



# Chapter 13: Townships and Small Settlements



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# Townships and Small Settlements

## Briefly ....

The townships and small settlements of Marlborough reflect the different natural environments they are part of as well as reflecting their different heritage and function. There is no “typical” Marlborough township. Each place is unique with character being a direct reflection of the different land use activities that occur within and around townships. The larger townships have a mix of residential, commercial and industrial activities. The character is therefore more diverse than that of the smaller settlements, which are predominantly residential in nature.

Population growth in Marlborough is expected to continue. This growth and the changing nature of the population are presenting a considerable challenge to the Council and the community.

## ISSUES

- Population growth has increased the demand for residential property in townships and small settlements.
- Managing infrastructure services to protect community health and wellbeing.
- Looking after the character of urban areas.
- Conflicts between urban land uses.
- Shortage of affordable housing.
- Retaining a vibrant central business district at the heart of Blenheim.

## PRESENT AND FUTURE MANAGEMENT

### *Looking at the future of Marlborough's townships and small settlements*

To see what the implications of growth on Marlborough's settlements have been and what the future might hold for future settlement, a baseline study of what makes Marlborough's townships and small settlements 'tick' was started in early 2007. A profile for over 25 Marlborough townships and small settlements was developed including identifying key issues and opportunities. Once the public had commented on these, alterations were made to the profiles.

As well as the specific issues identified for individual settlements, the report also highlighted issues affecting settlements right across Marlborough.

Two key factors identified were that the social fabric and physical fabric of our communities are both very important and that the sustainability of water supplies is a key determinant of future growth.

The Townships and Small Settlements report is a first for Marlborough, in that it places a line in the sand for the profile of each township and settlement. The intention is to now focus on individual townships and work towards addressing the issues and opportunities that have arisen and use this information for the review of the Marlborough Regional Policy Statement and the two resource management plans.

### *Monitoring residential growth*

The Council has been monitoring residential growth in Blenheim and Renwick for the last 4 years. This has helped the Council to be able to make decisions about whether there is enough land zoned for residential use. It also means that planning for increasing capacity for basic infrastructure and other services can occur.

The most recent information (2007) concluded that the amount of vacant greenfield residential land was not considered enough to meet anticipated demand for new housing for the planning period ending 2026 at current rates and patterns of housing uptake. What the 2007 study found was that the greenfield land bank that was apparent in the previous studies had been substantially reduced.

One option to provide for the anticipated demand is for the available resource of vacant and occupied residential land to be “stretched” further by allowing higher density developments. This may see the Council having to be more directive



about changing traditional patterns and densities of residential development through either the standards in the resource management plans, or criteria, guidelines or incentives.

### **Commercial and industrial activities**

Over the past 5 years, the Council has received a number of requests to rezone land in and around Blenheim to provide for commercial and industrial activities. Developers want to be able to build larger retail complexes (referred to as large format retail or business parks) on the outskirts of Blenheim both to the east and west of the town. For industrial activities, rural land to the east of Blenheim near and adjacent to the Riverlands Industrial Estate and Cloudy Bay Business Park was identified as being suitable.

The requests for large format retail activity raised concerns for the Council about what effect this type of activity may have on Blenheim's town centre. The Council initiated a number of investigations to get an idea of what the issues could be, assess any action needed to address the issues, and identify demand. A shortage of land for retail purposes was identified through these investigations. Rather than provide for a specific large format retail zone on the edge of town to address this shortage, the Council opted to increase the Central Business Zone primary shopping area. The Council's final decisions on the proposed changes have been appealed to the Environment Court.

The Council also carried out investigations on the need for more industrial zoned land. Investigations have similarly shown there to be a need for more industrially zoned land. Land adjacent to Riverlands Industrial Estate and Cloudy Bay Business Park has now been rezoned for industrial activities.

### **Urban design**

As part of reviewing where Marlborough will head in the years ahead, the Council has started looking at developing an urban design plan for Blenheim. The intention is to focus on developing a plan for Blenheim's Central Business Zone with an urban design plan for Picton to follow in the near future.

### **Community reserves**

The Council looks after significant areas of publicly owned land including some 295 parks, reserves and sports grounds. There are also 146 shared walking and biking tracks covering 93.87 kilometres. The network of pathways throughout Marlborough, for walkers and cyclists, is continually being enhanced and developed.

The Council also acquires and develops reserves on an ongoing basis through the subdivision process, land purchase, swap or exchange, esplanade acquisition and gifting. Current predictions of increased household numbers estimate that three additional reserves will be required each year. Within the last 5 years:

- Six neighbourhood reserves have been created where subdivision of land has generated a need for open space areas.
- Lansdowne Park has been purchased, an area of 8 hectares, which will continue to be the home of rugby for Marlborough with possibilities of further development for additional sports.
- Endeavour Park at Waikawa has undergone a major redevelopment resulting in a central multi-use sports facility for Picton.
- Development is underway on Renwick Domain for the construction of a sports pavilion to enhance the use of the playing fields.

*Renwick*



# Townships and Small Settlements



## In depth ....

Marlborough's townships and small settlements have become established for a variety of reasons: a service centre for an agricultural hinterland; a transport junction or watering hole; a port or aquaculture servicing wharf; or as a coastal retreat.

Whatever their beginnings, Marlborough's townships and small settlements are more than just collections of buildings and activities. They are communities of people: people from increasingly diverse backgrounds within and from outside Marlborough; people who associate together in various different groups. These might be groups related to work, business transactions, sports, school, clubs, church parishes, street neighbourhoods, age or disability. Not everyone operates in the same social grouping within communities. It is important to recognise that each township or settlement comprises a great diversity of people and multiple groups. Experience elsewhere in New Zealand, and globally, suggests that there will be even more diversity in communities in the future.

Marlborough's townships and small settlements therefore comprise a complex fabric of relationships, interactions and transactions between people, as well as the physical fabric of buildings, spaces and infrastructure. The quality of both the social fabric and the physical fabric of each township and settlement determines the quality of life of the people who live there.

Changes in population demographics, have had, and continue to have an impact on Marlborough's townships and small settlements. Over 50 percent of Marlborough's population (23,088 people) now live in Blenheim, with a significant proportion of the remaining population living in other townships and small settlements. Blenheim's population increased by 7 percent between 2001 and 2006. Population growth in some parts of Blenheim dramatically exceeded this average (e.g. Springlands increased by 10 percent and Witherlea by 14 percent). Picton (excluding Waikawa) had a decrease in population of 3 percent between 2001 and 2006, however all other urban areas in Marlborough are experiencing population growth.

Not only is the population of the townships and small settlements growing, the nature of the population is also changing. As for the country as a whole, Marlborough's population has become increasingly characterised by an aging population. Population growth by natural increase (net births less deaths) is expected to become negative in the long term. Based on this pattern, the number of people aged 0-39 is projected to decline substantially.

Another distinctive feature of Marlborough's population is its mobility, with over 70 percent of the population having lived here for less than 10 years. There is also a significant itinerant population within Marlborough that is not captured in statistics.

This population is associated with employment in the viticulture and horticulture industries. It is likely that the itinerant population is also diversifying the ethnic make-up of the townships and small settlements on the Wairau Plain and in Seddon.

Population growth in Marlborough's townships and small settlements is expected to continue. This growth and the changing nature of the population are presenting a considerable challenge to the Council and the community.

