

Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan

February 2011



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Executive Summary

Akaroa is highly valued for its historic importance and strong harbour and natural landscape setting. The Township itself reflects a long history of natural and cultural change.

As Akaroa continues to grow and change, the public areas of the Town will be subject to on-going pressure to provide for the needs of holiday makers, tourists and local residents. If not managed appropriately, changes such as increased traffic and demand for car parking and other public facilities have the potential to compromise the heritage and character of the township. The challenge is therefore to ensure that the public areas of Akaroa can be adapted to meet these demands, whilst at the same time ensuring that such adaptations are sensitive to the local context of the Township.

Purpose and scope of this plan

The Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan provides guidance and recommendations for the future direction and management of the public realm of Akaroa Township, ensuring that public places reflect the local character and provide for ease of access and movement. The primary objective of this Plan is to promote the cultural, social and economic well being of Akaroa by ensuring that the Township's public places and spaces reflect the integrity and character of Akaroa as a historic rural settlement.

In particular, this Plan:

- Provides guidance on the future management and development of the public realm, in line with recognised heritage and urban design principles.
- Identifies transport issues, including parking and pedestrian access throughout the township, and recommends projects for managing these issues in the short term and long-term.
- Provides guidance on the adequacy of visitor facilities to meet visitor demands.
- Analyses and identifies the most efficient land use mix for the 'BP Meats' site.

Public places and spaces, as defined in this plan, include:

- Parks and reserves.¹
- Streets and roads, including traffic and parking management areas.
- The beaches and waterfront.
- Walkways.
- Squares, plazas and other outdoor spaces where people congregate.
- Wharves and jetties.
- Public facilities, where these exist primarily to address visitor needs.
- The Council-owned 'BP Meats' site at 67 Rue Lavaud (noting that the future use of this land may provide for a range of public and private activities)

The physical scope of public spaces and places addressed in this plan are limited to Akaroa Township, with a specific focus on those areas of the public realm that are used most frequently by residents and visitors: the Akaroa Town Centre.

¹ While aspects of this Plan may touch on reserve management matters, this Plan does not specifically provide direction for open space or reserve planning and management (as this is addressed in the Open Space Strategy and any relevant Reserve Management Plans).

Structure of the plan

This document is divided into four sections which individually set out issues, guidelines and recommendations regarding:

- A. public realm management;
- B. transport and access;
- C. visitor facilities; and
- D. the future development of the BP Meats site

Under each section of the Plan, a range of recommended actions have been identified for the short, medium and long term. These actions are a combination of operational and procedural changes, and projects recommended for inclusion in the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan (LTP).

Summary of Recommended Actions

A summary of the recommended actions identified in this Plan are set out on the next page. Refer to the relevant section of the Plan for more detail on what each action involves.

Short term

These actions primarily involve operational changes that can be adopted within existing Council budgets within the next 2-3 years.

Medium term

Projects that can be accommodated within existing operational budgets or otherwise recommended for inclusion in the 2012-2022 LTP. These are primarily projects that require capital funding and may be investigated in the next 3-10 years.

Long term

Projects that are recommended for consideration if there is a long-term increase in demand (eg for parking and visitor facilities).

Consultation and implementation

Consultation on the Draft Plan commenced on 30 August 2010 and closed on 22 October 2010 after an extension due to the September 4 Canterbury earthquake. Thirty-three (33) submissions were received and key themes from those submissions were identified and analysed. Based on the feedback, amendments were made to some of the recommended actions. Following adoption of the final plan the recommended actions will be incorporated into an Implementation Plan. The funding, timing and scope of these will be determined by Council through its Long-Term Plan (LTP) process, together with a range of competing and complementary spending priorities.

Executive Summary (continued)

A. Public realm guidelines

Short term action

- A.1 Finalise and implement the Akaroa public realm design guidelines

B. Transport and Access

Short-medium term actions

The proposals listed below are aimed at addressing the immediate transport and access issues, with an emphasis on making better use of the existing parking and transport facilities.

- B.1 Improve parking information and signage to encourage day visitors to park at the northern end of the town.
- B.2 Improve vehicle (car and bus) and pedestrian circulation, and investigate options for drop-off/pick-up zone around the Main Wharf (see B.2 on page 14 for complete text).
- B.3 Increase the number of marked parking bays in the existing sealed area (boat ramp area) located adjacent to the recreation ground.
- B.4 Northern Town Centre – implement speed restrictions.

Long term actions (subject to a sustained increase in visitor numbers):

- B.5 Northern Town Centre – investigate one-way road network.
- B.6 Investigate public transport options – bus service and park and ride
- B.7 Parking management (charges and restrictions)
- B.8 Increase parking capacity in the Southern Town Centre
- B.9 Investigate options for increasing boat storage as opportunities for this arise

C. Visitor facilities

Short term action

- C.1 Public toilets: Improve facilities for disabled users.
- C.2 Public toilets: Repair or replace worn or soiled items, including fittings, floors and hand dryers (where these are not already provided).
- C.6 Bus facilities: Improve and resolve bus parking and stopping signage at the Visitor Centre, Main Wharf and Selwyn Avenue bus park, as part of a co-ordinated approach to providing bus stops and bus parking through the township taking into account the needs of bus drivers, passengers, tour operators, other road users and the general public (see also Action B.3 under 'Transport and Access' above)
- C.7 Bus facilities: Continue with existing plans for a bus shelter at Place de la Poste
- C.8 Bus facilities: Provide information to bus companies (head offices) on bus parking, stops and circulation in Akaroa (following completion of Action C.6)
- C.9 Bus facilities: Develop a template Traffic Management Plan for cruise ship visits.
- C.14 Picnic facilities and public furniture: Trial additional on-street recycling facilities.
- C.15 Picnic facilities and public furniture: Repair or replace the tables at Britomart Reserve.
- C.18 Visitor information: Investigate opportunities to develop a user-friendly, web-based map (potentially in collaboration with Akaroa District Promotions) to provide improved visitor information.
- C.19 Visitor information: Investigate the most appropriate location for a sign at the Rue Brittan/Rue Jolie corner indicating long-term parking at the Recreation Ground (see also Action B.1 under 'Transport and Access' above)

Medium term actions

- C.3 Public toilets: Replace the Place de la Poste and Recreation Ground toilet blocks with modern facilities.
- C.4 Public toilets: Undertake improvements to the Britomart toilets, including extensions to create more space, improved disabled access and replacement of waterless urinals.
- C.10 Bus facilities: Investigate measures to make the Recreation Ground more 'bus friendly' and encourage buses to park there long-term, utilising Selwyn Avenue (or a suitable alternative area) as a bus marshalling area only (see also Action B.4 under 'Transport and Access' above)
- C.11 Bus facilities: Investigate the potential of a bus shelter at the Main Wharf (see also Action B.3 under 'Transport and Access' above)
- C.16 Picnic facilities and public furniture: Develop a designated picnic area with barbeques in the Recreation Ground (preferably near the Mini-Golf).
- C.20 Visitor information: Investigate the feasibility of monitoring Akaroa traffic loading using traffic counters and identify how this information could be used in the future.
- C.21 Visitor information: Install signage panels and maps showing locations of public visitor facilities at the four visitor hubs (subject to the direction of the Banks Peninsula Signage project currently underway)

Long term actions (subject to a sustained increase in visitor numbers):

- C.5 Public toilets: Determine a suitable site and build an additional toilet block to service a visitor hub at the northern end of Beach Road
- C.12 Bus facilities: Incorporate a bus shelter at a visitor hub at the recreation ground particularly if a park and ride facility is considered (see also Action B.7 under 'Transport and Access' above)
- C.13 Bus facilities: Provide a bus stop to service a visitor hub at the northern end of Beach Road.
- C.17 Picnic facilities and public furniture: Provide additional bicycle racks
- C.22 Visitor information: Investigate methods to use load monitoring data to update the public and Council staff on visitor number in Akaroa.

D. BP Meats site development**Short term action**

- D.1 Address the existing contractual agreement with Purple Peaks Development Ltd (PPD)

Medium-long term action

- D.2 Depending on the results of discussions with PPD; seek funding for a Service Centre and investigate a public-private partnership to redevelop the remainder of the site for ground floor retailing and other uses.

NOTE: There is no binding commitment for Christchurch City Council to proceed with any project or action recommended in this Plan. The Council spending priorities are reviewed frequently, including through the Long Term Plan process. All decisions as to whether or not a recommended action will commence remain with the Council.

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Introduction

Akaroa has long been recognised for its historic importance and features an extraordinarily high density of well presented historic buildings.

Combined with a strong harbour and natural landscape setting, the urban character of Akaroa holds special qualities that are highly valued by both the community and visitors to the area.

Akaroa is a place of slow but continual growth. Changes to the public realm over recent years have largely been associated with the need to accommodate the pressures associated with holiday makers, tourists and harbour recreation activities. The effects of these changes, such as increased traffic and demand for car parking and other public facilities, have the potential to compromise the heritage and character of the township, if not managed appropriately.

This Plan has been prepared in order to provide a strategic direction for the Council regarding how public places and spaces in Akaroa are developed and managed into the future.

The paramount objective of this Plan is to promote the cultural, social and economic well-being of Akaroa by ensuring that the Township's public places and spaces reflect the integrity and character of Akaroa as a historic rural settlement.

What are public 'places and spaces'?

Public places and spaces, as defined in this plan, include:

- Parks and reserves²
- Streets and roads, including areas for traffic and parking management
- The beaches and waterfront
- Walkways
- Squares, plazas and other outdoor spaces where people congregate
- Wharves and jetties
- Public facilities, where these exist primarily to address visitor needs

Campervan facilities and issues have not been considered within the scope of this Plan as the Council is currently preparing a Freedom Camping Management Plan. This Plan will identify a mix of regulatory and non-regulatory measures to minimise the nuisance and perceived nuisance of freedom camping for the City and Banks Peninsula.

The physical scope of public places and spaces addressed in this Plan is limited to Akaroa Township, with a specific focus on those areas of the public realm that are used most frequently by residents and visitors: the Akaroa Town Centre (refer Figure 1).

The Council-owned site at 67 Rue Lavaud (the 'BP Meats' site), is also considered within the scope of this Plan, noting that the future use of this land will potentially provide for a range of public and private activities.

Purpose of this document

The goal of the Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan is to provide guidance and recommendations for the future direction and management of the public realm of Akaroa Township, ensuring that public places reflect the local character and provide for ease of access and movement.

