



# Town Centre Discussion Document

## Preparation and Implementation of a Structure Plan for Rolleston Township

Selwyn District Council

30 January 2009

# Town Centre Discussion Document

Prepared for

**Selwyn District Council**

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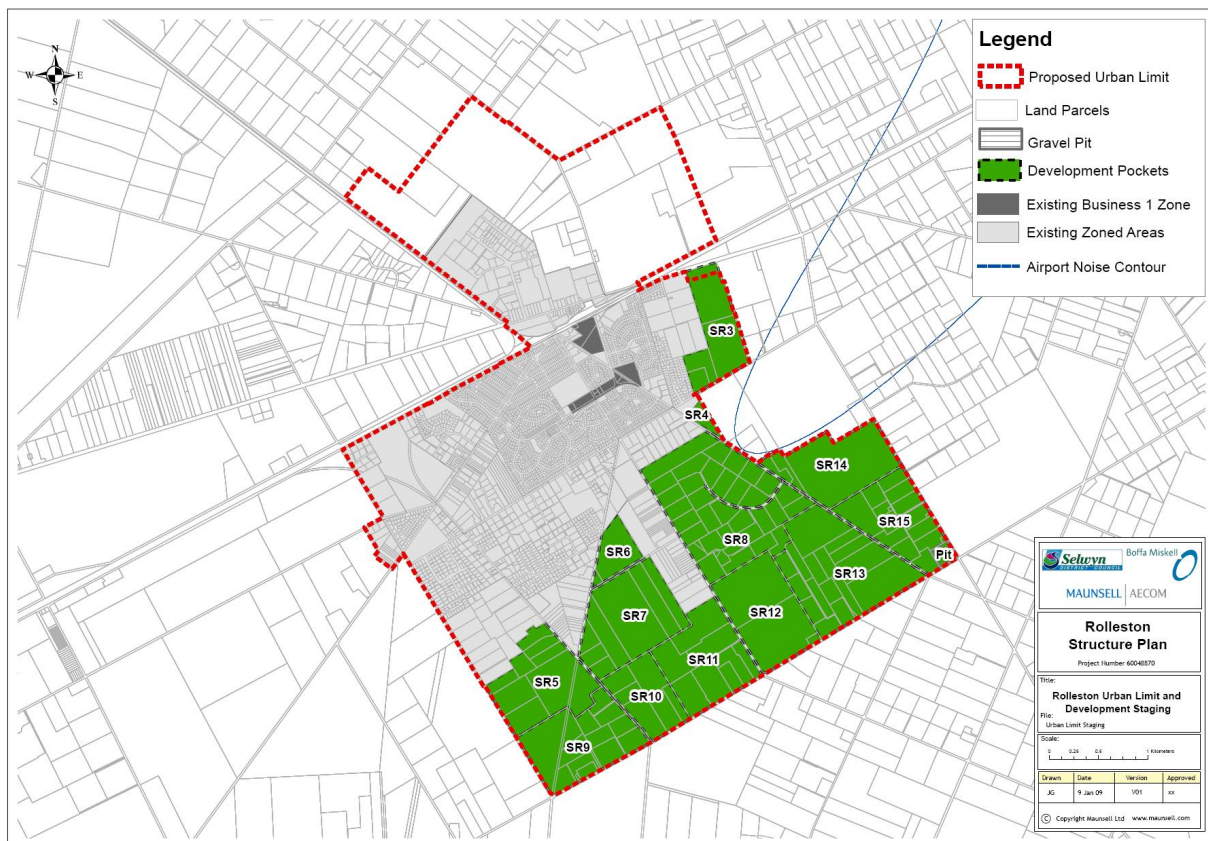
# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Rolleston will experience rapid population growth over the next 35 years, expanding to an expected population of 18,000-22,000 by 2041. In order to appropriately plan for this growth the Selwyn District Council is developing a Structure Plan for the township. The first stage of the Structure Plan development is the consideration of options for the town centre, which are in this document. This process will inform the development of the remaining sections of the Plan.