## ISSUES FOR MARLBOROUGH'S TOWNSHIPS AND SMALL SETTLEMENTS

Some of the issue or pressures on Marlborough's townships and small settlements are specific to particular townships or small settlements, while others are being experienced across many of the townships and small settlements. It is important to emphasise that these issues are not restricted to the issues identified in this chapter. Other chapters of this report are also relevant to Marlborough's townships and small settlements, especially the chapters on Infrastructure and Energy, Transport and Waste Management. It is important to have regard to these other aspects when considering issues affecting Marlborough's townships and small settlements.

### Growth pressures

As Marlborough's population has increased over the past 10 years, so too has the demand for residential property. The demand peaked at over 450 new houses a year in 2004 and 2005, based on building consents issued for new residential houses. Current projections are for sustained population growth, although it is acknowledged that worldwide changes in economic circumstances during 2008 may have an effect on these projections. However, if these projections do eventuate, then there will also need to be ongoing growth in the number of residential properties created and residential houses built. A continuing trend of declining number of people per household will mean that the demand for housing will exceed the rate of population growth.

Zoning is currently used within the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan and the Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan, to enable residential activity to occur. Land in or around the townships and small settlements used mainly for residential purposes, or that could be used in the future, is zoned as such on the planning maps.

The Council has been assessing the stock of residential property in Blenheim and Renwick over the past four years. This analysis shows that there is sufficient land zoned for residential purposes within the urban limits to provide for the projected population growth of the next 14 years, provided that the large blocks of land within the town boundary are made available for subdivision. No similar analysis has occurred for the other townships and small settlements.

There are three basic options to provide for residential growth - urban expansion, infill development and an increase in the height of buildings. The last of these is more commonly found in larger urban centres but there is the possibility for apartment type complexes of more than two stories to be built in towns such as Blenheim. Certainly in Picton the development of apartment buildings of around three to four stories on the London Quay waterfront is providing for a particular style of residential living.

Urban expansion occurs where further residential properties are created beyond the town boundary. For example, new residential lots have been created by the Forest Hills development between the southern end of Blenheim and the Wither Hills. Urban expansion can be provided for in the resource management plans by rezoning land for residential purposes on the periphery of urban areas.

Infill development, on the other hand, occurs where further residential properties are created through the subdivision of existing residential properties within the town boundary. For example, the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan enables infill development in the Urban Residential 1 Zone in Blenheim (around the central business district) by specifying that existing properties can be subdivided into smaller sections than elsewhere in Blenheim. Infill development can continue to be provided for by allowing small section sizes in appropriate townships and small settlements (or areas within those urban environments) by way of plan rules.

Urban expansion and infill development can both have adverse effects on the surrounding environment. Expansion is likely to mean that townships expand into the surrounding rural environment. This can mean the loss of quality soils and problems with rurally contaminated land. Urban expansion also creates the potential for conflict between residential land uses and the existing rural land uses. Many of Marlborough's townships and small settlements are surrounded by rural environments. Any expansion of existing townships or settlements creates a new interface between residential environments and rural land use activities. Although rural environments are often thought to be peaceful, spacious and private environments, this is not

always the case. The range of rural land uses that can take place means there is often noise, dust, odour, traffic, etc. However, new residents can have higher expectations of the amenity that should exist at the town boundary, creating the potential for complaints about the effects of the nearby rural land uses - see the Land chapter for more about this.

Expansion on the periphery of Blenheim in particular, will also increase the distance between residents and services provided in the central business district. The ability of some communities to expand may be limited by physical constraints like being able to provide essential services, the existence of flood or stability hazards.

Infill development increases the density of development within the town boundary. As many urban areas are characterised by houses on larger sections, which creates relatively quiet background noise levels, privacy between individual residential properties, ample sunlight to buildings and views to the surrounding environment, any increase in houses on smaller sections could adversely affect existing residential amenity values.

In some cases, the adverse effects of either urban expansion or infill development in a particular location might be such that the community seeks to avoid those adverse effects. The same issues may not exist at other locations, so it might be possible to direct residential growth to those locations.

Given the above, it is important that residential growth is managed, so that the demand for residential property is provided for in a manner that avoids remedies and mitigates the adverse effects of either urban expansion or infill development on the surrounding environment.

*Blenheim*





The growth experienced in the past 10 years or so, has not just affected the need to provide more areas for housing. It also affects the development and expansion of commercial and industrial activities. Many of our industrial areas are being fully used, making it difficult for new industries to find suitable locations. There have also been demands for larger shops, often referred to as 'big box' or 'large format retail' shopping. The Council has had to consider where, not only residential expansion can be provided for, but also where commercial and industrial growth can be accommodated.

### Managing infrastructure to protect community health and wellbeing

The community has made a significant investment in servicing many of Marlborough's townships and small settlements with reticulated drinking water and, in some cases, reticulated sewerage systems (Blenheim, Picton, Havelock, Seddon, Spring Creek, and Renwick). It is important these services continue to perform, so community health standards are maintained and enhanced. It is also important all properties connect to reticulated sewerage where they are able to do so.

The growth in both the population and area of Marlborough's townships and small settlements has potential to put stress on existing services. To cater for a growing population, greater quantities of water may need to be taken from existing sources or, if existing sources are already strained, new sources of water may need to be found. The availability of water is already constraining growth in several townships, including Wairau Valley and Woodbourne. Similarly, additional capacity may need to be built into sewerage infrastructure to cater for greater loadings. Any expansion of reticulated water or sewerage schemes will also involve new pipe-work and pumping infrastructure, at considerable cost.

There may also be a need to limit the extent of growth in particular townships and small settlements because they are not sustainable, given the nature of existing infrastructure or in the absence of that infrastructure. For example, the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan contains a policy of limiting growth in Renwick until reticulated sewerage was provided. That has now occurred.

### Looking after the character of urban areas

Each of Marlborough's townships and small settlements is unique and each has its own distinct character. This character is important as it contributes to the amenity values that the residents, the wider community and visitors all enjoy.

### AMENITY VALUES

- Section 7 of the RMA requires the Council to have particular regard to "the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values"
- Amenity values are defined as "those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes".
- Amenity values also form part of the RMA's definition of "environment" which is, in turn, incorporated into the Act's purpose of promoting sustainable management in section 5(2) through, amongst other things: "(c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment".

Through consultation processes for the review of the Marlborough Regional Policy Statement, the Council is aware that some people feel that Marlborough's urban areas actually lacked definable character and identity.

For residential areas the density of development in residential areas is considerably less than in commercial and industrial areas, with single dwellings on individual sites, low building height, and attractive buildings, gardens and streetscape. Things that contribute to residential character include:

- relatively quiet background noise levels;
- privacy between individual residential properties;
- ample sunlight to buildings;
- views to the surrounding environment; and
- the type and extent of vegetative cover.

The quality of the residential environment is important to residents. Standards included in the resource management plans control the nature and form of residential buildings in order to protect residential amenity values.

A significant amount of infill development has occurred in Marlborough since 1995, particularly in Blenheim. Some people have argued that high density residential development has adversely affected residential amenity values. However, if good urban design principles are applied to the development, then residential amenity values can be maintained.

The character and identity of towns can be influenced by the nature of the immediate and surrounding environment. For example, townships and small settlements in the Marlborough Sounds and at Rarangi are located in coastal environments and have a strong connection to the foreshore and coastal water,



while central Blenheim has an association with the Taylor River. Most of our townships and small settlements are highly modified environments, with few indigenous natural values. Where these values do exist it is important they are maintained and enhanced.