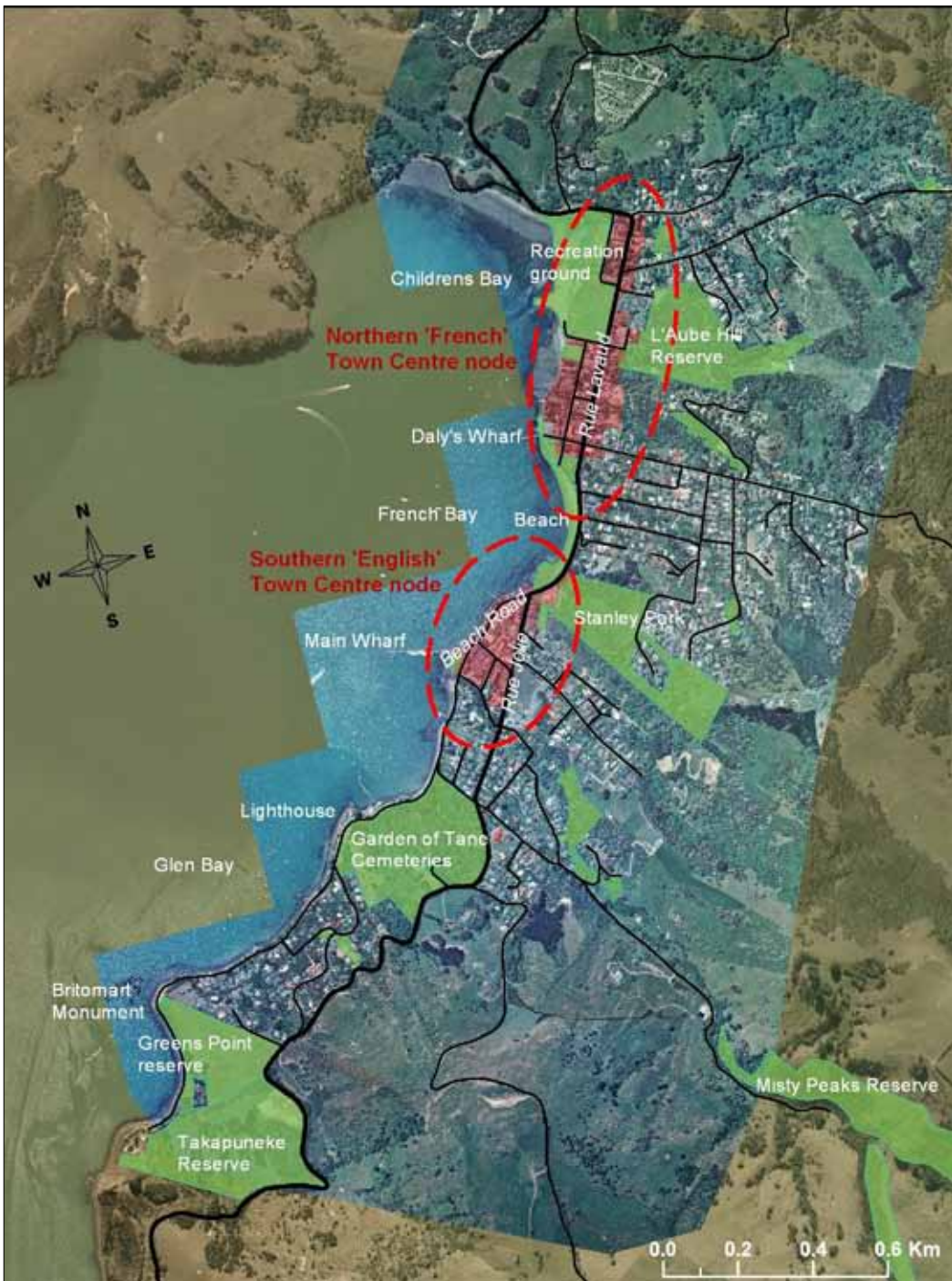
In order to achieve this goal, the Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan:

- Provides guidance on the future management and development of the public realm, in line with heritage recognition and urban design principles.
- Identifies transport issues, including parking and pedestrian access throughout the township, and recommends projects for managing these issues in the short term and long-term.
- Analyses and identifies the most efficient land use mix for the BP Meats site, such that it provides for community needs and supports the local economy.
- Provides guidance on the adequacy of visitor facilities to meet visitor demands.

² While aspects of this Plan may touch on reserve management matters, this plan does not specifically provide direction for open space or reserve planning and management (as this is addressed in the Open Space Strategy and any relevant Reserve Management Plans).

Introduction (continued)

Figure 1 - Map of Akaroa - key features within the township



Structure of this document

This document sets out the issues, guidelines and recommendations for the public realm, transport, visitor facilities and the development of the BP Meats site:

- *Public realm guidelines:* The public realm guidelines underpin the entire plan by providing direction for all future public works in Akaroa.
- *Transport and access:* A report on transport and access issues has been prepared for Akaroa. This section of the Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan summarises the issues, objectives and recommendations in this report.
- *Visitor facilities:* An assessment of visitor facilities in Akaroa and their ability to meet long-term visitor needs has been undertaken. This section identifies actions to upgrade the existing facilities subject to increased visitor numbers.
- *BP Meat site development brief:* This part of the Plan provides guidance regarding the future development of the BP Meats site (67 Rue Lavaud), a large block of Council-owned land in the Akaroa Town Centre.

Implementation

Under each section of this Plan, a number of recommended actions have been identified for the short, medium and long term. A number of these actions will require further investigation, including the identification of options, the evaluation of cost and benefits, and public consultation. The general timeframes expected for these actions is set out as follows:

Short term

These actions primarily involve operational changes that can be adopted within existing Council budgets within the next 2-3 years.

Medium term

Projects that can be accommodated within existing operational budgets or otherwise will be recommended for inclusion in the 2012-2022 LTP. These are primarily projects that require capital funding.

Long term

Projects that should be considered and investigated in more detail if there is sufficient increase in demand (eg for parking and visitor facilities)

Following consultation, these actions will be transferred to an Implementation Plan, which will set out, in more detail, how they should be implemented over time. Funding for new projects will be considered by Council as part of future LTP deliberations.

Related projects and plans

There are overlaps between the direction provided by this Plan and other projects and activities the Council is involved in. Every effort has been made to ensure that the recommendations provided in this report align with existing programmes of work. Strategies or other projects that have been considered in the preparation of this Plan include:

- Akaroa Harbour Basin Settlements Study 2009
- Akaroa Tourism Carrying Capacity Study 2009
- Akaroa heritage District Plan Variation investigations
- Open Space Strategy 2010-2040
- Christchurch Visitor Strategy 2007
- Banks Peninsula Signage project (in development)
- Christchurch Transport Plan (in development)

Also recognised are the number of projects and reports relating to Akaroa that have been prepared over the years by both the former Banks Peninsula District Council (BPDC) and Christchurch City Council (CCC), including the Urban Transportation and Parking Study (Opus, 2006), the Akaroa Waterfront redevelopment (2003/04), and previous proposals for the development of the BP Meats site (2004).

This plan does not intend to duplicate past and current planning efforts, but proposes to integrate existing information within the present planning context. The result is a co-ordinated plan for the future management and development of public spaces in Akaroa.

Long Term Plan (LTP) Disclaimer:

No project recommended in this Plan will be implemented unless the expenditure is provided for through future Long Term Plans.

A. Public realm design guidelines

Akaroa Township is set within a harbour basin that is highly regarded for its range of distinctive and unique landscapes, including the natural character of the coastline, the mosaic of native and introduced vegetation, and the prominent ridgelines that extend from the summit to the sea.

These features reflect an extensive and complex history of natural and cultural landform change. The Township has developed in response to these landscape constraints, with early settlement tending to occupy the accessible land on the foreshore, with subsequent settlement extending up into the valleys.

Akaroa's public realm

The harbour and waterfront areas contribute strongly to the historic and current character of the area. Streetscapes are also rich in character and history, providing an important part of the overall experience of the town. The presence of a relatively large number of 19th century historic buildings significantly contributes to the character of Akaroa. Cottages and smaller houses predominate, along with some larger public and commercial buildings located within the Town Centre. In recent times some new buildings characterised by their larger size, choice of construction materials and variance from the older architectural style, have been less successful in supporting the historic small scale of the town.

As Akaroa continues to grow and change, the public realm will be subject to on-going pressure to provide for the needs of holiday makers, tourists and harbour recreation activities. There is a need for contemporary public realm developments to recognise the local context and past development in Akaroa.

Public realm guidelines (in preparation)

In 2008/09, the Council commissioned the Akaroa Township Character Project (Boffa Miskell Ltd, 2009) and the Akaroa Heritage Conservation Areas Study (Harrison Grierson, 2009) in order to identify and examine the protection of the existing township character values and offer guidance on how to enhance these values. Draft public realm design guidelines are being prepared by Boffa Miskell as a result of these investigations.

The guidelines will assist the Council when altering or undertaking public realm works by ensuring that these works respond to the local context, minimise visual impacts and enhance town centre character.

The guidelines will cover a number of topic areas, including streetscapes, structures, fences and walls, signage, street lighting, street furniture, public art, green space and waterways.

Overlaps with the Council's Infrastructure Design Standard will be considered in the development of the guidelines. 'Trigger points' for when and how the guidelines should be applied will also be identified.

Recommended action

Short-medium term:

A.1 *Finalise and implement the Akaroa public realm design guidelines*

Once the guidelines have been finalised, a process shall be established to implement them, in consultation with key stakeholders. It is anticipated that the guidelines will be implemented by incorporating them into Council processes involving the design, development and management of existing or new public realm elements. Specific projects that seek to improve the management of the public realm in the future may also be identified.



View of Beach Road along southern town centre node

B. Transport and access

This part of the Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan summarises the issues, objectives and recommendations in the associated *Akaroa Transport and Access* technical report. The reader is directed to this report for more information on any aspect discussed in this section.

Transport and access issues for Akaroa are complex. Since the late 1990s, a number of studies, surveys and strategies have been undertaken to look at issues around transport and accessibility. Some of the recommendations in these documents have been implemented, while others haven't. One of the purposes of this section of the Akaroa Places and Spaces Plan is to revisit transport-related issues for Akaroa and identify potential solutions to these issues that still have merit and can be justified on a cost-benefit basis.

The issues, objectives and actions identified in this section of the Plan will inform the wider Christchurch Transport Plan, which is currently being prepared by the Council.

Issues

The issues presented below have been consistently confirmed by previous research into transport issues in Akaroa. These issues convey the complexity of transport management in Akaroa, and identify a range of complicating factors that need to be taken into account in identifying solutions to these issues.