## Drivers

Several factors are driving the need for a planned approach for the town's growth and the development of the Rolleston Structure Plan. A primary driver for planned growth is population growth. Population has from 2001 to 2008 increased 270% and is expected to increase a further 169% by 2041. This growth far exceeds the rate of growth that is observed for other areas in the Selwyn District. In order to manage the spread of development within Rolleston a new urban limit was defined in July 2008 and provided to Environment Canterbury to be included in Proposed Change 1. The extension of the urban limit into areas that are currently 'green field' sites changes the dynamic of the town and raises questions about the long term future of the current town centre (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Rolleston Proposed Urban Limit and Staging.**

Other drivers for the town centre discussions include:

- Community expectations for the town centre
- The town centre's relationship with the expanding Izone development
- Council and community vision for a Rolleston Town Centre.

The vision and aspirations are based around providing a town centre with an identity that acts as a focal point for the community that is well linked and meets the needs of current and future communities. The visionary statements included in section 2.6 will evolve throughout the Structure Plan development.

## **Planning and Policy Context**

The Resource Management Act (1991) and the Local Government Act (2002) provide a legislative platform for the development of the Rolleston Structure Plan. Under these provisions the following plans and strategies and the impact they have on the development of the Structure Plan have been considered:

- Urban Development Strategy – a strategy that identifies growth patterns for the Christchurch City, Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts. The strategy identifies Rolleston as a growth area of mainly new development
- Regional Policy Statement – identifies how physical resources should be managed to achieve sustainability including:
  - Proposed RPS Change No. 1
  - Variation No.1 to Proposed Change No.1
- CRETS – the Christchurch Rolleston and Environs Transportation Study provides a transport strategy for the corridor between Christchurch and Rolleston for the period up to 2021.
- District Plan – provides objectives, strategies and policies relating to township growth in addition to establishing the zones within the town
- Long Term Council Community Plan – provides descriptions of activities, outcomes and Council decision making over the next 10 years
- Urban Design Protocol – developed by the Ministry for the Environment to provide guidance for creating successful towns and cities. The protocol identifies seven design qualities to guide sustainable urban design
- SDC Subdivision Design Guide – sets out the Council's expectations for development within the District
- Crime Prevention through Urban Design (CPTED) – a strategy that aims to increase natural surveillance making people less likely to commit crime and feel safer
- Economic Development Strategies – the Canterbury and Selwyn District strategies identify potential opportunities and initiatives to support economic growth
- Community Development Strategy – aims to resolve a number of identified issues to strengthen the District's communities
- Selwyn Walking and Cycling Strategy – provides a framework for walking and cycling within the District
- Sustainability Principles – developed by SDC as a basis for all Council activities which include the four well-beings
- Climate Change – the impacts of predicted climate change on future lifestyles have been highlighted

The Structure Plan will be implemented through changes to the District Plan and/or the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

## Town Centre Description

A description of Rolleston town centre provides a basis from which to consider future growth.

**Location** - Rolleston town centre is characterised by its close proximity to Christchurch. The town centre is an area of 20.7 ha<sup>1</sup> which consists of:

- Two retail areas in the centre of Rolleston; Rolleston Square and Rolleston Shopping Centre
- Vacant Business 1 zoned land
- Rolleston Reserve
- Rolleston Community Centre & Library
- Rolleston Clock Tower

A number of issues have been identified with the location of the current town centre, these are:

- Disjointed and separate retail areas
- Poor links between existing retail areas and vacant business zoned land
- Proximity to proposed community sporting facilities
- The current town centre will not be central to the new urban limit of Rolleston
- Buildings in the existing town centre create wind tunnels deterring social interaction
- Town centre and Southern Business Hub (Izone) isolated with limited links to foster interaction between the areas

**History** - Rolleston is an old settlement with a long history that dates back to 1866 when the Christchurch to Rolleston railway line was opened. Businesses have operated in Rolleston since its creation. There have been periods of expansion over several decades continuing today, driven by lower section prices than in Christchurch.

**Character** - Rolleston town centre is considered to be functional with limited character. The town has a rural agricultural feel and has a role as a rural service town.

**Walkability** - A walkability assessment has been undertaken to understand how well the town centre is connected to surrounding residential areas. The town is characterised by a large number of cul-de-sac roads that reduce walking access, increasing travel times.

