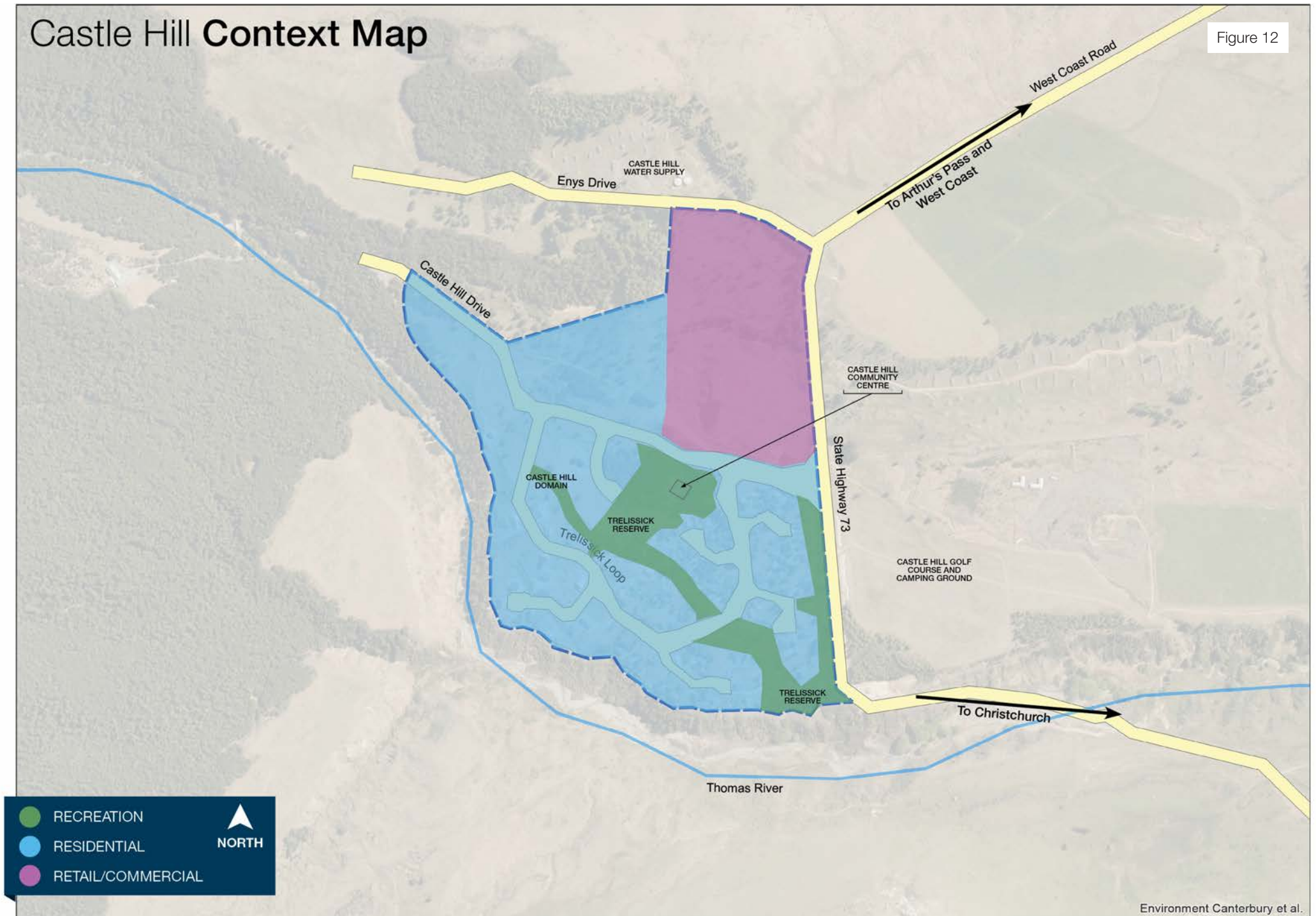


Castle Hill Context Map

Figure 12



Castle Hill

Introduction

Location

Castle Hill Village is located just over an hour west of Christchurch on State Highway 73, lying between the Torlesse and Craigieburn Ranges. The village is an alpine settlement located at an altitude of 720m above sea level.