### Conflict between urban land uses

People tend to live in urban environments so that they can live and work in close proximity to each other. The more people that live in the community, the more likely it is that it will be serviced by commercial activities like dairies, service stations, supermarkets and retail shops. A larger residential population presents business opportunities, which create a greater potential workforce. This, combined with ease of access to transport links, also means it is more likely that industrial activities will be established within the community.

Commercial and industrial activities are not necessarily compatible with the residential use of the surrounding land. These activities tend to occupy larger buildings, which can block sunlight and views, generally have less open space around them, generate traffic (pedestrian or vehicular), noise and potentially dust, glare and odour. All of these effects can detract from an enjoyable living environment.

Conversely, locating new residential activity near established commercial or industrial activities can create what is known as “reverse sensitivity” effects. Because the new residents are likely to have different and higher expectations of their living environment, they may complain about the effects of the established commercial and industrial activities nearby. For example, they might complain about the noise or traffic associated with these activities.

Zoning has been used in both the Marlborough Sounds and Wairau/Awatere resource management plans to manage the different sensitivities to effects. Activities with similar effects have been grouped together and any adverse effects can be restricted to a defined area. However, this can create issues between zones because the zones often have sharp boundaries, meaning that there can be residential activity on one side of the road and commercial or industrial activities on the other side of the road. This can result in adverse effects on residential amenity values and reverse sensitivity effects along the zone boundary, as it is very difficult to dissipate the effects of commercial or industrial activities over such a short distance.

### Affordable housing

Marlborough has enjoyed a high rate of employment and employment growth, which is projected to continue for the core resource-based industries. However, these industries are

characterised by low average earnings. The average hourly earnings in June 2006 were \$18.56, significantly lower than the national average. Over 70% of households earn \$40,000 or less.

As part of a national trend, Marlborough has experienced significant increases in residential real estate prices over the past 5 years. House prices rose approximately 70% between 2002 and 2004. Rents also rose sharply in Marlborough over that period.

Taking these two factors into account, there is now a real shortage of affordable housing currently for low-moderate income households in Marlborough's townships and small settlements. The drop in housing affordability is possibly reflected in declining home ownership rates, which dropped 7% between 1986 and 2001. The cost of building new houses has also risen in response to increases in the value of land, larger floor plans and increases in the price of building supplies.

Affordable homes are really important for the social and economic wellbeing of the community. They provide stability and help to improve the productivity of the workforce. Affordable housing is also important, given Marlborough's aging population and the seasonal nature of viticulture work.

### Retaining a vibrant central business district at the heart of Blenheim

The main business and retail area in Marlborough is the central business district of Blenheim. A wide range of important activities occur within this central area. These include retail shops, professional and administrative offices, civic and community facilities, emergency service activities, personal and household services, entertainment, restaurants and bars. Not only does the central business district serve Blenheim's resident population, it serves an extensive rural area. Increasingly too, the business area of Blenheim is providing for the needs of travellers and tourists.

The central business district is zoned within the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan as Central Business Zone and incorporates the inner shopping areas of Market and Queen Streets, and stretches to include the surrounding business areas as well. The Central Business Zone represents Marlborough's largest investment in terms of building and development. There is considerable public and private investment here, in the form of roading, car parking, street lighting and other infrastructure, which is important in providing commercial services and shopping facilities for the community.

While there is a recognised need for a cohesive and vibrant centre in Blenheim, changes in the way people shop have seen proposals to establish large retail shopping complexes on the outskirts of Blenheim. Currently there is an ongoing debate



between recognising the importance of Blenheim's central business district to be the focal point for retail, commercial, cultural and social activity, to ensure that the town centre continues to thrive and the increasing demand for and choice of goods in retail developments to occur in other locations.

## RESPONDING TO PRESSURES IN TOWNSHIPS AND SMALL SETTLEMENTS

### Community reserves

Having areas of open space and community reserves for recreation activities, conservation values and landscape or visual reasons contributes to our overall quality of life in Marlborough. The substantial open space resource, which exists in the Marlborough Sounds in particular, is a significant contributor to the wellbeing of both Marlburians and visitors to the area for natural character and visual reasons. This resource provides protection for important habitats and ecosystems and enables access to and along the coast. However, open space and community reserves in and adjoining the urban areas of Marlborough, are equally important in contributing to the community's overall recreational, social and cultural needs.

The Council and the Department of Conservation are responsible for managing open space areas and community reserves in Marlborough that are in public ownership. These areas are generally administered under the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977. The Council's responsibility in managing publicly owned land includes some 295 parks, reserves and sports grounds. There are also 146 shared walking and biking tracks covering 93.87 kilometres. The network of pathways throughout Marlborough, which allows for off road transport options for walkers and cyclists, is continually being enhanced and developed.

Reserves continue to be acquired and developed through the subdivision process, land purchase, swap or exchange, esplanade acquisition, gift, and designation under statute. An example of a reserve recently created in Blenheim, through gifting, can be found in the box 'Shep's Park, Severne Street, Blenheim'.

Current predictions of increased household numbers estimate that three additional reserves will be required each year. This figure can be balanced of by enhancement of current reserves to allow for greater use dependant on the area of residential growth.

Within the last 5 years a number of new reserve areas have been acquired. This includes 6 new neighbourhood reserves, created where subdivision of land has generated a need for open space areas. More recently the Council has purchased Lansdowne Park, an area of 8 hectares, which will continue to be the home of

rugby for Marlborough with possibilities of further development for additional sports.

In Picton, Endeavour Park at Waikawa has undergone a major redevelopment resulting in a central multi-use sports facility for Picton. Picton's existing sports fields located at Waitohi Domain, Memorial Park, Nelson Square and the Endeavour Park fields have had severe limitations regarding size, location and drainage.



*Endeavour Park - before and after*



The New Zealand Sports Turf Institute was engaged to undertake a scoping report on further development of Endeavour Park. This involved levelling the upper area and constructing two additional playing fields, space for car parking and a pavilion and improving drainage and playability on the existing fields. Wilding pines have also been cleared from the upper area. The development of a sports pavilion is currently being worked on with local groups. Being located adjacent to Queen Charlotte College, gives the added bonus of the park being available for a variety of uses.

Development is also underway on Renwick Domain with the construction a sports pavilion to enhance the use of the playing fields.

## Urban design

With Blenheim's last decade of rapid growth, the Council as part of reviewing the direction Marlborough will take with its economic, environmental and community policy in the years ahead, has started looking at developing an urban design plan for Blenheim. The intention is to focus on developing a plan for Blenheim's Central Business Zone with an urban design plan for Picton to follow in the near future.

An urban design plan for central Blenheim would look at accessibility, zoning to meet future growth, building guidelines, the extent of green areas including street trees, road layout, car parking, lighting and cycle ways.

The Council will be talking with businesses, organisations and individuals with an interest in the design of Blenheim, to identify issues and opportunities. Amongst the matters to be considered is the impact on the town of such things as:

- Major industries (wine, horticulture, aquaculture, forestry, tourism, education, aviation etc).
- Community aspirations for such things as sport and leisure, health, education, arts and culture.



Harling Park, Blenheim

- Changing demographics and its influence on housing needs, transport and access.

The Council, with the help of professional urban planners, aims to produce a plan which addresses the issues of town planning, tourism, investment, infrastructure, funding, education, culture and economic development.