1. *The geography of the Town and the historic character of the built environment are not conducive to accommodating high volumes of people and traffic.*

Parking capacity in Akaroa is currently not sufficient to accommodate visitors on the few days of exceptionally high demand during the peak summer season, without parking encroaching onto residential side-streets. For most of the year, high demand for parking is not an issue. The supply of any new land for parking is severely limited by topography and development pressures, particularly in the southern end of Akaroa. The Town's historic character limits the ability to widen roads and improve junctions. Conversely, high traffic volumes and congestion have a negative impact on the amenity of the Town.

2. *Existing parking capacity in the Town is not evenly distributed, resulting in an imbalance between parking demand and supply.*

During busy periods, the highest demand for parking tends to be focused on the more tourist-orientated southern Town Centre node. Parking capacity is greater at the northern end of the Town and more restricted at the southern end, thereby creating an imbalance in parking supply. A lack of parking information and direction for visitors upon arrival exacerbates this issue. The Akaroa School often provides occasional overflow parking which should be encouraged to continue but cannot be relied upon to provide a long-term parking solution.

3. *Strong parking demand, high visitor numbers and traffic congestion are seasonal problems. Apart from the scheduled event days, 'super peak' days are difficult to predict.*

Large numbers of visitors travelling to Akaroa by car create vehicle and pedestrian congestion, reducing the amenity of the Town for residents and visitors. Demand for parking fluctuates throughout the year, with strong demand for parking primarily during the summer peak visitor season. Fine and sunny weather brings high visitor numbers, making it difficult and uneconomic to predict and plan for extra parking supply and public transport services. Fine weather also attracts boat users, increasing demand for road capacity and reducing the number of available parks.

4. *The lack of choice in transportation mode limits accessibility to and from the Town for some groups of people.*

The topography and relative isolation of Akaroa means there is a strong reliance on the private motor car for visitors and residents travelling to and from Akaroa. These vehicles are concentrated on State Highway 75, the one main road into the Town. A lack of public transport options limits accessibility, particularly for those who do not have access to a motor vehicle or who are unable to drive. While there are scheduled bus services, these are primarily marketed to tourists and there are considerable barriers to providing a scheduled public transport service comparable to those services found in metropolitan Christchurch.

Definition of 'peak' and 'super peak' parking:

The 2006 Opus Urban Transportation and Parking Study identified two types of parking in the Town:

- 650 regular parks (Town Centre parks which are acceptable for use at any time)
- 300 special parks (available along the residential streets and generally only used during times of highest demand)

Super Peak or Exceptional Peak days refer to days when the expected parking demand is at least 600 vehicles. This level of demand is common on fine weather days during school holiday weekends and statutory holidays (particularly during the Christmas holidays and the first week of January). On super peak days, at least 100% of regular parks and 70% of special parks are occupied at the south end of the town. At the north end, at least 80% of the regular parks and 40% of the special parks are occupied.

Peak parking times refers to the summer visitor period where parking demand is between 350-600 vehicles. Peak parking occupancy is around 30%-40% in the southern residential areas and below 30% in the northern residential areas.

Objectives

The aim of the *Transport and Access* technical report is to identify potential solutions to the issues presented above. The overarching objectives of managing traffic and parking issues are to:

1. *Encourage 'all-day' visitors to park in the north end of the Town and walk through the Town by:*
 - a. Improving the pedestrian route through the Town.
 - b. Improving parking and vehicle access at the north end of the Town.
 - c. Improving parking information and directions provided to visitors to the north end of the Town.
2. *Encourage the use of alternative sustainable modes of transport to Akaroa and improve accessibility for non-car user groups by:*
 - a. Improving public transport access and services.
 - b. Promoting options for bus travel and/or park and ride.
 - c. Improving facilities for bus passengers.
 - d. Improving facilities for bus loading and parking.
 - e. Encouraging walking and cycling.
3. *Improve traffic flow through the Town by:*
 - a. Reducing the number of vehicles circulating from the northern end of the Town to the southern end of the Town.
 - b. Making more effective use of the road capacity in the Town Centres.



Figure 2 - Jubilee Park - Temporary parking area

B. Transport and access (continued)

Recommended actions

A number of options have been identified to tackle transport and access issues in Akaroa and achieve the objectives listed above. A full description and assessment of each recommended option is provided in more detail in the associated technical report.

Short-medium term actions

The proposals listed below are aimed at addressing the immediate transport and access issues, with an emphasis on making better use of the existing parking and transport facilities.

B.1 Improve parking information and signage to encourage day visitors to park at the northern end of the town.

It is considered that more efficient use of the available parking capacity of Akaroa would serve the parking needs of visitors to the Town in the short to medium term. Better signage and information on parking would encourage day visitors to park at the northern end of the town, reducing demand on the parking capacity of the southern Town Centre node and reducing the number of vehicles travelling through the Town.

New signage would replace or complement existing signage. Signage positioned at the entrance to Akaroa along Rue Lavaud would direct people to the main car parking areas of the town and advertise the likely availability of parks and whether they are short-term or all-day parks. Distributor signs would be placed locally to direct visitors to car parking.

B.2 Improve vehicle (car and bus) and pedestrian circulation, and investigate options for drop-off/pick-up zone around the Main Wharf, as part of a co-ordinated approach to providing bus stops and bus parking through the township, taking into account the needs of bus drivers, passengers, tour operators, other road users and the general public (see also Action C.6 in the Visitor Facilities section of this Plan regarding improvements to 'bus parking and stopping' signage at the Visitor Centre, Main Wharf and Selwyn Avenue bus park).

Improvements to the Wharf area could be implemented to improve the circulation of cars, buses and pedestrians in this area. This would also present an opportunity to extend the waterfront and Beach Road walkway, which currently stops abruptly at the Fisherman's Rest. There are a number of ways that an upgrade of the Main Wharf area could be undertaken:

1. Replacing the wharf approach with grass and pedestrian paths.
2. Creating a 'shared space' with little or no segregation between vehicles and pedestrians.
3. Moving bus parking away from the wharf approach.

Possible layouts for each of these options are provided in figure 3 (page 15).

Option 2 reflects a 'shared spaces' approach, whereby pedestrians, vehicles and other users of the space have equal status when moving through the area.

The changes required to the wharf area will be dependent on which option is selected, but all the options would create a bus loading zone. A bus shelter may also be provided if deemed appropriate to the setting. Further investigation and consultation on these options will be necessary before any particular option is implemented.

B.3 Increase the number of marked parking bays in the existing sealed area (boat ramp area) located adjacent to the recreation ground.

The sealed boat ramp area can potentially be used to greater capacity for car parking than at present. This would involve an increase in the number of marked parking bays around the periphery without displacing boat parking and manoeuvring areas. Detailed analysis of turning circles and traffic circulation would be required to determine the most suitable location for any new marked parking bays.

B.4 Northern Town Centre – implement speed restrictions.

A lowered speed limit, would assist in reducing traffic speed, noise and congestion, making the walk from the recreation ground parking through the northern Town Centre more pleasant for pedestrians.



Figure 3.1 - B3 Wharf Option 1 - Partly pedestrianised with some parking retained



Figure 3.2 - B3 Wharf Option 2 - Shared space



Figure 3.3 - B3 Wharf Option 3 - Bus loading zone only, wharf parking retained

B. Transport and access (continued)

Long term actions (subject to a long-term increase in visitor numbers)

These proposals are aimed at addressing an anticipated long-term growth in visitor numbers:

B.5 Northern Town Centre – investigate one-way road network.

An improvement in traffic flow and reduction in congestion in the northern Town Centre node could be achieved through creating a one-way system sharing traffic between Rue Lavaud and Rue Jolie.

B.6 Investigate public transport options – bus service and park and ride.

The predominant form of transport to and from the Town is likely to remain, for the foreseeable future, the private motor car. However if sufficient demand arises, options to provide a peak season bus service from Christchurch to Akaroa for the benefit of both visitors and residents may be explored. A Park and Ride scheme connecting the Northern and Southern Town Centre nodes, particularly on peak days, is also a possibility. Public transport options will only be viable if there is sufficient demand, or where visitor numbers can be reliably predicted (eg for planned events).

B.7 Parking management (charges and restrictions)

The longer-term option of parking charges and short-term parking bays in the Town Centre will help to encourage all-day parking away from these areas.

B.8 Increase parking capacity in Southern Town Centre.

This action recognises the physical limitations on land being available for parking and has no specific timeframes, but could potentially be implemented as opportunities arise in the future.

Growth in visitor numbers will increase pressure on all parking facilities, particularly in the Southern Town Centre node. While there are currently no suitable sites for dedicated car parking in this area, provision could be made to purchase any suitable sites that become available. The fire station site, for example, would be a good location for parking and other visitor facilities should the Fire Service consider moving to another site.

B.9 Investigate options for increasing boat storage as opportunities for this arise.

C. Visitor Facilities

Akaroa is undeniably a popular visitor destination in Canterbury. Tourism is a significant contributor to Akaroa's economy, employing over 50 percent³ of Akaroa's workforce and sustaining 75 percent⁴ of Akaroa's retail income. Visitor numbers to Canterbury are predicted to rise by 7.4 percent between 2008 and 2015⁵.

It is reasonable to assume that similar levels of growth will be experienced in Akaroa over this period. The provision of good quality public facilities for visitors is therefore extremely important.

The Council's role in supporting visitor needs is reinforced through the Christchurch Visitor Strategy 2007-2017, which identifies the need to improve basic infrastructure as a requirement to enable visitors to enjoy the landscape and attractions.

Scope

An investigation into the existing visitor facilities in Akaroa has been completed. This investigation assessed the adequacy of visitor facilities, both during seasonal fluctuations and with a view to managing long-term tourism growth⁶. Only facilities that are generally accessible to the public and are currently provided (or could be provided) by the Council have been considered within the scope of this analysis, including⁷:

- Public toilets
- Bus pick-up and drop-off points
- Picnic areas and rubbish and recycling facilities
- Visitor information and directional signage

Campervan facilities have been excluded from this analysis as the Council is currently preparing a Freedom Camping Management Plan. This plan will identify a mix of regulatory and non-regulatory measures to minimise the nuisance and perceived nuisance of freedom camping.