Mana whenua

Kura Tāwhiti is a traditional area of whare-wānanga, cultivation and mahinga kai for mana whenua. It is an Area of Statutory Acknowledgement under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. The literal translation of Kura Tāwhiti is 'treasure from a distant land.' It was also the mountain claimed by the Ngāi Tahu ancestor Tane Tiki who claimed the mountain for his daughter Hine Mihi so he could take feathers from the kakapo in the region to make her a cloak.

Most people associate Castle Hill Village with the limestone rock formations immediately west of SH 73. For mana whenua it is part of a larger landscape that extends north, south and east of the rock formations and which is culturally very significant.

European settlement

Castle Hill Village began as a development in 1982, ten years after then owner of Castle Hill Station, John Reid, conceived a plan to create a high alpine village on an area of farmland beneath the Craigieburn Range.

Castle Hill Station was named for the distinctive fortress-like limestone hills encircling the station homestead. These hills have eroded to form the boulders that many regard as the "crown jewel" of rock climbing in New Zealand. The area is also the base for numerous other outdoor activities including skiing, hiking, hunting and water sports. In 2004, part of Castle Hill Station was purchased by the Department of Conservation to link Craigieburn Forest Park to Korowai-Torlesse Tussockland Park.

Castle Hill Village was provided for in the Malvern Country Planning Scheme prior to enactment of the RMA. Building design standards reflected the alpine environment but not the cultural significance of the area.

Employment

Castle Hill represents a small component of township-based employment in the Malvern area¹¹. The township contributes to the district's tourist economy through its proximity to local ski fields¹² and natural attractions.

Population

Since its inception in 1982, the village has steadily grown and at the start of 2014 contained 126 houses, accommodating approximately 352 people. Most of these are seasonal holiday homes, although several of the homes are resided in on a permanent basis. The population of Castle Hill is predicted to remain static through to 2031,¹³ although additional dwellings are anticipated to be built in this timeframe, along with an expected increase in tourist numbers to the area.

Township status

Due to its relatively isolated location, contained size and high holiday home occupancy, Selwyn 2031 has categorised Castle Hill as a rural township whose function is:

*"...based on village characteristics with some services offered to the surrounding rural area."*¹⁴



¹¹Market Economics: Malvern Area Plan Assessment, August 2015, P13 ¹²Market Economics: Malvern Area Plan Assessment, August 2015, P9 ¹³Selwyn Growth Model ¹⁴Selwyn 2031: District Development Strategy, Strategic Direction 1, adopted October 2014, P34

District Plan land use zoning

Castle Hill Village is subject to a single Living 1A land use zoning (see [Figure 12](#)), which has a minimum average allotment size of 500 square metres and a minimum lot size of 350 square metres. The residential development is supplemented by an 8.2 hectare area of undeveloped Business 1A zoned land to cater for commercial activities including future tourism-based services and retailers.

The densities and lot layouts are based on the original concept developed for the village that is contained within the geography of the area, with State Highway 73 forming the eastern boundary, the escarpment and Thomas River containing the southern and western boundaries and the northern boundary being generally contained by Enys Drive and the associated escarpment. The housing stock is characterised by small detached housing, the appearance of which have been influenced by developer covenants and the provisions of Chapter 11 of the Selwyn District Plan – Township Volume. These development controls have contributed to the alpine character of the settlement.

Residential land capacity

There are approximately 221 sections within Castle Hill Village of which 5 have the potential to be further developed for residential purposes. These sections comprise some 5.1 hectares with a potential yield of 71 households. In addition, there are approximately 88 undeveloped existing residential sections available in Castle Hill Village.

There is sufficient available land to accommodate projected population growth through to 2031 without proactively zoning additional residential greenfield land.

Business land capacity

Castle Hill village has a relatively large area of undeveloped Business 1A zoned land that formed part of the original concept for the village by providing the opportunity for tourist-based retailers and services. There are no established retail, commercial or industrial type activities operating in the village at this point in time, although a golf course and associated camping ground have been consented to the east across State Highway 73. The expert retail assessment has identified that there was no demand identified for additional business or industrial land in the township¹⁵.

Overall, there is considered to be sufficient available land to accommodate the projected population growth through to 2031 without Council proactively zoning additional residential or business greenfield land.