## SHEP'S PARK, SEVERNE STREET, BLENHEIM

Shep's Park in Severne Street was a bequest to the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust. Lloyd and Joy Shepard moved to Severne Street soon after World War 2. For many years the couple lived in an ex-military tent before relocating a house on to the property. Towards the end of Joy Shepard's occupancy of the property, there was a large interest by real estate agents and property developers, keen to acquire the land for residential development.

With the death of Mrs Shepard the total property was gifted to the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust. This was an unusual event for the Trust, as it has previously only dealt with monetary gifting and protection of native vegetation and not the day to day management of land. The Trust sought assistance from the Council. An agreement has been entered into with the Trust and the Council has taken over the development and day to day management of the land.

Mrs Shepard's will and the trust deed sets out certain conditions that must be taken into account when developing the land. These include:

- naming the property "Shep's Park";
- retaining and enhancing existing native vegetation;
- retaining big gum trees;
- the property remaining an open space park; and
- removing the existing house.

Landscape design and concept plans have been developed and put out to the community for consultation and feedback.





**TABLE 13.1: NEW ALLOTMENTS CREATED BY DEPOSIT OF SUBDIVISION PLANS DURING THE PERIOD 2006 - MID 2007**

	1st Jan 2006 – 31st Dec. 2006 (12 months)			1st Jan. 2007 – 30th June 2007 (6 months)			Total New Vacant Allotments Created Over 18-Month Period
	Total Allotments Created	Allotments Occupied by Existing Dwellings	Net New Vacant Allotments Created	Total Allotments Created	Allotments Occupied by Existing Dwellings	Net New Vacant Allotments Created	
Blenheim	240	92	148	91	53	38	186
Greenfield	54	2	52	2	1	1	53
Infill	186	90	96	89	52	37	133
Renwick	20	8	12	18	6	12	24
Greenfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infill	20	8	12	18	6	12	24

### Monitoring residential growth

The Council has been monitoring residential growth in Blenheim and Renwick for the last 4 years, which, along with the information available from the 2006 census, has enabled residential growth trends in wider Marlborough to be understood. The results of the most recent monitoring are included in a 2007 report “Residential Land Availability Blenheim and Renwick - An Assessment of Zoned Residential Land Available for Future Development”. This report had the benefit of statistics from the 2006 census, as well as the trend perspective provided by the three previous reports on residential growth.

The purpose of monitoring residential growth is to assess residentially-zoned land potentially available for development and human settlement in Blenheim and Renwick, taking into account population trends shown through census figures. This means the Council can make decisions about whether there is enough land zoned for these purposes. It also means planning for increasing capacity for basic infrastructure and other services can occur.

The potential for ‘greenfield’ and ‘infill’ development was looked at. “Infill” development is where existing residential areas are redeveloped or where there is more intense use by multi-unit development or additional dwellings on already-occupied sites. “Greenfield” development occurs on undeveloped but residentially-zoned land, often on the outskirts of a built-up area.

The 2007 study analysed data from the Council’s information systems to identify the number of residential allotments created during the 18-month study period (from January 2006 to June 2007) - see Table 13.1. The total number of new allotments created excludes allotments containing existing built dwellings. The total therefore includes only genuinely vacant market-ready residential sections that were available for building at the time they were released to the market.

The total includes new allotments, vacant at the time of subdivision, but which had building consents issued not long before deposit of the plan or soon after plan deposit, but hadn’t yet been built on. These were generally for townhouse or multi-unit developments and were included because they represented the creation of genuinely new residential sections with new houses, which are additional to the existing housing stock. The timing of house-building relative to subdivision in these cases, reflects an emerging pattern of subdivision of land either by original owners or by developers, where the subdivision is integrated with or closely followed by construction of a dwelling on the resulting allotment(s).

The 2007 report concluded that the resource of vacant residential land is fast diminishing. The resource of vacant greenfield residential land was not considered enough to meet anticipated demand for new greenfield housing for the planning period ending 2026 at current rates and patterns of housing uptake. What the 2007 study found was that the greenfield land bank that was apparent in the previous studies had been substantially reduced.

*Queen Charlotte Drive*



**TABLE 13.2: TOTAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL - BLENHEIM AND RENWICK**

Potential Available In The Following Locations	At Typical Township Residential* Subdivision Density	At Typical Residential 2** Subdivision Density & Low Yield	At Residential 1** Subdivision Density & Moderate Yield	Potential @ Multi-Unit Residential Density & High Yield
<b>Vacant Greenfield Land</b>				
Blenheim	N/A	807	1267	1301
Renwick	109	N/A	N/A	160
<b>Total Potential In Vacant Greenfield Land</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>1267</b>	<b>1461</b>
<b>Infill Potential</b>				
Blenheim	0	571	1347	2257
Renwick (excluding the greenfield area at the northwestern edge)	339	N/A	N/A	340
<b>Total Infill Potential</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>2597</b>
<b>Overall Total Development Potential:</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>1378</b>	<b>2614</b>	<b>4058</b>

\* Township Residential is the residential zone in Renwick

\*\* Urban Residential 1 and 2 are the residential zones for Blenheim

Table 13.2 taken from the report, shows the overall potential for residential development and redevelopment. (The data are current to the end of the study period, i.e. 30 June 2007.)

While it was reported that infill housing would be able to absorb some demand, the combined infill + greenfield resource is not expected to meet demand for the period ending 2026. The report noted that the Council, along with the community, will need to make decisions well ahead of that time about how future residential demand is to be met: whether by re-zoning new areas or by holding fast to the current urban limits and relying more heavily on infill housing.

One option to address the need identified in the report, was for the available resource of vacant and occupied residential land to be “stretched” further, by allowing higher density developments. This would require the Council to be more directive to change traditional patterns and densities of residential development. Options suggested in the report to help achieve this included:

- Having well-designed higher density development within the Council’s own residential subdivision initiatives.
- Discussing with the small pool of owners of larger blocks of vacant land with a view to influencing development densities.
- Creating incentives to achieve good quality high density layouts or multi-unit housing within future medium-density subdivisions.
- Rewarding innovative subdivision design and integrated residential developments.
- Design guides and direct discussions with the land development agents most likely to influence design outcomes (surveyors, planners).

A greater reliance on infill housing however, can have implications for design and construction and the overall quality of residential environment created. Poorly-designed infill units built of poor

construction materials can result in poor quality environments for residents. One example is the potential implications for open space and green character of a built-up area. Increased densities will affect the area available for or retained as gardens and the area of mature or character-defining trees. Once lost, these characteristics are difficult to restore or replace.

Other issues or challenges that could be experienced include the design and provision of:

- visual and acoustic privacy;
- provision of suitable areas for storage, outdoor washing lines and rubbish;
- passive solar heating; and
- off-road parking and garaging.

These matters can be addressed through standards in the resource management plans, or criteria, guidelines or incentives. However, if greater reliance is to be placed on infill development, and as the opportunities available for that become fewer or harder, the tension between good design and affordability can be expected to intensify.

One other aspect noted in the 2007 report is that of housing affordability. As the supply of vacant residential land reduces, the cost of land and ultimately of new housing is expected to increase. There is now a widely-acknowledged shortage of affordable housing for people on low to modest incomes. This is not expected to ease for the foreseeable future, given the shortening supply of land for residential building. Affordable rental housing is also in short supply. This is expected to continue to be a significant feature of the housing stock in Blenheim and Renwick as housing supply lags behind the sudden demand experienced in recent years. The affordability and quality of housing are key determinants of a person’s quality of life. The implications are important for the kind of community Marlborough is able to provide into the future.