Objectives

The following objectives for the provision of good quality facilities for visitors to Akaroa have been identified:

- Public facilities are sufficient to provide for seasonal visitor fluctuations and long-term tourism growth.
- Public facilities are provided in areas where they are most needed.
- Public facilities are maintained to a high quality standard.
- Public facilities are safe, accessible and cater for people with impaired mobility.
- Public facilities promote the well-being of the natural environment.
- Public facilities minimise the impacts of visitor activity on the Town's amenity (eg litter, noise, visual amenity and congestion).
- Public facilities are located and designed in a manner that is sympathetic to Akaroa's historic and current character.

³ Christchurch Visitor Strategy 2007-2017

⁴ Property Economics, June 2008, Akaroa Basin Business Land Assessment

⁵ Ministry of Tourism, 2009

⁶ Suky Thompson (Peninsula Projects), February 2010, Assessment of Akaroa Visitor Facilities

⁷ Harbour facilities such as wharves and slipways (boat ramps) have not been considered in the scope of this plan. The planning and maintenance of these are being considered as part of a Marine Structures Asset Management Plan (currently being prepared by the Council).

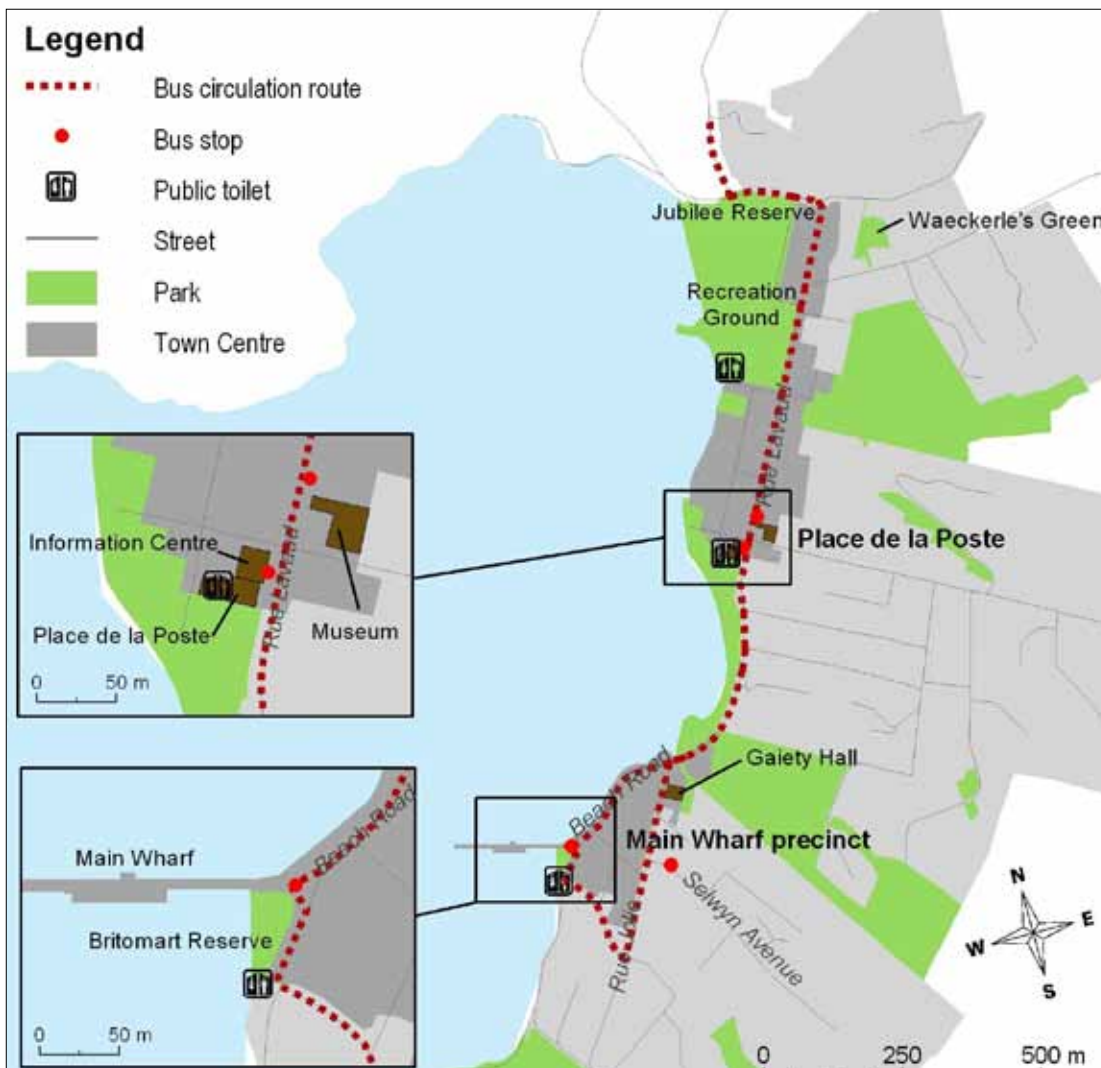
C. Visitor Facilities (continued)

Analysis of existing and future facilities

An analysis of visitor facilities in Akaroa is set out in detail on the following pages, taking a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) approach as to whether the facilities meet the objectives identified above. Recommended actions have then been identified based on this analysis.

For actions that identify a need for new or replacement facilities, it is implied that the public realm guidelines would apply in terms of guiding the design, appearance, location, scale and general appropriateness of any works in the public realm.

Figure 4 - Visitor facilities in Akaroa



Public toilets

There are three sets of public toilets in Akaroa (refer Figure 4, page 18).

Toilets are provided at the Recreation Ground in a small and basic block built in 1991. During the busiest days of the peak season, this block is heavily used by boaties and visitors who park at the northern end of the Township.

An additional block which services the northern end of the town is provided near the Information and Service Centre in Place de la Poste. A third block is provided adjacent to Britomart Reserve at the southern end of the town and caters for picnickers and beach-goers among other users.

An additional toilet block is located in the Garden of Tane. This block is in very poor condition, has been locked for a number of years and is scheduled for removal in accordance with the Garden of Tane Management Plan.



Place de la Poste toilet block (image courtesy of Suky Thompson)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current number of toilets is generally sufficient to meet current visitor levels. Existing toilets are generally well located. Temporary facilities provided for events have been used successfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities showing signs of wear and tear. Substandard facilities for disabled users. Cramped nature of men's toilets (Place de la Poste and Britomart). Waterless urinals in Britomart toilet block tend to block up over summer. Very basic facilities at the Recreation Ground toilet block. A poor standard of cleanliness due to insufficient cleaning levels/standards and high peak usage. Difficult for the public to find the toilets.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an additional facility is required to service increasing visitor numbers, this would be best located in the vicinity of northern end of the Beach Road precinct. Potential for new toilets to be self-cleaning (dependent on Akaroa's water supply). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misuse of the toilets (personal washing, dish washing etc). Increasing visitor numbers will require an additional toilet block. If day visitors are encouraged to park at the northern end of town (ie the recreation ground), then better facilities will be needed in this area.

C. Visitor Facilities (continued)

The public toilets in Akaroa are in need of immediate improvement to provide a standard of service that would be expected by visitors. Long term improvements are necessary to provide for future visitor growth.

A number of actions have already been undertaken by the Council to remedy public toilet issues since the analysis of visitor facilities was undertaken. This includes:

- the installation of door counters to monitor trends and peaks in toilet usage; and
- a review of service contracts, including adequate provision for spring cleaning and increased cleaning during summer.

Recommended actions

Short-term (for all toilet blocks):

- C.1 *Improve facilities for disabled users.*
- C.2 *Repair or replace worn or soiled items, including fittings, floors and hand dryers (where these are not already provided).*

Medium-term:

- C.3 *Replace the Place de la Poste and Recreation Ground toilet blocks with modern facilities.*
- C.4 *Undertake improvements to the Britomart toilets, including extensions to create more space, improved disabled access and replacement of waterless urinals.*

Long-term (subject to a long-term increase in visitor numbers):

- C.5 *Determine a suitable site and build an additional toilet block to service a visitor hub at the northern end of Beach Road.*



Main Wharf bus stop (image courtesy of Suky Thompson)

Bus facilities

Buses arriving and moving through Akaroa primarily provide a service to visitors travelling to and from the Township. The location of bus parking relative to key visitor attractions dictates bus circulation patterns in Akaroa. The timing of bus movements can also influence the type of facilities required and create impacts on local amenity.

In Akaroa, designated bus stops are provided (refer Figure 4, page 18):

- Outside the Museum
- Outside the Visitor Centre
- At the Main Wharf (accommodates three buses)

Bus parking is also provided:

- Informally at the Recreation Ground car park
- In Selwyn Avenue (which can accommodate four buses)

Two providers run a daily bus service between Akaroa and Christchurch. These services are primarily geared towards transporting visitors to Akaroa for day visitors, and are scheduled to fit in with the harbour cruise schedule. A variable number of tour buses also visit Akaroa. The maximum number of tour buses reported in Akaroa by the summer traffic surveys⁸ was six on any one day (these services tend to avoid the Township during the peak Christmas holiday period). Buses that service cruise ship visits tend to arrive early in the morning and drop off in the evening and their movements are carefully managed through Traffic Management Plans.

Bus circulation patterns dictate that buses approaching the Main Wharf area need to go up Rue Jolie and turn into Bruce Terrace. Incoming buses stop outside the Museum or outside the Visitor Centre (if they have dropped off passengers at the Wharf first) (refer Figure 4, page 18). When buses leave the Wharf they then need to drive along the Beach Road precinct. The main pick-up point for buses leaving Akaroa is the Visitor Centre stop. Bus circulation patterns also influence the type of facilities required, for example larger marshalling areas versus designated drop-off and pick-up points.

A mix of minor improvements to bus stops and medium to longer-term improvements to bus shelters and circulation patterns would help to improve the amenity of the Township for both visitors and residents into the future. Any changes to bus stops and parking areas will need to be formally resolved by the Council in order to be enforceable.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where buses previously parked and caused amenity issues have been marked as 'no bus parking'. • Bus marshalling and organisation during cruise ship visits have been well managed to date by both the Council and cruise ship providers. • Recreation Ground car park available and most suitable for bus marshalling and (potentially) Park and Ride facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect bus times at the Visitor Centre stop. • A lack of designated shelter at the Visitor Centre stop, causing passengers waiting for a bus to crowd inside the Centre or congest the porch. • No shelter at the Main Wharf for people waiting for buses. • A lack of room for bus turning and poor signage at the Selwyn Avenue stop. • Potential difficulties for buses to park and manoeuvre at the Recreation Ground on busy days. • Present bus circulation pattern negatively impacts on the amenity of Beach Road.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses servicing cruise ships tend to arrive and leave at times that reduce the impacts of bus parking and circulation during the day (when Akaroa is busiest). • Tour coaches also tend to avoid visiting Akaroa during the Christmas peak holiday period, reducing the impact of bus parking and circulation during this busy time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic plans for future cruise ship visits that create tensions between the shore excursion companies and local tour operators and taxi operators may result in traffic management issues around parking and circulation. • Bus drivers unfamiliar with Akaroa's narrow streets and corners can have difficulty manoeuvring around the town. • Bus congestion at the Main Wharf, particularly when the most popular day cruises come in.

