburton Car Club Road Closure – Wakanui Bent Sprint

Author	<i>Tayla Bird; Data Management Officer-Roading</i>
Activity Manager	<i>Mark Chamberlain; Roding Manager</i>
Executive Team Member	<i>Neil McCann; Group Manager-Infrastructure</i>

Summary

- This report considers an application from Ashburton Car Club Incorporated for a temporary road closure of a section of Fitzgerald Road, Seaside Road, and Bonningtons Road on Sunday, 15 March 2026 to hold the Wakanui Bent Sprint event.
- This report outlines the benefits and risks to be taken into consideration on whether to approve or decline the road closures.
- Council is not obliged to approve any road closures. Our practice has been to approve such requests, subject to being confident that the event organisers can manage the event safely, and that the road will be restored to pre-race condition.
- Officers are satisfied that the Ashburton Car Club can meet these expectations, as they have repeatedly done so for many years. This event requires no detours and the roads concerned do not experience high traffic volumes.

Recommendation

1. **That** Council permits the closure of Fitzgerald Road (between Gibsons Road and Bonningtons Road), Seaside Road (between Fitzgerald Road and Bonningtons Road) and Bonningtons Road (between Fitzgerald Road and Seaside Road), to be closed from 8.00 am Sunday, 15 March 2026 until 5.00 pm the same day to allow the Wakanui Bent Sprint event to take place.

Attachment

Appendix 1 Road closure diagram

Background

The current situation

1. The Ashburton Car Club has applied for a road closure of a portion of Fitzgerald Road (between Gibsons Road and Bonningtons Road), Seaside Road (between Fitzgerald Road and Bonningtons Road) and Bonningtons Road (between Fitzgerald Road and Seaside Road) to hold the Wakanui Bent Sprint event on Sunday, 15 March 2026. The event will be held from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm. See attached diagram of the road closure (appendix 1).
2. This proposed road closure has been advertised, and no objections were received.
3. The required insurances and traffic management plan have been received.
4. This application must be considered by Council under clause 11(e) of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974, because MotorSport New Zealand, of which the Ashburton Car Club is affiliated, requires roads to be closed for motor sport events as event participants may be under 17 years of age.
5. The Ashburton Car Club has run car racing events safely and successfully for over 18 years. Their events are well organised and every precaution is taken by the organisers to ensure that the highest levels of safety are maintained. Their events are highly supported by the local community and are a valued attraction to the District.

Options analysis

Option one – Approve road closure (recommended option)

6. Our practice has been to approve such requests, subject to being confident that the event organisers can manage the event safely, and that the road will be restored to pre-race condition.
7. Ashburton Car Club has a strong record of safe and successful management of these events in the district for over 18 years.
8. The responsibility for risk-free operation lies with the organisers and all contingencies are covered in the conditions of closure.
9. The road condition will be inspected by Roading staff before and after the event. Staff are confident that the asset will be returned to its pre—existing condition after the event.

Advantages: Ashburton Car Club events are supported by the local community. They have been running without issue for many years.	Disadvantages: Travel impact on residents, road users, spectators, and local businesses.
Risks:	

Safety issues due to it being a motor vehicle event.
 If an incident occurs this could prevent access to the road for a period of time.
 The impact on the condition of the roads.
 These risks are considered LOW overall as they can all be successfully managed.

Option two – Decline road closure

10. This option would see Council decline this road closure, which is not recommended.

Advantages: Any safety, travel delay or impact on road condition are avoided.	Disadvantages: Many people look forward to these types of events and they provide positive attraction to the district.
Risks: Reputational risk to Council to hold motorsport events within the district.	

Legal/policy implications

11. Clause 11 of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974 provides –

That council may, subject to such conditions as it thinks fit... close any road or part of a road to all traffic...

(e)... for any exhibition, fair, market, concert, film making, race or other sporting event or public function

12. Clause 11A further provides that council shall give public notice of its intention to consider closing any road, and shall give public notice of any decision made.

13. As noted previously, our practice is to enable these events to proceed subject to ensuring the safety of road users, residents, and spectators.

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel	Jacqui Watson; Senior Legal Counsel
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Strategic alignment

14. The recommendation relates to Council’s community outcome of “*residents are included and have a voice*” because they are given the opportunity to comment on and participate in a community event.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic		
Environmental		
Cultural		
Social	✓	An opportunity for people to take part in, observe and enjoy an event on local roads.

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	No cost to Council
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	NA
Where is the funding coming from?	NA
Are there any future budget implications?	NA
Reviewed by Finance	Erin Register; Finance Manager.