¹⁵ Market Economics: Malvern Area Plan Assessment, August 2015, P19

Castle Hill Opportunities & Issues

Figure 13





Opportunities and Issues

Development opportunities and issues that have informed the recommendations the future development of Castle Hill are summarised in [Figure 13](#) and below.

OPPORTUNITIES

Population, growth capacity and urban form

- There is a substantial area of developable land available within the village to accommodate projected growth, including several large vacant lots spread throughout the village and further development capacity identified to the north-west.

Business development

- Economic diversity and tourism-based activities are able to be accommodated within the undeveloped Business 1A zone and the consented holiday park and golf course area to the east of State Highway 73.

Natural environment and cultural heritage

- Investigate the appropriateness of identifying within the District Plan a cultural landscape over Kura Tāwhiti and Castle Hill Village to recognise the cultural significance of the area to mana whenua.
- Information about the history and cultural significance of Kura Tāwhiti could be displayed in Castle Hill Village.
- There are opportunities in some areas to landscape and plant road reserves and other public spaces with native species to support mahinga kai.
- There are opportunities to review the design criteria for the village, especially in the commercial and undeveloped areas to incorporate mana whenua history into the design of public and commercial facilities.

Transport

- The current transport provisions in the village are considered adequate for the level of demand in the township, with the concentric township form, topography and existing road and path network allowing for a highly accessible settlement pattern.

5 Waters

- New development should be located within or close to areas currently serviced with community water supplies and should utilise the capacity remaining in the Castle Hill Wastewater Treatment Plant where practical.
- Mana whenua support the development of Low Impact Urban Design and Development.

Local facilities and community development

- Castle Hill is an important tourist destination due to its proximity to Kura Tāwhiti, local ski fields and other recreational opportunities.
- Recent development of the Cragieburn Trails initiative by Castle Hill Village residents in conjunction with the Department of Conservation.
- Spark has identified upgrades to the 4G ultrafast broadband network in Castle Hill to support social, economic and community wellbeing.

ISSUES

Population, growth capacity and urban form

- The relatively isolated location makes the township attractive to a small portion of the property market.
- The amount of available land reduces the need to proactively zone additional greenfield land through the District Plan Review. Additionally there are the following identified constraints: natural values, retaining the purpose of the original masterplan, land tenure (DoC), topography (Thomas River escarpment), infrastructure resilience and severance across SH73.
- There is limited capacity for the township to support more intensive housing typologies, such as a Living Z zone, based on the township character, the settlement function in the Selwyn 2031 network and limited range of services.
- The consenting of the camping ground in the High Country zone has effectively doubled the size of the township area, which is now separated from Castle Hill Village by State Highway 73. Any further growth to the east will exacerbate this issue.
- Mana whenua identify that further development to the east of SH 73 may encroach on culturally very significant areas where additional camping or other development is considered inappropriate.
- There is a need to maintain the existing Growth of Township policy that precludes additional Living 1 zone residential or Business 1 zone business activities from adversely affecting the amenity or natural values attributed to the Thomas River or wetlands¹⁶.
- There is also a need to avoid encroaching into the Outstanding Natural Landscape Area on the southern and western boundaries and to retain the alpine outlook. Land tenure is also relevant, with Department of Conservation reserve being located on the western boundary.

Business development

- Business opportunities are contingent upon private investment, with the existing zoned land remaining undeveloped.
- There is potential for loss of business zoned capacity should the area be developed for residential purposes.

Natural environment and cultural heritage

- Mana whenua identify the need to manage effects of additional residents and visitors to the area and avoid development encroaching upon the maunga/ mountains or views of them.
- In addition to the established alpine theme of the Village, there is an opportunity to recognise the cultural significance of the area by integrating design that better reflects mana whenua culture and association with the area.

Transport

- There are potential cross traffic issues between the village and the holiday park and golf course to the east of State Highway 73. There is poor connectivity between the two areas.
- Environment Canterbury does not provide public transport or a bus service to this town. A recent service review undertaken by Environment Canterbury determined that no significant extension or expansion to their services in the district is expected in the foreseeable future.

5 Waters

- There is provision in the Regional Plans for community supply. However, any new surface water takes will require Environment Canterbury consent. Water supply is managed in accordance with approved Water Safety Plans.
- Additional growth locations will generally be costly to service based on the local geography and isolated location of Castle Hill. There are infrastructure upgrades required for community water, wastewater and stormwater utilities to service significant growth.
- Any additional growth will require an integrated approach to stormwater management, including amendments to the existing stormwater management consents to coherently manage current and future growth.

