



**sub district growth approach**

**SECTION 4**

## SUB DISTRICT GROWTH APPROACH

### 4.1 Possible approaches to growth in the District

The starting point for this is formed by Council's population projections for the respective settlements within the District for the 25-year period between the last Census (2006) and 2031. Given that the District will experience only modest growth, it is intended that it will occur where it will have the greatest benefit and the least costs.

Four possible approaches to managing future growth within the District were identified through the project process on the basis of a detailed understanding of the issues, opportunities, and constraints affecting each settlement:

1. *Minimal planning control* as to where and how to accommodate growth, possibly leading to greenfields development on the edges of settlements and areas of rural-residential throughout the district;
2. *Zone, but based on current market preferences*. This means supplying capacity for the projected population growth within the respective settlements. This will possibly lead to mainly greenfields and rural residential development;
3. *Zone on the basis of market preferences and sustainability prerogatives*. Ensure a balance between meeting the projected demand and working with constraints in the respective settlements. This will possibly lead to a combination of infill, intensification, greenfields and some rural residential development; and
4. *Picking winners*, i.e. allocating the projected growth in certain settlements or areas, selected for certain reasons.

These approaches all have their advantages and disadvantages. The main points are listed below:

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Minimal planning control	→ Possibly quick results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Expensive and difficult to service with roading and other infrastructure</li> <li>→ Might lead to unsustainable outcomes</li> <li>→ Less certainty for developers</li> </ul>
2. Zone, but based on current market preferences	→ Follows 'natural' trends	→ Some places have natural or infrastructure constraints, which might require expensive measures to overcome

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
3. Zone on the basis of market preferences and sustainability prerogatives	→ Follows 'natural' trends as much as possible, but is more affordable than approach 2	→ Does not meet the projected demand entirely, possibly leading to slow uptake of available zoned land
4. Picking winners	→ Possibly the most affordable option and best leverage off public sector investments	→ Does not meet the projected demand, possibly leading to slow or no uptake of available zoned land

### 4.2 Selected approach

Approach 3 has been identified as the most sustainable option for the District.

The constraints for accommodating the projected demand in each settlement have been analysed and infrastructure investments of different options have been compared.

At the same time, areas to accommodate growth have been sought in locations where existing services (community, open space and recreation, infrastructure etc.) could be utilised or built upon.

The approach can be summarised as:

- Enhancing existing settlements rather than establishing new ones;
- Developing strongly defined communities with unique identities, which minimise their impact on the environment, landscape, and productive and valuable soils;
- Focussing new growth where it can best leverage from existing community infrastructure;
- Providing for urban expansion where it will make logical sense and be affordable from an infrastructure perspective;
- Encouraging urban intensification where it is feasible and is supported by conveniently located amenities; and
- Looking to support lifestyles which are less-energy intensive, and in particular, where people have more choice in how they meet their daily needs other than by car.

Refer to Appendix 2 for more information on this

### 4.3 Composite growth picture for the Wairau-Awatere Sub District

A graphic representation summarising the result of this approach to accommodating growth in the Wairau-Awatere sub district is shown in Figure 4-1. This image provides an overview of the growth preferences as described in sections 5 and 6 of this document.

#### Explanation

Each township, or possible growth pocket on the periphery of Blenheim is represented by an icon consisting of four cells:

- **Top left:** Infrastructure constraints on a regional scale;
- **Top right:** Social, Environmental or Employment considerations on a regional scale;
- **Bottom left:** Infrastructure constraints on a local scale; and
- **Bottom right:** Social, Environmental or Employment considerations on a local scale.

The desirability or feasibility of the accommodation of growth in that location from the particular points of view as described before, ie. infrastructure or social, environmental, and employment considerations on the two scale levels is represented by colours:

- **Green** = desired, modest or no constraints;
- **Orange** = pro's and con's, some constraints; and
- **Red** = not desired, too constrained.