### What makes Marlborough's townships and small settlements 'tick'?

The townships and small settlements of Marlborough reflect the different natural environments they are part of and reflect their different heritage and function. There is no "typical" Marlborough township. Each place is unique. The basic distinctions in the climate and geography in the Marlborough Sounds, Wairau Valley, Wairau Plain and the Awatere Valley mean that there are underlying differences in the environments within the various settlements.

Marlborough's townships and small settlements however, can be characterised by their size into one of four categories:

- Larger urban townships (Blenheim, Picton/Waikawa, Havelock, Renwick, Seddon).
- Smaller settlements (e.g. Ward, Wairau Valley Township, Rarangi, Rai Valley Township).
- Coastal Marlborough Sounds settlements (e.g. Ngakuta Bay, Moenui, Tirimoana, Okiwi Bay).
- Clusters of rural residential settlements scattered throughout the Wairau Plain and wider rural environment (e.g. Marlborough Ridge, Benmorven Road and Ashford Grove, and Canvastown and Linkwater in the Sounds area).

The character of Marlborough's townships and small settlements is also a direct reflection of the different land use activities that occur within and around them, and the location and form of the buildings within which those activities occur. The larger townships have a mix of residential, commercial and industrial activities. The character is therefore more diverse than that of the smaller settlements, which are predominantly residential in nature.

The character and quality of the built environment within settlements is an important contributor to people's quality of life, although if asked, many people might struggle to identify the special character of Marlborough's townships and small settlements. There is discernible local character in each however

*Weekend market*



different from each other and derived from assets such as the built features and people activities within each settlement.

Many of Marlborough's settlements have experienced growth pressures in recent years. To consider the implications of this growth and what the future might hold for future settlement, a baseline study of what makes Marlborough's townships and small settlements 'tick' was started in early 2007. The study involved developing a profile and identifying the key issues and opportunities for over 25 Marlborough townships and small settlements.

The Wairau Valley Township presents a typical example of how these profiles have been assembled - see Figure 13.1.

Once the profiles had been completed the information was made available for the public to comment on and to add to. A subsequent edition of the profiles was then compiled in a report in June 2008, with alterations made to reflect the submissions made by the public. By way of example of the changes made in the profiles, once the Wairau Valley community looked at the profile prepared for Wairau Valley township, the issues were expanded from three to nine. Additional issues identified by the community were:

- No public toilet (toilet run by local church as a community service).
- No rest area in Township or between the Township and Blenheim.
- Encroaching vineyards will influence development and potentially threaten existing residential amenities.
- Local implications if the TrustPower power scheme proceeds.
- Township is short of commercial activity and community facilities; should more settlement be encouraged to support such ventures?
- Climate change could make the area more arid.

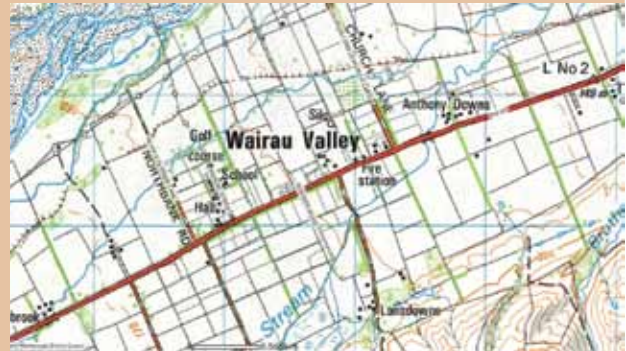
As well as the specific issues identified for individual settlements, the report also highlighted issues affecting settlements right across Marlborough. Two key factors identified in determining people's overall quality of life were that the social fabric and physical fabric of our communities are both very important and that the sustainability of water supplies is a key determinant of future growth. Other aspects from the study highlighted the following:

- Meeting the needs of a changing population is an issue for all of Marlborough's settlements. Marlborough's population is ageing with a potentially greater proportion of people aged 65+ than the New Zealand average - attesting to Marlborough's attraction as a retirement destination. District-wide population is tracking at about the medium projection level but growth within individual settlements varies widely.

**FIGURE 13.1: WAIRAU VALLEY TOWNSHIP PROFILE**

**KEY FEATURES:**

- Small township emerging from an open rural landscape south of the Wairau River
- Linear along a stretch of SH 63 with short cul-de-sac roads extending from the highway
- Sporadic residential development
- Large-lot rural residential subdivision surrounding township
- 30 minutes from Blenheim
- Walkers Creek meanders through golf course and along rear of some properties



**POPULATION:**

Population is included within the wider rural Wairau meshblock so it is difficult to discern accurately. Meshblock analysis using 2006 census data suggest approx 190 people and 70 occupied dwellings. Observably, the population is growing steadily.

There is approximately 2.7 hectares of land zoned Town Residential of which it appears that only 3,400 m<sup>2</sup> is vacant (bearing in mind that the minimum allotment area is 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>).

There is approximately 27 hectares of land zoned Rural Residential on the southern side of SH 63. Approximately 7.5 hectares of that land is vacant (excluding land for which building consents have been granted or are currently being processed). There is some scope for further subdivision within the Rural Residential area and a certain amount of rural residential subdivision outside the zoned area with acknowledged demand for more.

**AMENITIES & SERVICES:**

- **Recreational Facilities** on reserve (tennis court [in poor repair], netball, 9-hole golf course) sports pavilion
- **Community Facilities** Community hall, church, fire station and cemetery
- **Wairau Valley School** Year 1 – 8 Primary
- **Health Services** none local – nearest services Renwick

**BUSINESS:**

The few parcels of Rural Township zoned land are mostly developed and occupied (Tavern, shop, lavender farm, garage – no fuel sales. Soap shop in Church Lane). There are some vacant premises and approximately 3,600 m<sup>2</sup> of land is vacant and available for development (mostly at the rear of the main road frontage properties).





**FIGURE 13.1: WAIRAU VALLEY TOWNSHIP PROFILE (continued)**

### WATER SUPPLY:

There is a Council scheme sourced from groundwater well adjacent to the Wairau River. The water permit allows abstraction of up to 492 m<sup>3</sup>/day and expires in January 2008.

The scheme was designed to service 55 properties on the northern side of SH 63 between Church Street and Northbank Street. 49 properties are currently connected but there are also undeveloped properties within the supply area that have potential for further subdivision. There is no spare capacity within the scheme in its present form to supply any additional properties because consumption by existing users takes all available capacity. Water meters have recently been installed and, although they are not being used for charging, consumption has dropped significantly.

To extend the supply area would require a new consent, larger pump and a larger supply pipe from the well to the township. (Ref. 2) That work is not currently programmed. There is no auxiliary storage and no back-up pump (Ref. 1). The system is increasingly coming under pressure as subdivision and development occur in the surrounding rural area.



The supply is unable to provide peak water demand during drought periods and it is hoped the capacity improvement achieved by use of water meters will assist. The supply is not secure in terms of current drinking water standards and requires treatment for compliance with protozoa standards. Installation of cartridge filtration is programmed to address this. (Ref. 1)

The adjacent rural residential subdivisions have individual groundwater bores and are experiencing some water quality issues related to the age of the water. The potential for contamination from groundwater-sourced drinking water (i.e. indicative of an unsecure aquifer) would be compounded if the several pending subdivision applications for the near vicinity were granted consent.