Recommended actions

Short term:

- C.6 *Improve and resolve bus parking and stopping signage at the Visitor Centre, Main Wharf and Selwyn Avenue bus park, as part of a co-ordinated approach to providing bus stops and bus parking through the township, taking into account the needs of bus drivers, passengers, tour operators, other road users and the general public (see also Action B.3 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan regarding improvements to the Main Wharf precinct).*
- C.7 *Continue with existing plans for a bus shelter at Place de la Poste.*
- C.8 *Provide information to bus companies (head offices) on bus parking, stops and circulation in Akaroa (following completion of Action C.6).*
- C.9 *Develop a template Traffic Management Plan for cruise ship visits.*

Medium term:

- C.10 *Investigate measures to make the Recreation Ground car park more 'bus friendly' and encourage bus drivers to utilise this area for longer-term parking, utilising Selwyn Avenue (or a suitable alternative area) as a bus marshalling area only (see also Action B.4 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan regarding parking at the Recreation Ground).*
- C.11 *Investigate the potential of a bus shelter at the Main Wharf (see also Action B.3 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan regarding improvements to the Main Wharf precinct).*

Long term (subject to a long term increase in visitor numbers):

- C.12 *Incorporate a bus shelter at a visitor hub at the Recreation Ground particularly if a Park and Ride facility is considered (see also Action B.7 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan regarding Park and Ride facilities).*
- C.13 *Provide a bus stop to service a visitor hub at the northern end of Beach Road.*

C. Visitor Facilities (continued)

Picnic facilities and public furniture

Picnicking is a popular activity for visitors to Akaroa. An inventory of picnic facilities in Akaroa identified 28 picnic tables, 59 benches and 52 rubbish bins distributed throughout the Township.

Current picnicking facilities are generally of a good standard, but there is potential for additional facilities which would enhance the visitor experience.

Recommended actions

Short term:

- C.14 *Install additional on-street recycling facilities.*
- C.15 *Repair or replace the tables at Britomart Reserve.*

Medium term:

- C.16 *Develop a designated picnic area with barbeques in the Recreation Ground (preferably near the Mini-Golf).*

Long term (subject to a long-term increase in visitor numbers):

- C.17 *Provide additional bicycle racks.*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic tables, benches and litter bins are generally well spread out and positioned appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people have trouble finding picnic facilities. • Picnic tables at Britomart Reserve showing signs of wear and tear. • Existing or replacement facilities may not be in an appropriate style for their location. • Picnic facilities in Jubilee Reserve not particularly attractive or safe, given proximity to the Highway. • General lack of public shelter. • Waeckerle’s Green underutilised as picnic or recreation destination for visitors and locals. • Picnic facilities along Beach Road are well-used but in poor condition.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for barbeque facilities at the Recreation Ground. • Potential to incorporate any new public shelter areas with bus shelters, signage and public information provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential increase in bicycle users resulting in an increased demand for bike racks.



Visitor information and directional signage

Visitors to Akaroa who are unfamiliar with the layout of the Township require information and signage to direct them to facilities and attractions.

A proliferation of signage is provided around Akaroa for:

- parking restrictions
- public toilets
- the Visitor Centre
- maritime rules and restrictions
- street names
- private business
- other public facilities (eg halls, reserves etc)

In addition, a community noticeboard is provided outside the Information Centre and information is provided online through the Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism and Akaroa.com websites, and through the services provided by the Visitor Centre. A new visitor information panel is proposed for Akaroa as part of the Banks Peninsula Signage project. The location for this panel has not been confirmed; however it is most likely to be located in the vicinity of the Information Centre.

The primary means of addressing the issues around signage and visitor information is to provide a coordinated approach across the Township.

Recommended actions

Short term:

C.18 Investigate opportunities to develop a user-friendly, web-based map (potentially in collaboration with Akaroa District Promotions) to provide improved visitor information.

C.19 Investigate the most appropriate location for a sign at the Rue Brittan/Rue Jolie corner indicating long-term parking at the Recreation Ground (see also Action B.1 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan regarding parking signage).

Medium term:

C.20 Investigate the feasibility of monitoring Akaroa traffic loading using traffic counters and identify how this information could be used in the future.

C.21 Develop a signage plan to provide for coherent way-finding around Akaroa. The plan would identify methods to avoid the proliferation of signage and coordinate the design of new signage (eg size, styles and materials). Signage panels providing visitor information would ideally be located at key visitor hubs (see Figure 4, page 18).

Long term (subject to a long term increase in visitor numbers):

C.22 Investigate methods to use load monitoring data to update visitors and Council staff on visitor numbers in Akaroa. Methods might include:

- *Website updates and dynamic signage (eg variable message signs installed at Halswell and/or Little River) to alert visitors on how busy the Town is likely to be and to suggest the best areas to park.*
- *Using live data to update Council staff on the need for additional cleaning or parking enforcement.*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing signs serve their functional purpose. • New signage proposed as part of the Banks Peninsula signage project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current 'mishmash' of signage creates visual clutter which both confuses visitors and detracts from the Town's historic setting. • No signage to long-term parking at the northern end of the Town. • Some signage is too small or hidden from passers-by. • The notice board outside the Information Centre leaks and is cumbersome to use. • Excessive parking signage.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing potential for web-based information distribution for visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional signage over time may exacerbate the existing situation.

C. Visitor Facilities (continued)

Akaroa visitor hub concept

A 'visitor hub' concept is proposed in order to provide for visitor needs whilst reducing street clutter by consolidating visitor information and facilities (refer Figure 5, page 25). Visitor hubs would provide for a range of visitor facilities in a single location, including public toilets, bus stops, shelters, and signage and visitor information.

Any future proposals for new toilets, bus stops, shelters and signage or information panels should be located within one of the four hubs identified.

Two visitor hubs are already partially defined at Place de la Poste in the Northern Town Centre node and the Main Wharf (the Southern Town Centre node). These hubs provide a range of services and are generally adequate at providing for current visitor needs. However, if long-term demand increases, there may be a need to develop additional hubs. These would be best located at the Recreation Ground and at the northern entrance to the Beach Road waterfront precinct.

The development of a new hub would depend on visitor growth, with one or more of the facilities provided as demand requires.

New visitor hub – Recreation Ground

A hub in this location would encourage visitors to park at the north end of the town and walk into the Town Centre nodes, consistent with the objectives of the Akaroa Transport and Access section of this Plan. Drivers could also be encouraged to park and walk or park and ride through the creation of a heritage trail into the Town Centre, bicycle hire or potentially a park and ride system during peak periods (refer Action B.6 in the Transport and Access section of this Plan).

New visitor hub – Beach Road precinct

There are a number of possibilities for the development of this area as a new visitor hub. An ideal location for clustered signage and shelter would be the precinct entrance in the area outside the Bakery. If demand means that additional toilets are required, options may include locating these behind the Gaiety Hall or in the vicinity of the Fire Station (refer actions C.5 and C.13). Before any significant visitor facilities are installed in this area, safety and access issues at the corner of Beach Road and Rue Jolie need to be considered. This may involve a range of pedestrian and road upgrades.

Figure 5 – Akaroa visitor hub concept



D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief

The 'BP Meats' site is a 2,970m² Council-owned block of land located at 67 Rue Lavaud in the Akaroa Town Centre (figure 6). Originally purchased by the former Banks Peninsula District Council (BPDC) in 2000, the site is strategically located within the heart of the northern commercial node of the Township.

Since 2002, the land has been the subject of debate among the wider community regarding how it should be developed.

The purpose of this section of the Plan is to identify the best use for the site by taking community views into account and undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the site development options. The best use(s) of the site will be achieved by ensuring that any development proposal for the site:

- provides for economic growth and development;
- provides for community development;
- can be adapted to meet future needs;
- provides for activities that are difficult to locate elsewhere in the Township;
- reflects the surrounding character of the Northern Town Centre node; and
- is compatible with adjoining land use activities.

Background

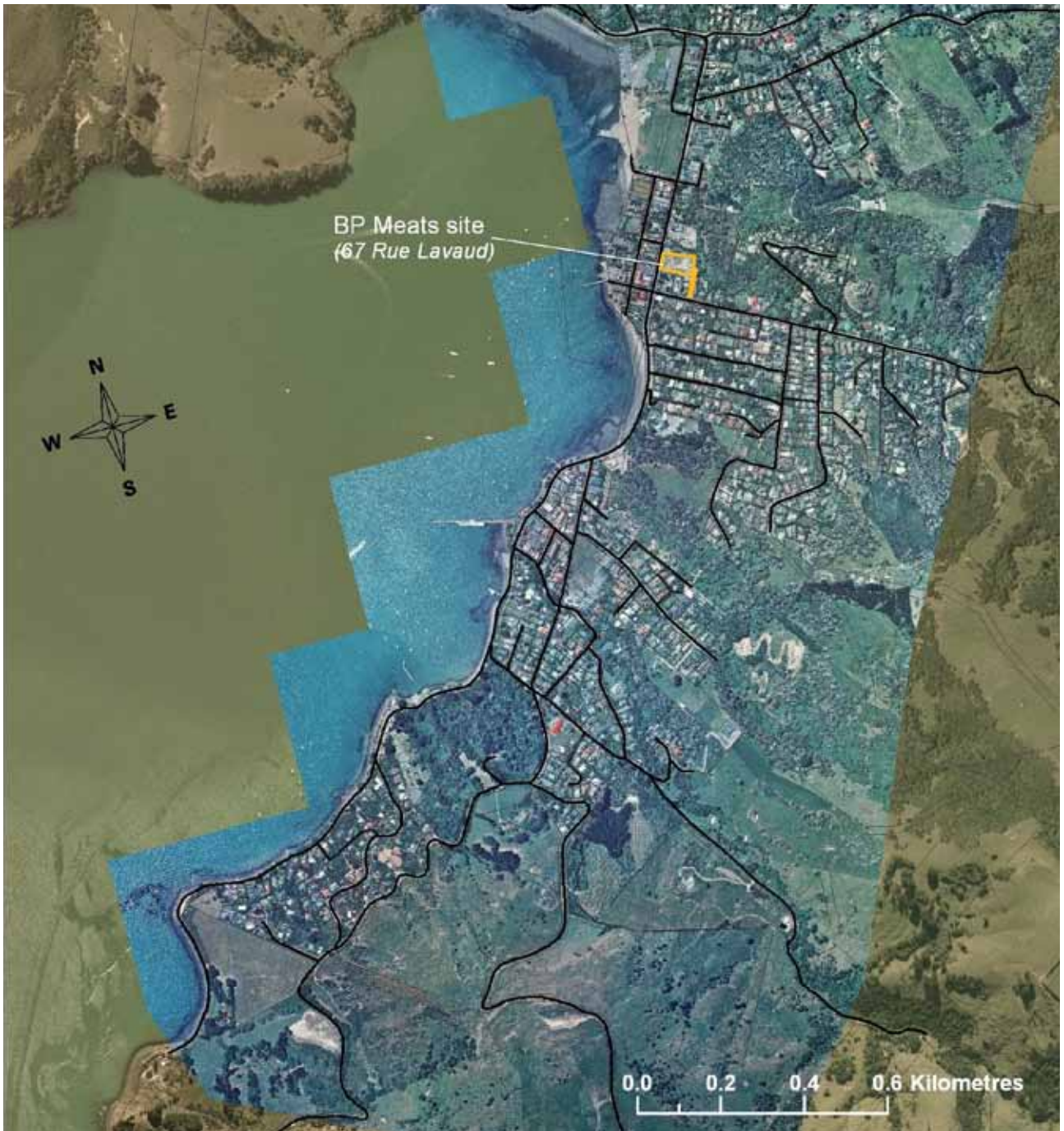
The BP Meats site consists of two fee simple lots; the larger of the two being 2,554m² in area and fronting onto Rue Lavaud near the intersection of Rue Lavaud and Rue Balguerie (refer Figure 7). The other lot provides access to the rear of the site from Rue Balguerie.

