

# It's Our Place

## Baring Square East Project

*Our Place : Our Town*

Ashburton District Council has plans to rejuvenate Baring Square East in line with the new Library and Civic Centre building. This booklet includes a summary of the proposals and a submission form for your feedback.

**We are accepting feedback until 5pm, Wednesday 16 September.**

# Introduction

**Our plans for the new library and civic centre are well progressed, with the preparation for calling tenders commencing in September 2020. To complement this facility, Council plans to rejuvenate Baring Square East.**

We have been working with Athfield Architecture to develop a concept plan for what this rejuvenation could look like.

## What we are looking for

Baring Square East will sit opposite the new library & civic centre. It is already used for some community events and we want to support more use of the public space by the community and encourage more pedestrian movement between Baring Square East and the new building. Safe public access is very important.

The current development of Baring Square East features a number of monuments and structures that celebrate the heritage of Ashburton, including the statue of founding father John Grigg, the Boer War memorial, the arbors (informally known as the “whalebones”) established to commemorate the centenary of the Ashburton Borough, and the clocktower contributed by the Ashburton County to mark the centenary of the County. Council feels these features are well established and is looking to build on the legacy of the past, with an eye to the future of the district.

With those points in mind, Council is looking for community input to identify other community ideas that will support this vision of more closely integrating Baring Square East and the Library & Civic Centre while honouring the past in a contemporary way.

## Key changes

Development of Baring Square East as a one-way slow street (30 km/hour) with pedestrian-friendly access and some short-term parking for visitors

Creating a ‘civic plaza’ linkage between Baring Square East and the entrance to the Ashburton Library and Civic Centre

Replacing the existing mix of different types of paving with basalt paving to enhance the look of the area

Raising the water feature stepping slabs so they are the same level as the surrounding paving

Upgrading the existing timber seats to blend in with the Library and Civic Centre

Simplifying the planting in Baring Square.

A full version of the Baring Square Preliminary MasterPlan is available from [ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay)

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***We want  
to hear  
from YOU!***

# A bit of background

## What is the history of Baring Square East?

The land on which the town of Ashburton stands was obtained from the Canterbury Association which held the land under the Wakefield Scheme. The river and the town were named after the Hon. William Baring (Lord Ashburton), a prominent member of the first New Zealand Land Association founded by Wakefield in 1837. The town is laid out around two central

squares either side of the railway line and main highway, Baring Square East and Baring Square West.

The image below shows Baring Square East circa 1910 – 20, with the statue of John Grigg shown in the foreground and the Boer War Memorial in the centre of the square.

In 1977, the Ashburton community was preparing for centenary celebrations to mark 100 years of the Ashburton Borough in 1978. To mark the centenary the Borough Council decided to develop Baring Square East, incorporating the newly erected

Ashburton Town Clock which the County Council had placed in 1976 to mark the centenary of the Ashburton County.

The landscape architects Boffa Jackman and Associates proposed that

*“... a certain element of nostalgia, popular as it is at present, should be evoked in any design (for Baring Square East). That is, it should not be so modern that contract of design styles brings with it a sense of incongruity or disharmony.”*

*“The major feature of all designs are the archway arbors in precast concrete of modern but traditional design which encircles the central open space. It is intended that they evoke the traditional feeling of walking beneath a cloister. Over time they will ‘mellow’ and carry ivy – again very much expressive of tradition”.*



*Hopkins, Alfred Walter, 1882-1969. Ashburton, general view looking down East Street - Photograph taken by A W H. Ref: 1/2-000886-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. / records/23251967*

Baring Square East was unveiled in October 1978 by the then Governor General, Sir Keith Holyoake.

# A bit of background

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## *The clock has a long history in Ashburton.*

It started its Mid-Canterbury life in 1904 housed in the tower of the old Post Office which was erected in 1901.

In the aftermath of the 1931 Hawkes Bay and 1942 Wairarapa earthquakes, the tower was removed at the direction of central government and the clock put into storage.