### ISSUES:

- No defined edge to the settlement – potential for sprawling new development to sprawl away from the township
- Pressure on water supply and availability of additional source(s) to serve development within the township but also clusters of surrounding subdivisions
- SH 63 splits the township

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Attractive settlement within relatively close commuting distance from Renwick and Blenheim offering rural lifestyle experience
- Land available at the edges of the settlement for consolidation of residential and large-lot residential development
- Define points of road entry to the township to create a stronger sense of the urban boundary
- Create stronger links between the rural residential development and the core township
- Recreational connections to Wairau River

### WASTE DISPOSAL:

- **Wastewater Disposal** is to individual on-site septic tanks and there are no reports of poorly-performing systems or contamination.
- **Stormwater** is disposed of to swales and open drains and Walkers Creek to the Wairau River. There are no prevailing overload or inundation problems.
- **Solid Waste** is collected at transfer station for transfer to Blenheim.



This means that different approaches in different settlements will be needed.

- Transportation services and ways of getting between and about the townships needs to adapt to an ageing population, as will the provision of future recreational needs. New housing of the future is expected to need to match the needs of smaller and older households - many on fixed and low-moderate incomes. There is a real shortage of affordable housing currently for low-moderate income households which is expected to intensify unless measures are adopted to supply affordable new housing
- Economic challenges also face Marlborough's communities. Employment growth is projected for Marlborough's core resource-based industries but these are characterised by average earnings that are significantly lower than the national average.
- Marlborough's economy is connected to and vulnerable to changing market demands and tastes overseas. It needs to be able to respond and adapt quickly for growth and change in the economy. Traditional production systems, transportation and ways of using resources may soon become inadequate as overseas markets demand more rigorous standards in response to things such as climate change.
- Good urban design will be important for the future. Each of the settlements has elements of distinctive character which can be further developed to reinforce community identity and create points of difference. There is scope for enhancing the character, connectedness and quality of the physical fabric of most settlements using simple urban design techniques.
- Within our townships and small settlements there are very few natural areas remaining. Waterways such as the Taylor River in Blenheim, remain the only significant potential sources of natural values.

The Townships and Small Settlements report is a first for Marlborough, in that it places a line in the sand for the profile of each township and settlement. The intention is to now focus on individual townships and work towards addressing the issues and opportunities that have arisen and use this information for the review of the Marlborough Regional Policy Statement and the two resource management plans.

### Commercial and industrial activities

Over the past 5 years, the Council has received a number of requests to rezone land in and around Blenheim to provide for commercial and industrial activities. These included a demand

by developers to be able to build larger retail complexes (referred to as large format retail or business parks) on the outskirts of Blenheim both to the east and west of the town. For industrial activities, rural land to the east of Blenheim near and adjacent to the Riverlands Industrial Estate and Cloudy Bay Business Park was suggested as being suitable.

### Retail activities

The requests for large format retail activity raised concerns for the Council about the impact this type of activity would have on Blenheim's town centre. This was because the central business area is the primary retail, commercial, cultural and social centre in Marlborough, and the Council was unsure about the scale and effects of retail activity located outside of the town centre and urban boundary. To see what the issues might be and how they could be addressed, and identify demand, the Council initiated a number of investigations.

### Business land resources, growth trends and direction for future growth

This initial study was an investigation of current business and industrial land resources, growth trends and direction for future growth in these activities in the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan area, and particularly in Blenheim. A key objective of the study was to see how adequate the current land bank for a range of commercial activities was, including for large format retail growth.

The report noted that industrial, commercial and business activities have traditionally located within existing industrial and business zones. However, there has been very limited growth in the land area zoned for business, commercial and industrial uses since the Wairau/Awatere Plan was notified in 1997.

Queen Street, Blenheim





An analysis of the Central Business Zone identified that it is characterised by commercial activities operating at a variety of scales, and mixes. Many buildings are multi-storey, often with retail activities at ground floor level and business or service activities above ("mixed use"). Pure retail operations account for 15% of the total Central Business Zone area, with mixed-use commercial/retail and government/retail covering 8.1% and 0.5% respectively. There are a few large format retailers, however these represent only 13.9% of the total land area. Commercial/service activities make up the largest category at 19% of the total land area, with car parking covering 11%. Land under community usage, such as the library, stadium and art gallery made up just over 9% of the land area.

The report goes on to review a Business Survey undertaken by the Council in February 2005. The survey of 890 business and commercial property rate payers in the Wairau/Awatere Plan area found that 78% of respondents were satisfied with their existing sites. Of those that would consider moving the main reasons would be location or for a bigger site. Of the remaining 22% that were dissatisfied with their current site, only a quarter had investigated the availability of new sites, mostly without success.

As part of the study, interviews with key professionals involved in developing and marketing land and real estate were carried out. The Real Estate Institute noted that there was market interest from bulk store operations, and retail-orientated operators, and for facilities associated with the wine industry, but there is difficulty in finding sites large enough to accommodate these activities. The retail drive was thought to be fuelled by a shift in disposable income within the local economy, and as a result of rapid growth in the wine industry.

In terms of locational constraints, the Central Business Zone and other business zones are constrained from growth by the existing land uses surrounding the zones. This makes it difficult for large format retail activities to be established in more central areas and is why developers have been looking at sites on the periphery of Blenheim.

### Blenheim Business Land Study

A study carried out in March 2006 assessed the future business land demand in Blenheim. Its objectives were to establish current demand and supply, demand drivers in Blenheim and Marlborough, and assess total demand for industrial and commercial land over the next 20 years to determine the adequacy of land supply.

The report looked at employment growth in Marlborough. It used Statistics New Zealand household projections and

employment per household figures to project employment levels forward to 2025. Using a low growth rate scenario, total employment growth in Marlborough to 2025 was projected to be 2,870 employees, and 5,490 employees using a high growth rate scenario. The significant difference between low and high scenarios reflected the impact possible labour shortages may have on economic activity in Marlborough.

An interesting aspect of the report was that while the Central Business Zone primary shopping area is the core retail area, significant commercial and industrial activity is undertaken in other zones, with 67% of Marlborough's Full Time Equivalent jobs in areas not zoned industrial or commercial.

In terms of site availability within existing commercial and industrial zones, the report identifies 35.1 hectares of vacant land. However, 99% of this is within Industrial 1 or 2 zoned land, with very little commercial land available.

Future land use requirements were calculated using four density scenarios of space per Full Time Equivalent jobs. The medium growth population scenario showed that 7.3 hectares of land would be required for commercial use. An increase in employment density of 2% would require an additional 6.6 hectares of commercial land; a 5% density increase would require 5.4 hectares; and a 10% increase would require 3.8 hectares.

The report concluded that in the order of 5 hectares of additional land will be required through to 2025 to supply retail and commercial uses.

### Blenheim Retail Land Demand Assessment

A further economic study into the land demand specifically for retail activity was also carried out. The objectives of the report were to:

- Establish the current retail land demand and supply situation in Blenheim, and quantify the current level of unmet demand for retail floorspace.
- Assess the impact on market growth on future floorspace requirements in Blenheim, and indicate the amount of land that should be zoned for retail purposes under a range of future development scenarios.