The main building on the site is leased as a butchery/deli business "La Boucherie du Village". Other buildings on site include an internet and email business, a vet clinic, and a toy library. A local waste management contractor uses the rear part of the site.

In 2004, Purple Peaks Development Ltd ('PPD') presented a site development proposal to the Council which included a mix of car parking, rental accommodation, commercial/retail premises, a market square and clock tower, and four apartment houses for private sale.

Consultation on the PPD proposal was undertaken in 2004 and resulted in a petition with 279 signatures being presented to the Community Board, requesting that the land remain in community ownership until a professional assessment and a comprehensive parking and traffic plan had been completed. In response, PPD submitted a revised development plan without the private accommodation units and the balance of the site being developed as car parking. The former BPDC deferred making a decision on these plans until the 'Traffic and Parking Strategy' had been completed (the 2006 Opus 'Urban Traffic and Parking Study'). Since the amalgamation, little progress has been made on a development proposal for the site.

Figure 6 - Location of the BP Meats site within Akaroa



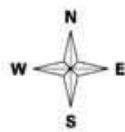
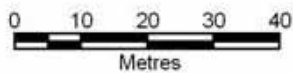
D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Figure 7 – BP Meats site layout






BP Meats site, Akaroa

67 Rue Lavaud



Legend

-  Butchery (notable building)
-  BP Meats site
-  Zone boundary

Site Opportunities and Constraints

The BP Meats site is strategically located on a flat site within the historic Northern Town Centre node in Akaroa, surrounded by a range of key community and retail activities. This strategic location makes the site ideal for a range of potential land use activities.

Existing Buildings

The old butchery building on the site is identified as a notable building in Appendix V of the Proposed Banks Peninsula District Plan. This building is described by the Council's Property team as being in poor condition and requiring frequent and ongoing maintenance. While the building is valued for its heritage status, the constraints associated with retaining this building will affect any proposed development for the site.

None of the other structures on the site are of any particular value.

Heritage Values

Within the Northern Town Centre node in the vicinity of the BP Meats site, there is a large number of significant heritage buildings, structures and open spaces that reflect the history of Akaroa. The site and surrounding land are also located within the Akaroa Historic Area as defined by the NZ Historic Places Trust (Figure 8, page 31).

In addition to the butchery building, a number of other notable buildings are located in close proximity to the site, including the old Courthouse building and Langlois-Eteveneaux house, Bank of New Zealand building, the former Post Office (now the Service Centre), the War Memorial Garden and the former Criterion Hotel (now the Turenne Dairy).

An Akaroa Heritage Conservation report (2009) identifies the Rue Lavaud/Rue Balguerie precinct, including the land defined as the 'BP Meats site', as a potential Heritage Conservation Area characterised by "a large number of significant heritage buildings, structures and open spaces that embody many aspects of the history of Akaroa as a self-sufficient coastal community". The report recommends that the mixed use of Rue Lavaud and Rue Balguerie should be promoted in order to retain the historic pattern of residential, commercial, religious and civic usage.

Zoning

The bulk of the site is located within the Akaroa Town Centre Zone (refer Figure 9, page 32). The provisions of this zone are intended to allow for a range of business and community activities, while maintaining the character and amenity of these areas.

The site adjoins a Residential Conservation Zone to the south and a property zoned Akaroa Hillslopes to the east. Any development of the BP Meats site would therefore need to be designed in such a way that does not reduce the amenity of these areas through the generation of adverse effects such as traffic, noise and overshadowing.



Front of butchery building

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Site Access

Vehicle access to the site is currently provided to the rear of the site from Rue Balguerie. The width of this accessway is approximately 6.2 metres and is zoned 'Residential'.

Three dwellings are located in close proximity to this accessway. While this accessway is wide enough to handle two-way traffic movements, any increased use of this accessway may have detrimental effects on the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties and a resource consent may be required. A second access point could be provided from Rue Lavaud.



Rear of site looking towards Rue Lavaud and the back of the butchery building



Access to the site (off Rue Balguerie)

Figure 8 - BP Meats site heritage context



BP Meats site, Akaroa
Heritage buildings and sites

Legend

- BP Meats site
- Cat I historic building (NZ HPT)
- Cat II historic building (NZ HPT)
- Notable building (District Plan)

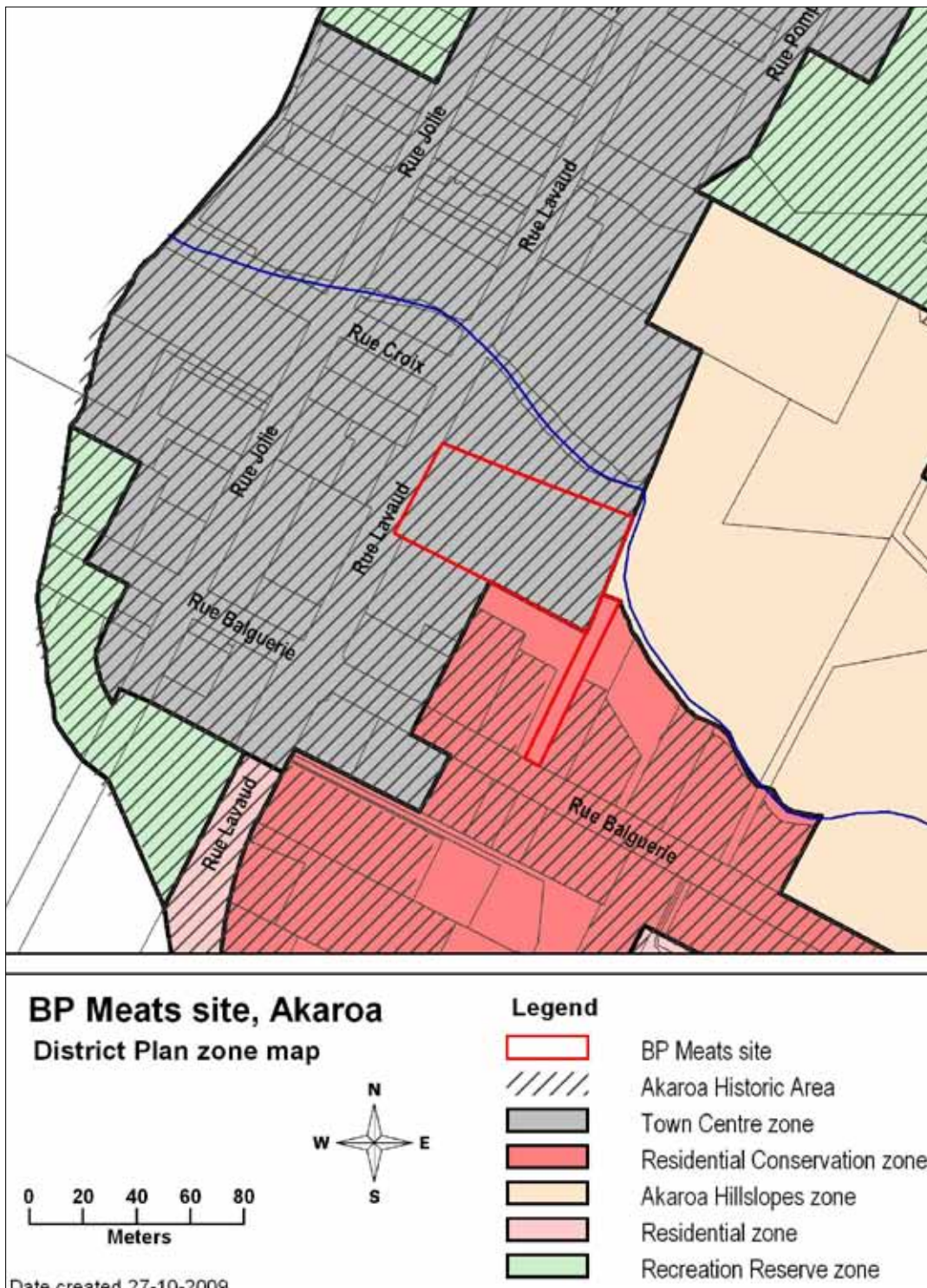
0 20 40 60 80
Meters



Date created 27-10-2009

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Figure 9 - BP Meats site zoning



Summary

The opportunities and constraints for the development of the BP Meats site can be summarised as follows:

Opportunities

- A large flat site in Council ownership
- A central location within the Northern Town Centre node
- Town Centre zoning that provides for a wide range of land use activities
- An existing accessway off Rue Balguerie, with potential for an additional access off Rue Lavaud

Constraints

The scale and layout of any development on the site will be limited by:

- The heritage provisions of the Town Centre zoning and notable building (the butchery) on the site
- The heritage values of the adjoining sites and the wider historic area
- The close proximity of residential dwellings and residential-type zoning.