The 1970s saw the clock restored by the Ashburton Lions Club and the completion coincided with a decision of the local County Council to mark the County Centennial in 1976 by erecting a suitable tower to house the clock. The tower was designed by Warren and Mahoney Architects.

The tower has become widely recognised as the symbol of Ashburton. In 2004, the New Zealand Institute of Architects acknowledged the significance of the Warren and Mahoney structure in presenting them with an “Enduring Architecture” award for their design based around four slender post-tensioned concrete columns. It had won an earlier NZIA Local Award in 1978.

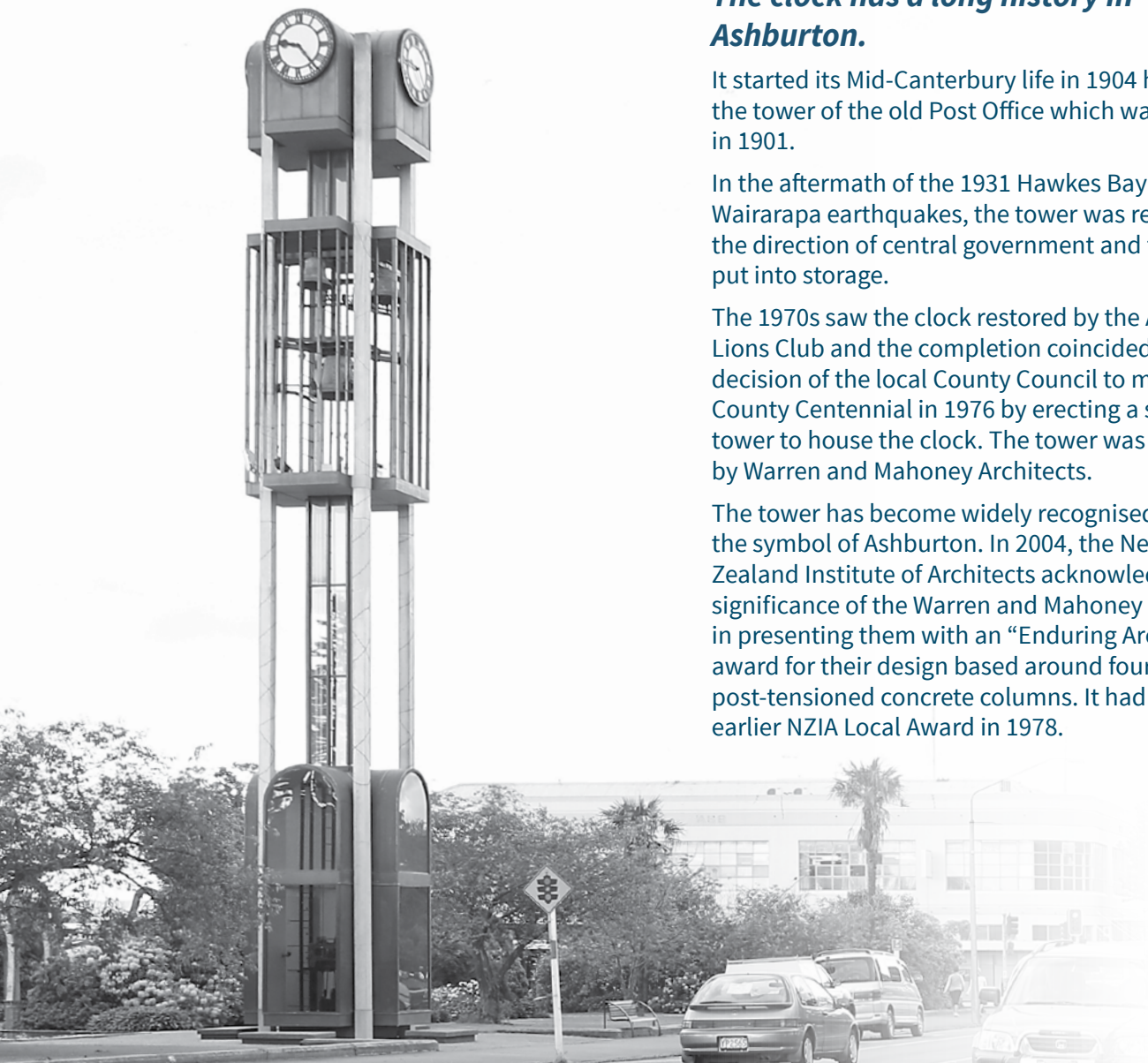
## **Who is leading this work?**

Council is leading the rejuvenation of Baring Square East and have commissioned Athfield Architecture to develop the preliminary design presented in this document. Community feedback will inform the next step of the process, the detailed design.

