

## Building consents still flowing in

Economists continue to predict a downturn in the housing market, though the number of building consents being processed by the Ashburton District Council remains high.

Council finished the 2022 calendar year with 769 consents received, at a value of \$250,437,888, and that included 271 new house consents.

As a comparison:

- In the 2021 calendar year, Council received 786 consents, including 275 for new house consents, with a value of \$200,344,271
- In the 2020 calendar year, Council received 631 consents, with a value of \$173,933,552
- Pre-covid in 2019, Council received 633 consents, worth \$120,602,124.

Strategy and Compliance Group Manager Jane Donaldson said March was the busiest month of 2022, when 35 new house consents were received.

“December was the quietest with only 12 new house consents, so the average was roughly 22 new house consents per month.

“In the first 18 days of 2023, we received 16 new house consents and there are currently no signs of things slowing down just yet.”

The number of consents dropped slightly in the last six months of the year, though the value of the work remained the same.



Ms Donaldson said the number of amendments had risen significantly, and was up 57 per cent.

“Amendments are changes to a building consent that has been issued, but that we have to reassess for compliance. We can see this relating to supply chain issues in the building industry, where builders are using different brands of materials, like plasterboard.

“It will be interesting to see how interest rates and the continuing uncertainty about a recession will affect numbers in the next six months.”

The large number of building consents had been putting pressure on Council staff to meet processing timeframes, but a big push over the past couple of months has cleared some of the backlog.

“We should be able to meet the processing target for the rest of the year, though compliance timeframes are affected if there is a delay in answering Council’s request for information,” she said.

Planning staff processed 49 Land Information Memorandums in December, down from 74 in November. The number of resource consents decided in December was 16, up from 15 in November.

EVENT NOTICES



**Pool Party**  
7pm - 8:30pm  
Pool inflatables

**SUMMER**  
**27 JANUARY**

Pool entry  
**\$4.50 children**  
(8 - 18 years)  
Adult supervision Advised.

**EA networks**  
centre

eanetworkscentre.co.nz



## Crane zone off limits

Havelock Street, from Council’s admin building to Park Street, will be closed to through traffic for one day on **Wednesday 1 February** when the spire of St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church is lifted off by crane.

The church is undergoing earthquake strengthening and the spire is being removed by a crane that will be positioned on Havelock Street.

Traffic will be detoured using Baring Square West Road, Cameron Street and Park Street. The operation is expected to take most of the working day, and is weather dependant.

Pedestrians will be directed to footpaths outside the work zone.

## Leen Braam, Councillor Amsterdam to Ashburton

Late last year, after a five-year gap, Lianne and I were able to travel back to the Netherlands.

Covid and other unknowns stopped us for a couple of years, and it was great to reconnect and see our Hollandse Familie (Dutch Family) and friends.

Another reason for us was an invitation to the wedding of our nephew and his bride-to-be. They waited until New Zealand covid restrictions were ended to make sure that we could attend the wedding.

It writes like a fairy tale - the wedding was at a beautiful small castle, a beautiful bride and the wedding party staying the night at the castle, including breakfast. No, I wasn’t in the dungeons, we had a great room overlooking the park. Just magic!

But back to reality. I always try to compare the Netherlands with good

ol’ Ashburton district and reading de Telegraaf (a Dutch daily newspaper) I realised that the main stories are exactly the same as the Press in New Zealand.

Unpopular Government decisions, climate crisis, fuel/food prices, Ukraine/ Russian war, staff shortage, building materials shortage, housing shortage, farmers are polluters, energy crisis, high building costs. Plus, Covid is still having an impact all over the world.

The only difference between the two newspapers are the languages.

Sorry, the only other exception was a small item about the Three Waters reform pushed upon us. I am sure that the Dutch have their own issues with clear and clean waters but I could not find any story in the newspapers, maybe they have a better solution or more options (cheaper and fair) or am I just day-dreaming?

So now we are back to good ol’ Ashburton with quiet nights, not much light pollution and space to swing a cat. An amazing community and a great district to live, love, work and play.

Yes, we have similar issues as most of the populations of this world, but I am positive that if we respect each other, work together and find solutions, this district will strive to create an environment where its people can excel.

Covid has proved to be “a gift that keeps on giving” and after returning from our trip I was diagnosed with long covid. I am pleased we found the problem, but the cure is slowing down for a while.

And that is not easy for a busy person.