Analysis of land use options

The following is a summary and analysis of the potential land use activities that could occur on the site in the future. A wide range of land use activities have been considered and it is acknowledged that the site could handle a range of uses (eg housing, commercial, community services etc). The exact mix of activities will depend on the feasibility and funding available, as well as the ability to work with the site constraints and land available to create a high quality development.

i. Parking

Demand for parking in Akaroa is only high during the peak tourist season (December to March) with shorter periods of very high ('super-peak') demand occurring within this period. Because the highest demand for parking in Akaroa only occurs on a few days every year, developing all or a significant portion of the BP Meats site solely to provide for peak parking demands would not be an efficient use of the land and would not contribute to the vitality and historic character of the surrounding area.

The District Plan requires a minimum standard for on-site parking for any new development. Below-grade (underground) parking may be an option but would be a high cost element in any development and may not be feasible given the cost and the highly seasonal demand for parking.

Parking (as the primary land use on the site)

Pros

- Would help to meet seasonal parking needs
- Would be (relatively) easy to redevelop in the future

Cons

- Would be visually detrimental and would not contribute to the historic character of the northern Town Centre node
- Would not provide opportunities to improve community vitality or promote economic growth
- Does not provide peak parking where it is most needed (ie in the southern town centre node)
- Inconsistent with the Town Centre zoning (a discretionary activity)
- Site access difficult for large volumes of traffic.

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

ii. Business Activities

There is likely to be a moderate demand for business land in Akaroa over the next 30 years, with an estimated 4.4ha required throughout the harbour basin to provide for industrial, commercial, retail and accommodation industries⁹. Of these industries, only commercial and retail (1.1ha in total demand) have any significant reasons to be located in the Akaroa Town Centre, due to the synergies associated with centralising business activity in this location.

There is a general lack of commercial land available for long-term development in Akaroa, with the BP Meats site one of only two sites in the Town Centre considered to be underutilised. The ability of residential properties in the Town Centre zone to transform for commercial use is limited due to the high property values associated with residential activity and the restrictions placed upon them by their heritage value. Hence it is necessary to provide for business growth within the existing Town Centre zone, on sites such as the BP Meats site, as much as possible.

While there is an identified long-term shortage of business land in Akaroa, there is anecdotal evidence that there is currently an oversupply of retail and commercial premises. The attractiveness of Akaroa for new or expanded commercial and retail services is also restricted by the highly seasonal nature of the local economy and a low resident population that makes it difficult for businesses to operate year-around.

Given the core location of the BP Meats site, retail services that favour the local community would be ideal for this location, however in an open market it may be difficult to control the type of businesses that operate on the site. For this reason, it would be desirable to retain a butchery operation on this site, although not necessarily in its current location.

In keeping with the wider character of the northern town centre zone, it is most desirable that retail activities be located at ground-floor level and facing the street. Any retail or commercial development of the site would be well suited to mixed-use development, with the potential to provide retailing activity and commercial services at ground-floor level and residential dwellings or offices above this. Purpose-built retail or commercial premises that restrict the long-term adaptability of buildings should be avoided.

Business Use (ground-floor retail with a street frontage; offices may be provided above ground floor)

Pros

- Would help meet long-term business land needs.
- Would provide for economic development.
- Makes efficient use of Town Centre zoning.
- Located within a retail hub, therefore very compatible with surrounding retail activities.

Cons

- May not be able to control the type of retailing or office operations.
- Commercial viability. Attractiveness of additional retail floorspace for potential tenants and owners, particularly given the seasonal variation in visitor demand, low resident population and current high levels of commercial vacancies in the Township.

iii. Residential

Housing affordability, for both permanent residents and seasonal workers, is an issue in Akaroa due to the recent growth in land and house prices, slower rates of income growth, a lack of year-round employment, an absence of investors in the rental market, and a high proportion of holiday homes.

Part of the site could potentially be developed into affordable housing in order to attract permanent residents and/or seasonal workers to Akaroa.

Any residential units would be best located above ground floor level and/or towards the rear of the site, in order to provide for the efficient use of the town centre zoning by reserving the ground floor and Rue Lavaud frontage for business or community activities.

Seasonal worker accommodation

Obtaining and accommodating sufficient staff to meet increasing tourism needs is a major issue for business owners, with a lack of rental housing or affordable housing available to purchase seen as a contributing factor in this¹⁰.

The provision of small, above ground-floor accommodation units could be an efficient use of the BP Meats site and would ideally suit the needs of a seasonal tourism or hospitality worker. Such units might also be useful for providing short-term accommodation for visiting or locum staff in other industries, for example doctors and teachers.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that seasonal workers in Akaroa tend to exhibit disruptive behaviour and are untidy tenants. Given that seasonal workers are vitally important to the Akaroa economy and that their effects would likely disturb quieter residential areas, it may be quite appropriate to enable their accommodation within the Town Centre zone.

If development of the BP Meats site incorporates seasonal worker accommodation units, consideration must also be paid to how these units are utilised during the off-season, and who would be responsible for managing them.

Seasonal worker accommodation (1-2 bedroom units provided above ground-floor)

Pros

- Will meet seasonal worker accommodation needs and therefore support economic growth in the tourism industry.
- Units can be adapted for other short term accommodation needs.
- Central location suited for worker accommodation.

Cons

- Could attract 'unsavoury' tenants.
- It is not certain who would manage the accommodation and how the accommodation would be utilised during the off-peak tourism season.

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Affordable housing for longer-term residents

Housing affordability for permanent residents is affected by a combination of high land and house prices, predominantly lower incomes in the service industries, a lack of year round employment and a high proportion of holiday homes that are not available as long-term rental properties.

The Council is planning to undertake an affordable housing needs analysis for Christchurch and Banks Peninsula over the next financial year. This analysis will identify affordable housing needs and will identify the role Council can play in meeting this need. Until this analysis is undertaken, it is not clear what type of housing would best be provided on the site to meet affordable housing needs specific to Akaroa. For example, while one to two bedroom units provided above ground floor may be suitable for seasonal workers and business owners above retail premises, they may not be desirable for longer-term residents and families who desire larger living spaces in more residential areas.

In order to ensure that any affordable housing potentially provided on the site remains affordable, the Council would need to play a role in either providing, managing or enforcing this. This could be directly through managing rental properties with eligibility criteria to attract permanent residents, or less directly by ensuring that any private housing development is covenanted to ensure the housing remains affordable and is not used for holiday homes.

At present, the Council plays a limited role in providing or supporting affordable housing, other than through the provision of social housing. Until an affordable housing analysis is completed, it is unlikely that the Council would be willing to be directly involved in the provision of affordable housing on this site.

Affordable housing for longer-term residents (needs unknown)

Pros

- Will help address affordable housing shortage.

Cons

- No analysis of affordable housing needs has been completed to date; there is a risk that any accommodation constructed prior to this may not meet actual need.
- No clear understanding of Council's role in providing or supporting affordable housing.

Social housing

The Council currently manages two blocks of social housing in Akaroa: the Bruce Terrace Cottages (three one-bedroom units built in 1959) and the Rue Viard Cottages (three one-bedroom units built in 1973). These units are aging and becoming harder to maintain and may be included in future replacement programmes.

It is desirable that any new social housing units are located near community hubs and social services, where possible, in order to foster community connections and tenancy stability. The existing sites generally do not provide ease of access to local facilities for older persons. While the Bruce Terrace site could conceivably take more units, this would involve significant demolition and reconstruction.

Current demand for social housing in Akaroa would easily fill six replacement units; however ten units (a mix of 1-bed and 2-bed units) would be desirable to accommodate future demand. It is estimated that if these units are provided on the BP Meats site, the land area required for six new units would take up a quarter to a half of the site (including parking and outdoor areas), although this would need to be confirmed. Single storey units are preferred although double storey units may be acceptable provided the access requirements for elderly tenants are taken into account.

Social housing (up to six units at the rear of the site)

Pros

- Will help to consolidate social housing on a single site and will meet demand for social housing in Akaroa.
- Site is within easy access of community amenities.
- Difficult to build new units on the existing sites and/or to renovate existing units.

Cons

- Could take up a considerable portion of the site if all demand is met in this location.

Private housing

(with no controls on affordability or retention)

The close proximity to the commercial centre and the potential for harbour views for above ground floor dwellings mean that the land would be highly valuable for private residential development. However, due to the housing market being dominated by holiday home owners, it is likely that any unrestricted private housing development will be subsumed by the holiday home market, rather than providing more affordable accommodation for local residents and seasonal workers.

Using part of the site for private residential development was originally proposed in the PPD proposal as a means of providing funds to be invested in the development of the remainder of the site. The community response to this approach was highly unfavourable at the time.

Private housing (provided at the rear of the site)*Pros*

- Highly desirable location for residential activity; financial benefits.

Cons

- Most likely to be developed as holiday homes, which will not provide for economic or community development.
- Loss of community-ownership of the site, resulting in this proposal being an unpopular option.

iv. Community

Community uses of the BP meats site might include a Council service centre, visitor centre, health centre, recreational facility, or some other type of community facility. At present, there is no funding set aside in the Long-Term Plan (LTP) to support the development of any such facility on the site, however if a clear need is identified this could be proposed in the next LTP (2012-2022).

Council Service Centre

A review of the Banks Peninsula Information Centre in 2005 identified that the existing Visitor Centre is physically constrained by being in the same building as the Post Office and Service Centre. Crowding occurs during peak times and there is limited scope for the marketing of tourist activities. Options that were identified for the Information Centre included taking over the space currently occupied by the Service Centre and possibly the Post Office (assuming the Service Centre and Post Office can move to another location). At the time this Information Centre report was prepared, the BP Meats location was dismissed as a possible location for the Information Centre due to the discussions around the site that were occurring at the time (the PPD proposal).

The construction of a new Service Centre on the BP Meats site has been suggested by the Community Board on a number of occasions, including in submissions to the 2009-19 LTCCP. Moving the Service Centre to the BP Meats site would then free up space in the existing building for the Information Centre to expand. A possible option could be to relocate the Service Centre into the existing building on the site; however this will depend on space requirements and the ability to modify the notable building.