## **Why is this being undertaken now?**

The Canterbury earthquakes have resulted in significant changes to the face of the Ashburton town centre, as buildings have required significant strengthening work or demolition. This redevelopment has given Council the opportunity to support investment and encourage revitalisation of the CBD. A part of this work is our own project to build a new Library and Civic Centre in Baring Square East.

We think that it makes sense to rejuvenate Baring Square East at the same time as we build the new Library and Civic Centre as there are many integration opportunities between the two. We plan on keeping all of the existing features of the current Baring Square East including the clocktower, memorial statues and concrete arbors (informally known by some as the “whalebones”).





# A bit of background

## Our Place – Town Centre Development

In 2018 we ran a campaign which included a series of short survey rounds. This campaign was part of an ongoing conversation between Council and the community about the district's future. You gave us some really valuable feedback about your priorities, and the fourth most important to you was the development of the town centre.

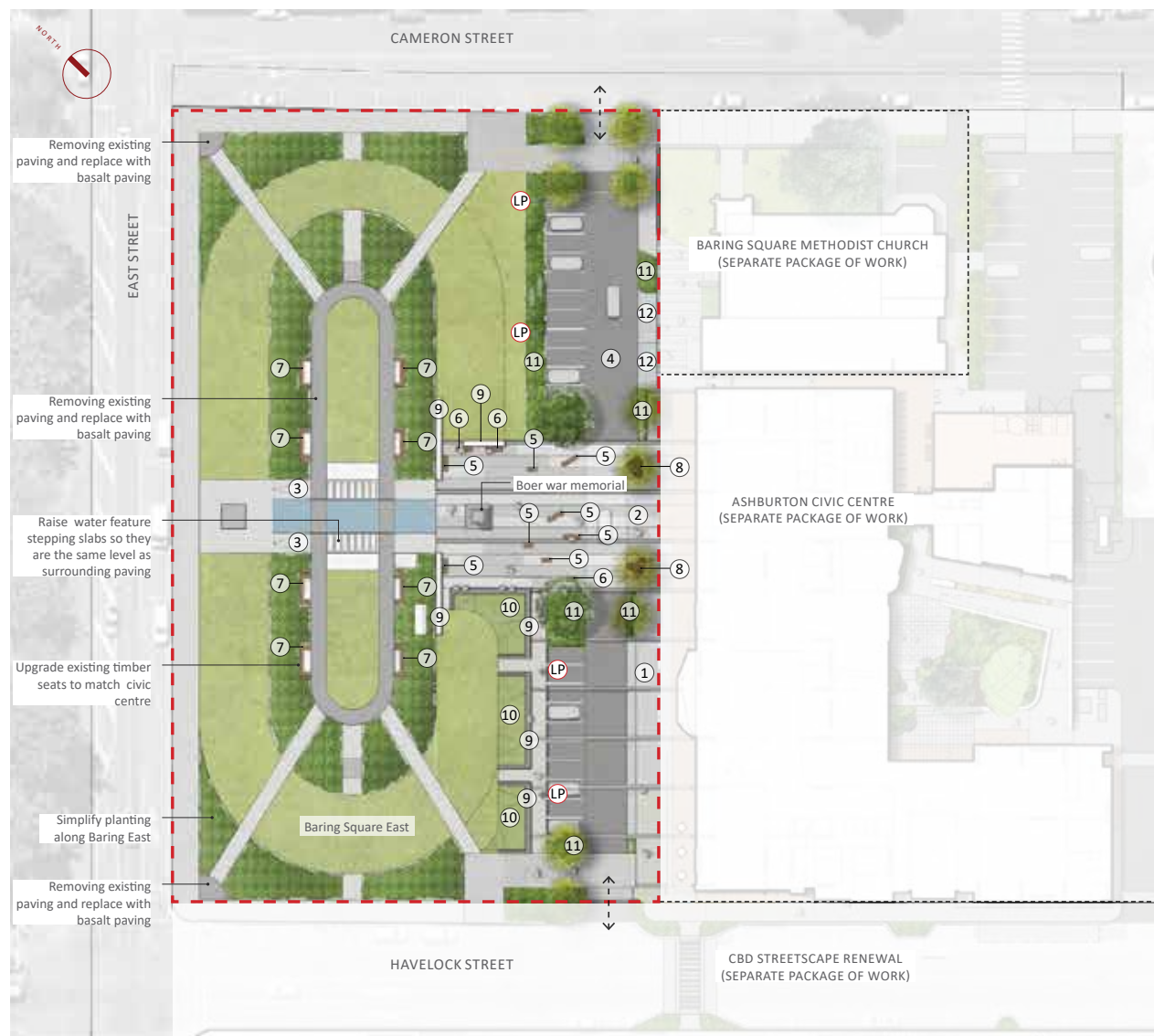


***We want  
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We want to know what you think of the Baring Square East Project. You can provide your feedback by completing the submission form in the back of this document, or online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay).

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# Landscape preliminary design



# Landscape preliminary design



**The preliminary plan shows the following features:**

## **Baring Square East**

Development of Baring Square East as a one-way street (30 km/hour) with pedestrian-friendly access and some short-term parking for visitors to the library and civic centre and the Methodist Church.

## **Civic Plaza**

Creating a dynamic and multi-use space for public events and shared streetscape appeal with public seating and a hierarchy of spaces.

## **Library Forecourt**

Open al-fresco dining space connected to the café with a dynamic and energetic edge to the streetscape character.

## **Baring Square**

Replacing the existing paving with basalt paving and raising the water feature stepping slabs so they are the same level as the surrounding paving. The timber seats are upgraded to blend in with the Library and Civic Centre and the planting in Baring Square will be simplified with ornamental trees and decorative planting beds.