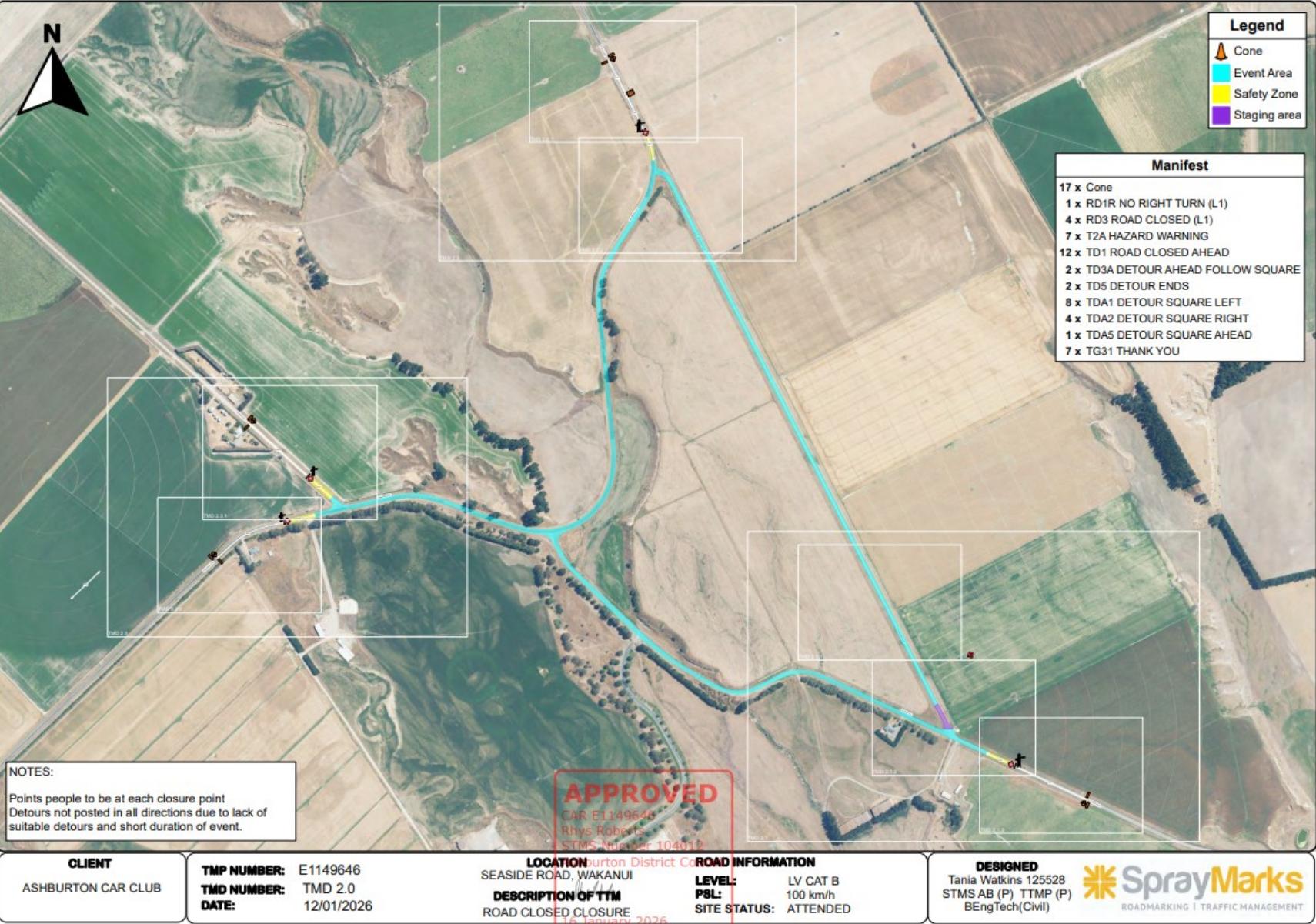
Significance and engagement assessment

15. Property owners in the affected areas approached and letters dropped so they aware of the event and road closure.
16. The event has been publicly notified.
17. Other local organisations are actively involved with marshalling, security etc.
18. Emergency services are provided with a copy of road closure information after approval has been given.
19. There will also be publicity around this road closure due to the normal media coverage of public meeting agenda items.
20. The advance communications and notifications are consistent with the overall significance of this decision and the legal requirements.

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No

Level of significance	Medium
Rationale for selecting level of significance	This level of engagement is required to meet statutory requirements.
Level of engagement selected	Level 3 – Consult. Council must advertise the closure and consider objections if any are received.
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	This level of engagement is required to meet statutory requirements.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

Appendix one – road closure diagram



12. Ashburton Car Club Road Closure – Upper Downs Shingle Sprint

Author	<i>Tayla Bird; Data Management Officer-Roading</i>
Activity Manager	<i>Mark Chamberlain; Roading Manager</i>
Executive Team Member	<i>Neil McCann; Group Manager-Infrastructure</i>

Summary

- This report considers an application from Ashburton Car Club Incorporated for temporary road closures of a section of Upper Downs Road on Saturday, 28 February 2026 to hold the Upper Downs Shingle Sprint event.
- This report outlines the benefits and risks to be taken into consideration on whether to approve or decline the road closure.
- Council is not obliged to approve any road closures. Our practice has been to approve such requests, subject to being confident that the event organisers can manage the event safely, and that the road will be restored to pre-race condition.
- Officers are satisfied that the Ashburton Car Club can meet these expectations, as they have repeatedly done so for many years. This event requires no detours and the roads concerned do not experience high traffic volumes.