#### Approach

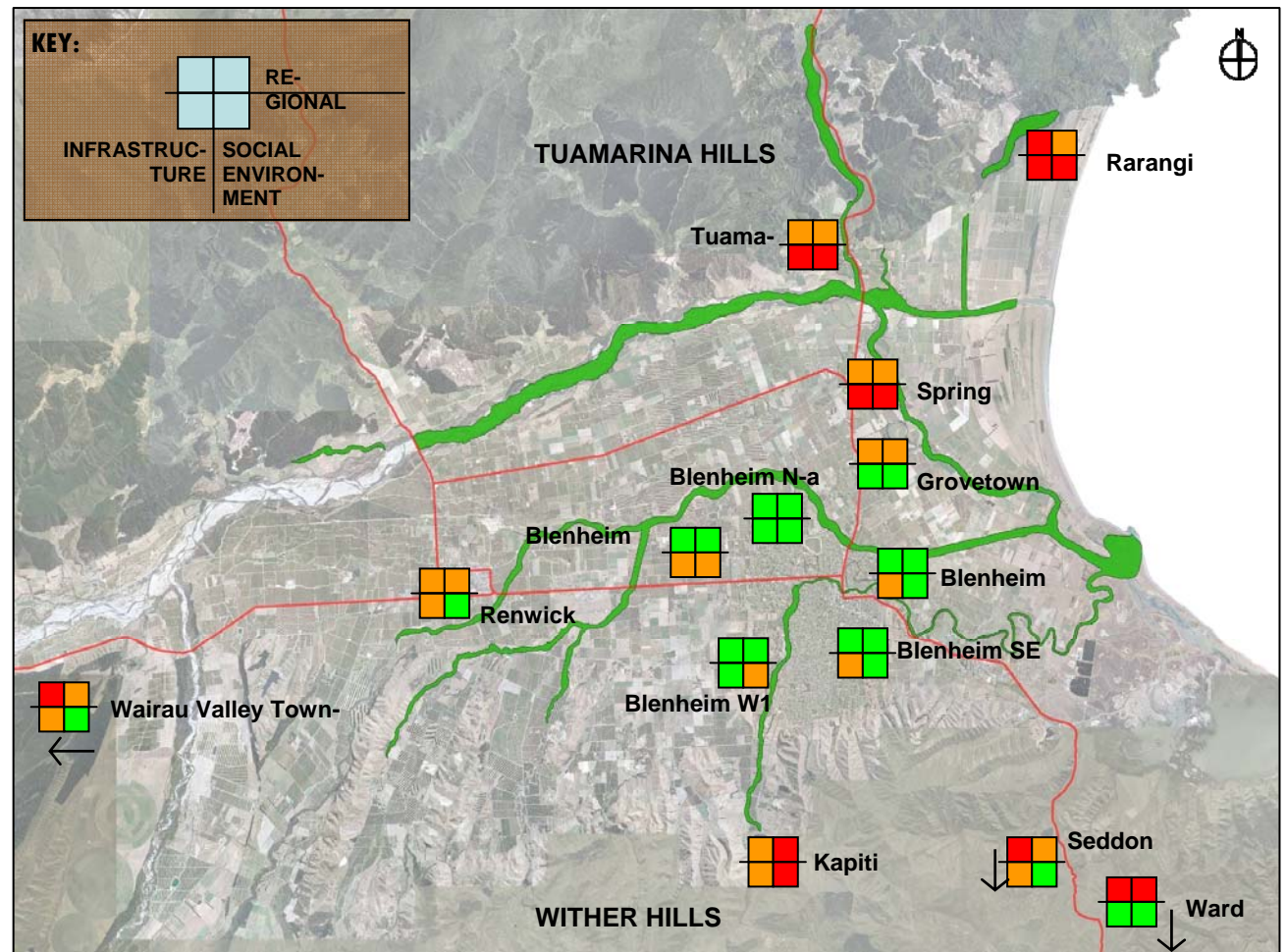
##### Infrastructure constraints

An informed judgement of the infrastructural constraints either manifesting or impacting on a regional or at a local level has determined the colour of the two respective left-hand cells. The main objective in this respect relates to affordability and sustainability. Generally speaking, growth occurring in locations where there is existing capacity has a preference over growth that requires expensive and/ or disruptive upgrades. Staging growth in ways that delay the requirement for short term public capital expenditure was a common strategy.

Dealing with flooding hazards forms also part of the considerations in this respect. Flooding hazards can often be mitigated, but in most cases at considerable cost. Building in a flood area when other suitable locations exist is generally not regarded as being sustainable.

##### Regional desirability

As a general rule, the desirability from a social, environmental or employment perspective on a regional scale is determined by an informed estimate of the dependency on and (driving) distance to Blenheim for community facilities or employment. This means that the growth pockets on the periphery of Blenheim colour green



ABOVE FIG. 4-1: Composite of the Wairau-Awatere sub district growth preferences (not to scale).

for this cell, that the settlements within commuting distance turn orange, and that settlements further out or places where there are no facilities whatsoever turn red. This is based on the objective of locating growth in a location where it most effectively and efficiently 'relates to' to existing settlements, facilities, and networks, and where it is most likely to be consistent with market forces. Opportunities to improve affordability have been pursued as a priority. This includes minimising travel and maximising the efficient use of existing facilities.

A degree of choice in the location and type of new residential development has been pursued, corresponding to appropriate locations within a broader structure. This means that developments of medium intensity should not occur anywhere, but in locations which can contribute to more sustainable lifestyles. These include around open space amenities, or access to services by a convenient walk or passenger transport.

#### *Local desirability*

The desirability from a social, environmental or employment perspective on a local scale is determined by an informed estimate of local factors such as availability of land for residential development, impact of residential growth on the local environment, the availability of local facilities and services, and local employment.

Growth and in particular infill often brings with it opportunity costs - sometimes including less privacy and less amenity. These must be avoided if development is to deliver attractive, quality outcomes especially for existing neighbours.