Council Service Centre (located over one or two storeys towards the front of the site – not necessarily a street frontage)*Pros*

- Existing (former Post Office) building currently substandard and is cramped and difficult to access for staff and visitors.
- Information Centre would benefit from the additional space freed up if the Service Centre leaves the site.
- Accessible central location within Town Centre hub.
- Able to construct purpose-built facilities.

Cons

- Potentially a large portion of the site needed if the building is single storey and a full range of community service facilities are provided. This would limit the space available on the site for other purposes (eg retail).

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Health facility

At present, the Akaroa medical centre and physiotherapist are located on the grounds of Akaroa hospital. A Health Centre scoping analysis undertaken in 2008 identified problems with the existing facilities and services, including a lack of working space in the existing medical centre, limited facilities for the physiotherapist, and a lack of accommodation for locum/visiting health professionals. Options for providing these services in the future included building a new centre on the hospital grounds, or constructing a new facility within the Township, possibly on the BP Meats site.

Building a new facility on hospital land was the most cost effective option and would maintain the tradition of having the health services and facilities in close proximity. The scoping report recommends that this option be progressed to the next level. This approach is supported, given that there is land available for this purpose in the hospital grounds; freeing up the BP Meats site for Town Centre activities that do not have the same ability to be located elsewhere in the Township.

Pros

- Accessible Town Centre location.
- Able to construct purpose-built facilities.

Cons

- A new facility or improved facilities can be accommodated on the existing hospital site.

Recreation facility

The Akaroa community lacks a dedicated public aquatic sports and fitness facility.

The swimming pool at Akaroa Area School is available to school families and the wider community during the summer by purchasing a key. There are also designated times for people to take part in lap swimming and coaching sessions.

A new recreational facility would provide for resident and visitor needs. Options for a dedicated public aquatic sports and fitness facility might include construction of a new facility somewhere in the Township (eg near the recreation grounds) or co-locating with existing facilities (eg the School pool). Options such as these have not been explored in any detail, nor is there a clear understanding as to what facilities are required.

Recreational facilities such as a swimming pool and gymnasium tend to take up a considerable amount of space, and cannot be easily adapted to a change in use. As such it would be more appropriate if such facilities were located elsewhere in the Township and not on the BP Meats site.

Recreation facility (needs unknown)

Pros

- Will support community growth and development.

Cons

- Potentially able to locate elsewhere in the Township or to be provided in association with existing facilities.
- An aquatic facility would take up a considerable amount of space and could not be easily adapted in the future.

Other facilities

There is a wide range of community meeting spaces and services available in Akaroa.

The Akaroa Toy Library currently holds a lease to operate within the same building as the butchery. While it may be possible for the Toy Library to be retained on the site as part of a future development, the Library could be located elsewhere in the Township; adjoining the Playcentre, for example.

Community meeting spaces are widely available throughout the Township, with the Council providing facilities at the Gaiety Hall and the Akaroa Sport Complex, with other facilities also available through community organisations and churches.

Community services and office space is provided through Heartlands, which operates out of a building at 39 Rue Lavaud. Heartlands also provides a co-ordinated range of government and non-government services in the Akaroa community, including IRD, ACC, careers advice, drivers licensing, Work and Income and other community information and advice.

Other community facility (needs unknown)

Pros

- Would support a community use for the site.

Cons

- Demand for a new facility is unclear. There are a number of community meeting spaces and services already available in the Township.

Summary: Preferred land use mix

In determining suitable uses for the site, there is a preference for a mix of activities that together achieve the following desired outcomes:

- Provides for economic growth and development
- Provides for community development
- Can be adaptable to meet future needs
- Provides for activities that are difficult to locate elsewhere in the Township
- Reflects the surrounding character of the Northern Town Centre node
- Is compatible with adjoining land use activities

No one land use activity will meet all the criteria above (refer Figure 10, page 40); hence a mixed use development is desirable in order to maintain the viability and vitality of the site.

Figure 10, on the following page, offers a simple comparison of the various land use activities possible on the site. Based on this table and the associated analysis, the following activities are deemed most compatible with the direction for the site:

- **Service Centre** (to be located over one or two storeys towards the front of the site, but not necessarily having a street frontage)
- **Retail and offices** (retail activity located on the ground floor, with offices provided above ground floor)

The following activities are less compatible with the direction for the site, but could be provided in combination with the activities above:

- **Seasonal worker accommodation** (1-2 bedroom units provided above ground floor)
- **Social housing** (up to six units provided at the rear of the site)
- **Other community facility** (needs unknown)

The following activities are generally undesirable for this site:

- **Affordable housing for longer-term residents** (needs unknown)
- **Health facility**
- **Parking** (over a substantial portion of the site)¹¹
- **Recreation facility** (needs unknown)
- **Private housing** (to be provided at the rear of the site)

¹¹ Noting that on-site parking will need to be provided for any development proposal, as required in the District Plan. This option examines the appropriateness of parking being the primary land use on the site.

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Figure 10 – Assessment of land use activities for the BP Meats site

Activity / land use preferred intensity and location	Provides for economic growth and development?	Provides for community development?	Can be adapted to meet future needs?	Unable to locate elsewhere?	Reflects the surrounding character?	Is compatible with adjoining land uses?	TOTAL
Retail or office premises	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	11
Ground floor location on street frontage. Offices may be located above ground floor.							
Service Centre	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	10
Located over one or two storeys towards the front of the site (but not necessarily a street frontage)							
Seasonal worker accommodation	✓✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	6
1-2 bedroom units above ground floor							
Social housing		✓		✓✓	✓	✓	5
Up to 6 units at rear of site							
Other community facility	✓		✓✓		✓	✓	5
Needs unknown							
Affordable housing for longer-term residents	✓	✓			✓	✓	4
Needs unknown							
Health facility		✓✓	✓			✓	4
Parking							
Utilising a substantial portion (2/3+ of the site)	✓		✓✓✓	✓	✗		4
Recreation facility		✓✓	✓				3
Needs unknown							
Private housing					✓	✓	2
To be provided at the rear of site							

KEY: ✓ = yes, to a limited degree ✓✓ = yes ✓✓✓ = yes, definitely ✗ = highly unsuitable or invasive

Design guidance

In order to achieve a good outcome for the site, a number of design guidelines are proposed in order to ensure that any development reflects the surrounding character and does not have any significant effects on adjoining land use activities. Achieving a quality development on this site that successfully integrates with the existing area will require careful thought and clever design.

In addition to the guidance below, the Design Guidelines for Akaroa in Appendix XI of the Banks Peninsula District Plan are also relevant to the site.

Parking and Access

- The development of the site should be integrated with transport and parking plans for the township.
- The site shall provide sufficient off-street parking to meet the needs of the activities located there (as per District Plan requirements). Parking areas should be provided and designed in such a way that it does not dominate the site visually or physically.
- Safe and adequate pedestrian access is provided throughout the site.
- Vehicle access to the site shall be provided by an additional accessway off Rue Lavaud, with the existing access of Rue Balguerie retained.

A new access off Rue Lavaud would be required to minimise the effects of increased traffic on residential properties on Rue Balguerie. Vehicle access off Rue Lavaud directly onto front sites is common in this area. Egress through Rue Balguerie would still be permitted.

Site Layout

- The site shall have a high level of urban amenity that reflects the local character of the Northern Town Centre node and the historic character of Akaroa generally.
- The site layout should take into account the relationship with the surrounding sites and the existing notable building.
- Where possible, a butchery operation on this site should be retained and become a focal point of the street frontage and site.
- Any new buildings on the frontage of Rue Lavaud should directly front and address the street.
- A 'town square' or large public space area on or set back from the street frontage should be avoided so as to not detract from the street of heritage buildings along Rue Lavaud.
- Small-scale public amenity spaces can provide areas for people to stop and rest. Such areas should be well designed, taking into account views, sheltering and landscaping.
- On-site parking shall be designed so that it does not dominate the site visually or physically.
- The retention of the existing mature trees is desirable. An arborist should be consulted before any decisions are made about how to develop the site.

Building Design and Appearance

- Building heights should not exceed two storeys. A mix of single, one and a half storey and some two storeys would work best on the site.
- Should alterations or additions to the notable building be considered, further investigations into the architecture and history of the building must be undertaken.
- A 'landmark' building over two storeys in height is undesirable.
- Pitched or gabled roofs are preferable, in order to fit with the local vernacular.
- Building form should be simple and well-proportioned.
- Building materials and colours should draw on the traditional palette in use through Akaroa. Corporate colours should be avoided.
- Buildings should incorporate sustainable building design principles where possible, with features such as rainwater collection, eco-friendly or recycled building materials, waste minimisation measures and energy efficient building design.
- New buildings should be designed to be adaptable to future needs.

D. BP Meats Site: Development Brief (continued)

Funding and development

The primary purpose of this document is to provide a development vision for the BP Meats site against which any future development proposals for the site can be assessed.

This report has identified the best use for the site being a mixed-use development, with a new service centre and retailing being highest priority activities for the site. Seasonal worker accommodation, social housing and/or another community facility may be provided in conjunction with this. The exact mix of activities will depend on the commercial feasibility and funding available, as well as the ability to work with the site constraints and land available to create a high quality development.

Existing agreement with PPD

In 2004, PPD and BPDC entered into a formal agreement whereby the Council agreed to consider a development proposal by PPD for the whole site. The agreement stipulates that, if – after consideration and consultation in respect of the development proposal – the Council decides the proposal should proceed, the Council and PPD will then negotiate the terms of which the Council would be willing to sell the property to PPD so the development proposal can be completed. If the Council decides that the PPD proposal should *not* proceed, a resolution will be required to withdraw from the agreement with PPD. This agreement imposes an obligation on the Council to consider the proposal and consider selling the site to the developer, but there is no absolute obligation on the Council to sell the property.

Development options

In implementing the development brief, the Council has a number of options. Funding for a new Service Centre can be sought through the 2012-2022 LTP. Funding for any other facilities can also be budgeted for in the LTP, bearing in mind that all funding is contestable across the Council's operational and capital programmes and subject to change through the process of consulting with the community.

A partnership with a private developer may also be an option, whereby all or part of site development is managed and/or owned by a private developer. Development proposals may be sought by the Council in accordance with this brief, with the Council then considering whether to sell the property to a developer, or to enter into an agreement regarding the development of the site.

Recommended actions

Short term: (next 1-3 years)

D.1 Address existing formal agreement with PPD.

Medium-long term:

D.2 Depending on the results of discussions with PPD, seek funding for a Service Centre in the 2012-2022 LTP and investigate opportunities to develop the remainder of the site for ground floor retailing and other uses.



View of the southern town centre

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Notes