While the report focused on retail activity in Blenheim, it also took into consideration all of Marlborough as the catchment area, as shoppers from rural areas may choose to shop in Blenheim, given its status as the dominant retail centre in Marlborough. However, it acknowledged that some of the spending from shoppers in the catchment flows out of Marlborough to centres such as Nelson and Christchurch, because those centres have an increased range of goods and services.

Population and household numbers in the study area were looked at and, using Statistics New Zealand medium scenario projections, it was estimated that the current population of 42,700 people in 17,150 households would grow to 46,200 people in 20,880 households by 2026. This was considered to be a relatively slow rate of future population growth, and as such the report concluded that significant retailing growth in Marlborough is not likely to be driven by household growth.

Over 84,000 square metres of core retail floorspace in Marlborough was identified during the study, of which the vast majority (73,200 square metres) is located in Blenheim. Floorspaces are categorised into store types: food retail; general retail; automotive, personal and household services; cafes/restaurant/takeaway, and bars/liquor. When assessed in terms of the district-wide catchment, the study finds that there is an oversupply of food retail floorspace, automotive retail floorspace is sufficient at present and the remaining categories are currently undersupplied. The undersupply of floorspace is particularly acute for the general retail category.

This undersupply of floorspace represents the leakage of trade to other centres. Looking in more detail at the general retail shortage, the study found the biggest shortfall is within the clothing and footwear sector, and a significant quantity of new floorspace (up to 13,000 square metres) could be supported.

In terms of future retail land requirements, the study looked at two scenarios. Scenario one was the expected demand for retail and services floorspace in the future, if current leakage rates continue and assuming there is no current demand for additional floorspace. Scenario two was the expected demand for retail and services floorspace assuming 0% leakage from the district.

Using scenario one, around 2.8 hectares of land would be required in the Blenheim urban area (the urban limit of Blenheim being the boundary) for core retail stores by 2026. A further 4.3 hectares of land would be required for other (non-core) retail, hospitality and service stores, and 1.4 hectares for ancillary services (banks etc). In total, an additional 8.5 hectares of land, at an average rate of demand of 0.5 hectares per year, would be required to support growth in Blenheim retail and service markets through to 2026.

When a district-wide catchment (Blenheim and rural areas) is considered, 14.9 hectares of land will be required for all retail and services and ancillary purposes by 2026. Most of this is likely to be located in Blenheim.

Using scenario two, 3.8 hectares of core retail land would be required by 2026. A further 10.0 hectares would be required to support total retail and common centres-based ancillary (non-retail and non-services) activity. Looking at the district as a whole, 20 hectares would be required for retail and services by 2026 if a scenario of nil leakage was applied, of which core food and comparison retailing would demand 9.1 hectares.

The additional land requirements identified represent a significant increase (27% to 32%) over the current areas zoned for business activities. The report noted that new retail development requirements are likely to differ from established activities as they are likely to contain a larger proportion of large format stores than currently exist in Blenheim. These activities are less likely to be easily accommodated in the Central Business Zone than smaller format stores.

In conclusion, the report stated that over the next 20 years, significant growth in retail and service markets in Blenheim and Marlborough will require additional floorspace to provide goods and services, otherwise customers will travel to other centres such as Christchurch or Nelson. The report anticipates that the most likely outcome for retail land area requirements are that, as land supply in Blenheim increases, leakage will fall slightly below current levels, placing future land requirements in Marlborough between 15 and 20 hectares. Some of this demand may be accommodated on existing zoned land, but the majority will require newly zoned land.

### Transportation study

As part of understanding where any new business parks might best be located, the Council commissioned a report on road network issues. The report identified business parks are high traffic generating activities when compared to normal light industrial activity areas, and therefore have the potential to substantially increase traffic along major arterial routes, including on significant intersections.

The report set out criteria for the Council to use in assessing the impacts of site specific new zones in which the impact on the wider road network could be considered.

The two sites proposed by private land developers for business parks have been assessed using the criteria. The site on Middle Renwick Road at the western entrance to Blenheim required some work to reduce traffic issues. The site at the southern entrance to the town required major work measures to address transport issues. Access to the state highway in both cases was considered to be a major obstacle.



### Changes to the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan

In September 2006 the Council produced a discussion document, entitled 'Proposed Plan Variation for Business and Industrial Zones'. This described the results and recommendations of the various investigations undertaken for both business and industrial land, provided background information and proposed some possible options to address the issues identified. There was a significant community response to the discussion document. Much of this interest was generated by the retail issues.

Existing Blenheim retailers in the Central Business Zone were strongly supportive of changes to the Wairau/Awatere Plan that would see infill and redevelopment in the existing town centre of Blenheim. They expressed concern that retail development outside the town centre, in the form of business or retail parks, will result in retailers relocating from the town centre and a resultant downturn in the economy of the town centre.

However, there was also strong support for the creation of new business park zones to accommodate large format retail development in a modern environment. Those supporting new business parks also felt it was important that measures were introduced to manage the impact of new out of centre retail activity on Blenheim town centre.

From this the Council identified the following:

- Blenheim's Central Business Zone is the main focus of retail, commercial, cultural and social activity in Marlborough. The town centre is relatively contained, supports a mix of activities and new activities could be successfully established there.
- There is demand for more retail land in the vicinity of Blenheim. Within the Central Business Zone there are unused and underutilised sites and buildings that could be developed by encouraging infill and redevelopment. Further, significant capital investment has been made in the town centre by the Council and the private sector, which needs to be recognised and supported.
- There is an undersupply of some activities and core retail sectors within Blenheim. Accommodating new retail activity within Blenheim would assist in combating current retail 'leakage' trends.
- A growing population and changing demographic will bring continued shifts in the needs and wants of the community.
- The community appears supportive of strengthening the Central Business Zone through consolidation, and greater amenity that encourages and supports a diverse range of activities.

After completing the investigations and research and in considering the public's views the Council opted to make some changes to the Wairau/Awatere Plan to address the issues highlighted. The major change was to increase the Central Business Zone primary shopping area rather than provide for a specific large format retail zone on the edge of town. At the time of preparing this report the Council's final decisions on the proposed changes had been appealed to the Environment Court.

Another change proposed to the Plan at the same time as for the Central Business Zone, extended the area of the Neighbourhood Business Zone at Springlands. The Council's decision on extending the zone has also been appealed to the Environment Court.

### Industrial activities

Industry is a significant part of any community. It supplies the community with the goods and services it is dependent upon. In addition, industry provides a significant proportion of the population with employment. In the Blenheim area there are two types of industrial activities: those located within Blenheim itself, mostly along the Grove Road - Main Street area and at Springlands (zoned as Industrial 1); and the larger industrial estates at Burleigh, Riverlands and Cloudy Business Park (zoned as Industrial 2). These larger industrial estates differ from the urban industrial areas in that the sites are used for larger scale manufacturing and processing type activities.

The Council also received requests to rezone land to provide for industrial activity, in particular heavy or process based industry, in the Riverlands area, which already contains an extensive area of industrial activity. At the same time as the investigations for retail activities, the Council was also investigating industrial land requirements in Blenheim and the potential effects of rezoning.

### Industrial land resources, growth trends and direction for future growth

The same study that looked at retail activity also investigated land resources, growth trends and direction for future growth for industrial activities. The study looked at existing industrial zones in the Blenheim area to determine the breakdown of land-use type within each, including the identification of vacant land (the study considered vacant land to be where there was no obvious development of the site).