Local facilities and community development

- The limited population base in Castle Hill village presents difficulties in generating the rates base required to support major capital projects or community facilities.

¹⁶Policy B4.3.17

Possible Future Development Options

Residential

No new areas for residential development have been identified as being necessary to be proactively zoned by Council in response to projected growth within the Malvern 2031 planning horizon. This is on the basis there is currently sufficient available land to accommodate projected population growth and there are constraints that need to be addressed through the RMA process.

Figure 13 shows areas of potential future greenfield growth paths that could accommodate residential and business development either beyond 2031 or more immediately through a privately initiated plan change process, including areas where more intensive development may be able to occur and explains the advantages and disadvantages of each respective area. The map indicates the current township boundary and references some of the opportunities and issues listed below that will influence the substantive assessment of the appropriateness of future growth options.

Castle Hill area 1 – CH A1

A potential future area for standard residential development is an area currently zoned Rural (High Country) and is located to the west of the current Business 1A zone, south of Enys Drive. The area may also be suitable for future business purposes.

Advantages

- This location is identified as a Forestry Exclusion Area so is outside the Outstanding Natural Landscape Area identified in the District Plan.
- The area is well-contained by Enys Drive to the north.
- The location has high amenity, with views to the surrounding Outstanding Natural Landscape Area and wider environment.
- The area provides for a long-term growth beyond 2031 that is able to be integrated into the existing urban form.
- There is potential to integrate this location with the adjoining zoned land to the south.

Disadvantages

- There is more than sufficient supply of Living 1A zoned land to provide for projected growth within the Malvern 2031 planning horizon without extending the settlement boundary into adjoining land.
- The topography makes infrastructure provision costly and inefficient to service with water due to the need for pumps. There is also a lack of resilience in respect to infrastructure services and utilities management due to the isolated location and geography.

Conclusion

No new areas for residential or business purposes have been identified as being necessary to be proactively zoned by Council in response to projected growth within Castle Hill over the Malvern 2031 planning horizon. This is on the basis that there is currently sufficient zoned but undeveloped residential land available to accommodate projected population growth and demand.

There are also a number of issues that need to be addressed to facilitate additional growth, including:

- settlement character and function, including the need to protect the current amenity attributed to the village and the absence of the necessary community infrastructure or services required to support additional growth or increased household densities. There is also a need to adhere to the scale of development that was envisaged by the original Castle Hill Village concept plan
- infrastructure upgrades relating to integrated stormwater management, access to potable water and the ongoing treatment and disposal of wastewater. There is also a reduction in resilience associated with the settlement's isolated location and local geography
- The need to preserve the natural values attributed to the surrounding environment, which is recognised in the District Plan as an Outstanding Landscape
- the need to manage growth to avoid any adverse impacts this may have on cultural sites or the mana whenua values attributed to the area
- land tenure, with much of the adjoining land to the west being owned and administered by the Department of Conservation, and
- natural hazard risks associated with the Thomas River escarpment.

The retention of the current township boundary through to 2031 is consistent with the principles contained in Chapter 5 of the CRPS, the District Growth Strategy Directions and the Area Plan Principles, which reinforce the need to manage growth in an integrated and consolidated manner while avoiding the social, economic and environmental impacts associated with dispersed settlement patterns.

This Area Plan does not preclude any additional greenfield land from being considered for zoning through privately-initiated plan change requests under the RMA, but signals that there is sufficient capacity within the township to accommodate growth through to 2031 without the need for the Council to proactively zone additional land through the District Plan Review.

The following implementation steps identify the various processes for considering the appropriateness of where further development within the current township boundary through to 2031 can best be integrated. The implementation steps are the methods for delivering the opportunities and addressing the issues identified in the above assessment, which will collectively deliver better social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes for the settlement of Castle Hill, its community and its rural township function to the local area.

Castle Hill area plan implementation steps

A number of implementation steps for Castle Hill are provided as a means to realise the opportunities and address the issues by 2031. The implementation steps contain guidance on indicative: (1) timeframes; (2) Council department work streams; (3) costs; (4) agency and Council department that are primarily responsible for implementation, and; (5) possible funding sources.