# It's Our Place

We are asking for written submissions to the proposal but due to time constraints with the project we will not be holding public hearings.

The community's feedback will help us finalise the detailed design brief for Athfield Architecture to produce the detailed design.

*Have your  
Say!*



**The easiest way to provide your feedback is to complete the form online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay)**

Alternatively, you can provide feedback by filling in the attached submission form and getting it back to us using one of the following methods:



**FREEPOST TO**  
Ashburton District Council  
Our Place  
Freepost 230444  
PO Box 94  
Ashburton 7740



**IN PERSON**  
Dropping it off at:  
- Ashburton District Council  
reception – 5 Baring Square West



**EMAIL TO**  
[submissions@adc.govt.nz](mailto:submissions@adc.govt.nz)



**ONLINE AT**  
[ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay)



## A full version of the Baring Square Preliminary Master Plan is available from [ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay)

*You can submit on any or all of the questions below. You don't have to complete every question.*

### Submission Form

1. Do you support the rejuvenation of Baring Square East as presented?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If yes, what aspects of the proposals do you support and why?

b. If no, what aspects of the proposals do you not support and why?

c. Other comments

Please note, all submissions are public documents and will be made available on Council's website with the names of submitters included.

If you are completing this submission on behalf of others, please name the group or organisation. Only one submission per group/organisation will be accepted.

*If you need, please attach additional information.*

We are accepting  
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Ashburton District Council  
PO Box 94  
Ashburton 7740

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## Baring Square East Project

*Our Place : Our Town*

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**Say!**

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Preliminary Master Plan is available from  
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### Your details

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organisation (if appropriate): \_\_\_\_\_  
Street number: \_\_\_\_\_ Street name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Suburb / Town / RD: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: .....

Date: .....