Recommendation

- 1. That** Council permits the closure of Upper Downs Road, Mt Somers, from Quarry Road to Hinds Gorge Road from 8.00am Saturday, 28 February 2026 until 5.00 pm the same day to allow the Upper Downs Shingle Sprint event to take place.

Attachment

Appendix 1 Road closure diagram

Background

The current situation

1. The Ashburton Car Club has applied for a road closure at Upper Downs Road to hold the Upper Downs Shingle Sprint event on Saturday, 28 February 2026. The event will be held from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm. The affected length of Upper Downs Road runs from Quarry Road to Hinds Gorge Road. See attached diagram of the road closure (appendix 1).
2. The proposed road closure has been advertised, and no objections were received.
3. The required insurances and traffic management plan have been received.
4. This application must be considered by Council under clause 11(e) of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974, because MotorSport New Zealand, of which the Ashburton Car Club is affiliated, requires roads to be closed for motor sport events as event participants may be under 17 years of age.
5. The Ashburton Car Club has run car racing events safely and successfully for over 18 years. Their events are well organised and every precaution is taken by the organisers to ensure that the highest levels of safety are maintained. Their events are highly supported by the local community and are a valued attraction to the District.

Options analysis

Option one – Approve road closure (recommended option)

6. Our practice has been to approve such requests, subject to being confident that the event organisers can manage the event safely, and that the road will be restored to pre-race condition.
7. Ashburton Car Club has a strong record of safe and successful management of these events in the district for over 18 years.
8. The responsibility for risk-free operation lies with the organisers and all contingencies are covered in the conditions of closure.
9. The road condition will be inspected by Roading staff before and after the event. Staff are confident that the asset will be returned to its pre—existing condition after the event.

Advantages:

Ashburton Car Club events are supported by the local community. They have been running without issue for many years.

Disadvantages:

Travel impact on residents, road users, spectators, and local businesses.

Risks:

Safety issues due to it being a motor vehicle event.
 If an incident occurs this could prevent access to the road for a period of time.
 The impact on the condition of the gravel road.
 These risks are considered LOW overall as they can all be successfully managed.

Option two – Decline road closure

10. This option would see Council decline this road closure, which is not recommended.

Advantages: Any safety, travel delay or impact on road condition are avoided.	Disadvantages: Many people look forward to these types of events and they provide positive attraction to the district.
Risks: Reputational risk to Council to hold motorsport events within the district.	

Legal/policy implications

11. Clause 11 of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974 provides –

That council may, subject to such conditions as it thinks fit... close any road or part of a road to all traffic...

(e) *... for any exhibition, fair, market, concert, film making, race or other sporting event or public function*

12. Clause 11A further provides that council shall give public notice of its intention to consider closing any road, and shall give public notice of any decision made.

13. As noted previously, our practice is to enable these events to proceed subject to ensuring the safety of road users, residents, and spectators.

Review of legal / policy implications

Reviewed by In-house Counsel

Jacqui Watson; Senior Legal Counsel

Strategic alignment

14. The recommendation relates to Council’s community outcome of “*residents are included and have a voice*” because they are given the opportunity to comment on and participate in a community event.

Wellbeing		Reasons why the recommended outcome has an effect on this wellbeing
Economic		
Environmental		
Cultural		
Social	✓	An opportunity for people to take part in, observe and enjoy an event on local roads.

Financial implications

Requirement	Explanation
What is the cost?	No cost to Council
Is there budget available in LTP / AP?	NA
Where is the funding coming from?	NA
Are there any future budget implications?	NA
Reviewed by Finance	Erin Register; Finance Manager.

Significance and engagement assessment

15. Property owners in the affected areas approached and letters dropped so they aware of the event and road closure.
16. The event has been publicly notified.
17. Other local organisations are actively involved with marshalling, security etc.
18. Emergency services are provided with a copy of road closure information after approval has been given.
19. There will also be publicity around this road closure due to the normal media coverage of public meeting agenda items.

The advance communications and notifications are consistent with the overall significance of this decision and the legal requirements.

Requirement	Explanation
Is the matter considered significant?	No
Level of significance	Medium
Rationale for selecting level of significance	This level of engagement is required to meet statutory requirements.
Level of engagement selected	Level 3 – Consult. Council must advertise the closure and consider objections, if any are received.
Rationale for selecting level of engagement	This level of engagement is required to meet statutory requirements.
Reviewed by Strategy & Policy	Mark Low; Strategy and Policy Manager

Appendix one – road closure diagram