The study looked at the existing and projected growth rates for industry. It used the Council's building consent database, which showed that between 1994 and 2004, 100 building consents were issued for industrial related activities, 62 for new facilities with the remainder associated with existing facilities. Of the new



*Riverlands industrial area*

facilities consented, 95% were from within the Blenheim environs. While not specifically noted in the building consent information, much of the industrial activity is inferred as being related to wine processing and support industries.

Present uses of existing industrial zones were reviewed, and growth in industrial activities over the last 10 years analysed, using business surveys and discussions with key professionals. The same Business Survey referred to in the earlier section on retail activities was also used in considering industrial activities.

Discussions were also had with those involved in developing and marketing of land and real estate, such as the Real Estate Institute, valuers, and Chamber of Commerce. Evidence was principally anecdotal, rather than quantitative. It was suggested that there is demand for land that cannot be met by the current land bank due to site size and location. Market pressure is principally from light to medium industry, particularly associated with the wine industry and related support services.

Finally, the study looked at the most appropriate areas for additional areas to rezone land for industrial purposes in terms of specific site and infrastructural issues. Areas considered the most appropriate because of existing land uses and separation from more sensitive uses were to the east (Alabama Road and southeast Riverlands) and southeast of Blenheim.

### **Blenheim Business Land Study**

The Blenheim Business Land Study assessed the future business and industrial land demand in Blenheim. The report identifies 35 hectares of vacant land, of which 99% is within Industrial 1 or 2 zoned land.

Future land use requirements were calculated and medium, low and high growth rate scenarios were assessed. The report projects that, assuming there is sufficient available labour to supply the labour demand, between 13 and 20 hectares of

land will be needed to accommodate business and industrial development through to 2025, factoring in a take-up of between 30% and 50% of existing vacant land.

The report recommended that the Council consider the location of new land supply while avoiding, as much as possible, the removal of productive land from use by those key sectors driving the demand for new land.

From the background assessment and consultation process, it was identified that a significant amount of retail activity takes place within industrial zones. The report suggests that it would be preferable for such retail activities to take place within an appropriately zoned environment to ease risks such as reverse sensitivity conflicts.

### **Transportation Study**

Consultants carried out an assessment to identify key transport issues and potential outcomes that could arise from rezoning land as Industrial 2 south-east of Blenheim. The report assessed two separate sites; one of the land to the north of State Highway 1; and, the other a significant extension of the Riverlands Industrial Estate.

The report identified significant issues that could result from rezoning the land. These included the ability to maintain and protect the function of the road hierarchy, effect on efficiency and safety of traffic, level and type of traffic generation, impact of anticipated growth areas and future programmed transport improvements.

The report predicted that with the exception of the site on the north side of State Highway 1, development of the remaining land would see traffic increase on State Highway 1 from 8,000 to 16,000 vehicles per day by 2010.

*Picton*





The site on the north side of the state highway was assessed as a site that 'may be considered acceptable with mitigation'. The major issue with this site is the Malthouse Road/State Highway 1 intersection and the need for it to be significantly upgraded if the land was to be rezoned. Upgrading was identified as possibly creating safety and efficiency concerns with the current speed environment, the closeness of other intersections and the anticipated increased use from the Riverlands Industrial Estate.

The Riverlands Industrial Extension through to the Cloudy Bay Business Park was assessed as being 'considered appropriate' for development. Rezoning this land would mean an internal link between the existing Riverlands Industrial Estate and Cloudy Bay Business Park could be created. This means that traffic needing to get to this industrial area could be split between the existing State Highway intersections, i.e. Sheffield Street and Cloudy Bay Drive. These two intersections have been designed to cater for large levels of industrial traffic in a high speed environment. On the basis of a 70/30 split, additional traffic should be catered for without significant impact to the network. However, the report suggests the introduction of this level of traffic may bring forward a need for upgrading, particularly at the Sheffield Street intersection, and necessitate a speed review.

### Changes to the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan

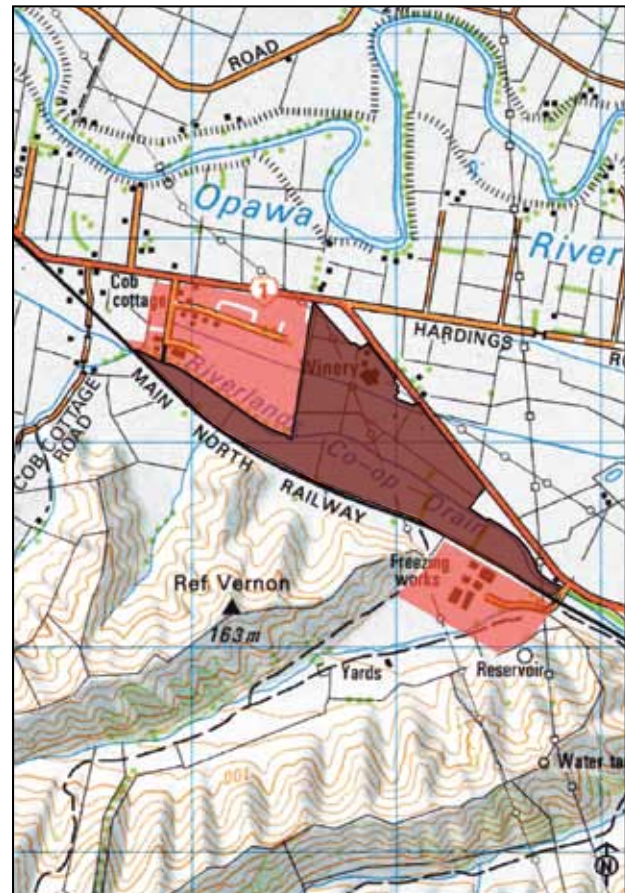
In September 2006 the Council produced a discussion document, entitled "Proposed Plan Variation for Business and Industrial Zones", which pulled together the results and recommendations of investigative work undertaken for both business and industrial land, and provided background information and some possible options to address the issues identified.

The majority consensus of the community feedback on the document was that of a perceived shortfall of industrial development land. There was overwhelming feedback support (90%) for expanding Riverlands Industrial Estate. This land was thought to be a logical expansion of existing land use, and provided natural infill between Riverlands Industrial Estate and Cloudy Bay Business Park. The area's existing infrastructure, strategic location to State Highway 1 and its limited value for agricultural use, were acknowledged by those commenting.

Through the investigative work undertaken it emerged that:

- There was a lack of suitable, available Industrial 2 zoned land in the vicinity of Blenheim, especially at a size or scale demanded by the current market. While industrial activity around Blenheim was thought to be strong, a risk was identified that growth may be being constrained.

FIGURE 13.2: NEW AREA OF INDUSTRIAL 2 ZONED LAND



- Existing infrastructure had some capacity to accommodate initial industrial development in the Riverlands/Cloudy Bay area, with further infrastructure expansion planned. It was recognised some activities have a greater impact on infrastructure than others, and that the industrial 'mix' introduced to this area will determine the extent and timing of infrastructure upgrades needed. Management of stormwater particularly, was identified as a significant issue.
- The community was generally in support of the Riverlands area being used for industrial activities. It became evident from public feedback that activities undertaken on Industrial 2 zoned land have a significant negative impact on the amenity, and that a greater level of buffering through landscaping, could reduce these impacts.

The Council notified changes to the Wairau/Awatere Resource Management Plan to rezone land for industrial purposes in the Riverlands area. The Council's decisions on submissions were not appealed and the darker shaded area as shown in Figure 13.2 is now zoned for industrial activities.