**Demographics** - Household sizes within Rolleston are above the regional average with a high proportion of families with children and higher than average income levels.

**Climate** - The climate of Rolleston is hot and dry with a proneness to drought.

**Functions** – The town centre has a range of functions that go beyond but also include retail outlets. The retail consists of two main shopping areas that sit within a 11 ha<sup>2</sup> block of Business 1 land that can be seen in Figure 2. Outlets include a supermarket, restaurants and other local shops. A small neighbourhood centre exists on Brookside Road. A large BP Garage is located on the state highway. There is currently no big box retail within Rolleston e.g. The Warehouse or Mitre 10. There are approximately 5.33 ha<sup>3</sup> of vacant Business 1 land in the current town centre.

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated by Maunsell using GIS aerial overlays

<sup>2</sup> Area of the Business 1 District Plan zone which includes roads

<sup>3</sup> Calculated by Maunsell using GIS, based on parcel boundaries



There has been a number of issues identified relating to the function of the current town centre:

- Lack of focal point/social hub, low utilisation of community open spaces in the town centre
- Lack of identity
- Rolleston town centre lacks a point of difference
- Stark and functional appearance to the town centre, not an attractive place to spend time
- Facilities that don't appeal to the demographic range, particularly the young
- Need for distinction from other retail areas due to their close proximity
- Strip style of existing retail area with poor linkages
- Limited range of retail outlets and services



**Figure 2: Business Zoned Land in Rolleston Town Centre**

There is no industrial land within the existing town centre, however the relationship between Izone Southern Business Hub and the town centre has been considered.

A range of community facilities exist within the general town centre locality which include health care, education, a community centre, library, reserve, recreational facilities and the District Council head quarters. There are no social services within the town centre.

Consideration will also need to be given to the location of the town centre in relation to planned schools. The location of the high school is still being determined with involvement of the community by the Ministry of Education.

**Movement** – A key aspect that characterises Rolleston is its location on the state highway and the high level of commuting that is undertaken to Christchurch. There is a high dependence on cars and a limited public transport system.

Within the town centre there are a number of issues relating to road safety that should be considered for the future of the town centre:

- Not pedestrian friendly, current town centre does not encourage walking
- Current town centre is divided by major roads
- Poor links between the existing shopping areas
- No pedestrian crossing points provided in the town centre

## Good Urban Design

As a signatory of the Urban Design Protocol, Selwyn District Council is seeking to incorporate the elements of good urban design into the Rolleston Structure Plan. As previously mentioned a town centre is more than a collection of retail outlets, in order to give the town centre a sense of place the following elements of good urban design have been considered:

- A hierarchy of centres serving neighbourhoods, town and district
- Good access, strong linkages and calmed traffic
- A mix of uses and users
- Streets and other public spaces
- A Safe, active and pleasant place
- Economically viable and vibrant
- High quality, flexible and robust landscaping
- Future proof for co-ordinated growth and changing community

## Case Studies

A series of case studies from within New Zealand and overseas can be used as inspiration for the future nature and context of Rolleston's future town centre. The following case studies have been discussed with these learning points observed:

### Projects Recently Designed or Under Construction

- **Southern Development Zone – Wanaka** – streets with friendly pedestrian environments have been used to create a focus on the town centre. A mix of retail outlets and size has created a lively façade without a dominance of car parking.
- **Brooklands, Milton Keynes, UK** – walkability and public transport have been prioritised to ensure good connections to the centre from the surrounding areas, with an urban square offering a focal point.
- **Flatbush, Manukau** – the need to plan connections for both major and minor roads within a new development and the needs for a town centre to be close to high densities of population.
- **Adamstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland** – the use of a strict phasing/staging plan and hierarchy of town centres to ensure viability of the new development as it progresses.

### Existing Good Town Centres and their Qualities

- **Nelson City Centre** – the use of a strong main street to act as a spine for the town centre with wide landscaped pedestrian routes. The provision of centrally located community facilities and provision of car parking behind buildings on the main street.