The various implementation steps have been formulated to deliver sustainable social, economic, cultural and environmental outcomes for each township within the Malvern area in the short, medium and long term. The following timeframes have been established for this area plan:

- Short term 2016 to 2020
- Medium term 2021 to 2025
- Long term 2026 to 2031

In addition to the Castle Hill Village specific implementation steps set out below, there are a number of other implementation steps that apply across all the townships in the Malvern Area Plan. These can be viewed at the beginning of [Section 2](#) of this Area Plan at Table 1.

Estimated costs are shown in the following table as a high-level indication of the scale of funding that may be required to implement various steps. The costs generally relate to physical works, such as street upgrades, open space enhancements or developments of new facilities and do not include the costs to operate, maintain or renew the assets in the future. Possible funding sources for each implementation step are identified.

It is important to note, however, that in many cases no funding has been approved and decisions on whether a project or initiative to deliver the identified implementation step can proceed will still need to be made through the Council's Annual and Long-Term Planning processes. Also set out in the table is who will be advancing the various implementation steps, and the mechanisms by which they will be realised.

Key for indicative costs
 \$ = below \$50,000
 \$\$ = \$50,000 – 200,000



Table 4: Implementation steps – Castle Hill

Implementation step	Indicative timeframe	Indicative cost	Agency responsible	Funding source
Population, growth and urban form				
See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:				
Review the alpine village rules through the District Plan Review with the view to determining the appropriateness of Selwyn District Council formalising the private covenants as rules and growth of township policies to adhere to the masterplan	Short		Selwyn District Council Planning department – District Plan Review	Environmental Services District Plan Review
Natural environment and cultural heritage				
See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:				
Include significant heritage and cultural sites in Castle Hill Village when preparing township brochures and/or township information panels	Medium	\$	Selwyn District Council Planning department in consultation with Nga Rūnunga – District Plan Review	Community Services Long-Term Plan
Review the District Plan ‘Sites of Significance to Tangata Whenua’ and investigate the viability of a ‘cultural landscape’ zone over Castle Hill Village and the wider surrounds	Long	\$	Selwyn District Council Planning department in consultation with mana whenua – District Plan Review	Environmental Services District Plan Review
Transportation				
See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:				
Facilitate a Corridor Management Plan in partnership with New Zealand Transport Agency to identify future opportunities and issues associated with the state highway, which will inform on-going planning initiatives	Medium	\$\$	Selwyn District Council Transportation and Planning departments	Assets and Environmental Services Long-Term Plan
5 Waters				
See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:				
Support the developer-led amendment of stormwater network discharge consents to facilitate growth	Medium	\$	Selwyn District Council Water Services department in consultation with mana whenua	Assets Long-Term Plan
Manage the water supply network in accordance with the approved Water Safety Plan	Medium	\$	Selwyn District Council Water Services department	Assets Long-Term Plan

Local facilities and community development

See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:

Progress capital works for community facilities, including: playground renewal and upgrades in 2018; extension/upgrade of the community centre (subject to funding); and village green development in 2019/20	Medium	-	Selwyn District Council Property and Commercial department – Strategy and Planning Works Programme	Property and Commercial Long-Term Plan
Development of new reserve areas and green linkages from proposed subdivision	Long	-	Selwyn District Council Property and Commercial department – Strategy and Planning Works Programme	Subdivision
Identify potential opportunities for improved access arrangements and tourist-based initiatives to support economic and community diversity	Medium	\$	Selwyn District Council Property and Commercial department in consultation with mana whenua, Department of Conservation and the local community	Community Services Long-Term Plan
Continue to promote tourism in the area through the following initiatives: (1) Castle Hill Village tourism operators, promoted at trade shows and online (2) township information, published on the Sensational Selwyn website, and (3) Castle Hill Village features in the 'Arthur's Pass to Christchurch' tourism promotion	Medium	\$	Selwyn District Council Community Services department	Community Services Long-Term Plan

Business development

See Area Plan wide implementation steps in Table 1, in addition to the following:

Review the most optimal use of Business 1A zone in partnership with the local community, which could include determining whether the Business 1A zone enables or precludes comprehensive residential development and whether the framework encourages or precludes the establishment of commercial activities	Short	\$\$	Selwyn District Council Planning department – District Plan Review	Environmental Services District Plan Review
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