- **Tauranga City Centre** – the use of a coastal streetscape design could be applied to Rolleston in a rural setting, to add identity and character. A centrally located bus exchange has added value to Tauranga.
- **Queenstown** – a compact town centre based on a block pattern with wide spread pedestrian connections. High quality street furniture and small public parks have both added to the appeal of Queenstown.
- **Frankton** – a range of facilities such as a medial centre, banks cafes and large supermarkets has been popular. Small public spaces with open air dining has provided a lively atmosphere. Visual interest has been created by the use of public art.

A land mass comparison has been undertaken between Rolleston (under the new proposed urban limit) and a variety of towns across New Zealand with a similar population (based on 2041 population). The towns selected are service towns close to large cities, details of this comparison can be found in Appendix C.

## How does all this apply to Rolleston?

A series of decisions regarding the future of Rolleston town centre are required. These decisions will be based on the information contained within the sections of this report that have been previously discussed. A key decision for the town centre relates to the definition of the role of the town centre and neighbourhood centres, including the number of centres. Community views should be considered and consultation already undertaken will be supplemented through the Structure Plan process.

The amount of retail land that should be allocated to Rolleston as part of the Structure Plan has been the subject of two independent studies. These studies will assist the Council in the land allocation process that will be undertaken later in the Structure Plan process. The nature size and location of the town centre will be determined in part by the facilities that the town centre and neighbourhood centres will provide to the community. In addition, appropriate timing for the provision of these facilities will need to be determined.

The types of facilities that could be included in or co-located with the town centre or neighbourhood centres are shown below:

- Supermarket and grocery stores
- Major retailers (Department stores)
- Other shops (fashion, books, hairdressers, appliances)
- Market (farmers market, arts and crafts)
- Business / Offices
- Community Institutions (Library, Council offices, churches, RSA, Working Men's Club, art gallery)
- Living (residential, visitor accommodation)
- Education (secondary school, primary school, childcare)
- Health Care (doctor, physiotherapist, dentist)
- Entertainment & Leisure (swimming pool, sports centre, skate park, cinema)
- Food and Drink (restaurants, cafes, pubs)
- Public Open Spaces (squares, parks, playgrounds)
- Transport (bus interchanges, park and ride)
- Social Service Agencies

## Options Evaluation Criteria

In order to enable Council to make an informed decision on the location and size of the town centre a series of criteria have been developed to test each of the town centre options. These criteria are in

two stages; the stage one criteria will be used to short-list the nine options and the stage two criteria will be used to thoroughly evaluate the selected options further.

The stage one criteria are based around the following subjects:

- Right size and number of centres
- Centrally located
- Good local access
- Can attract passing trade
- Good public transport services
- Make use of existing retail outlets
- Links to existing and proposed community facilities
- Utilise existing parks, roads and services
- Linkages to open spaces and waterways
- A social hub

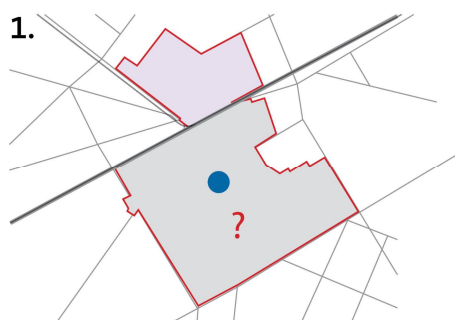
The stage two criteria considers the following topics in detail:

- Ease of movement
- Land use mix
- Environment and health
- Character and identity
- Economic viability
- Staging

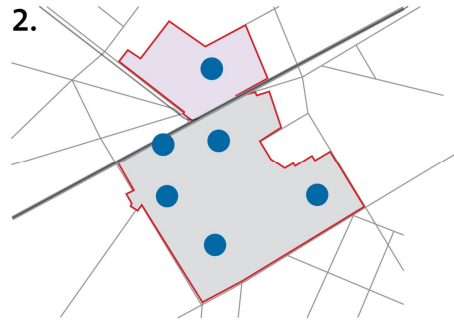
## Town Centre Options

Nine indicative options were prepared to analyse the possible location and hierarchy of the Town Centre provision in Rolleston. Each option, which includes a 'do nothing option' considers a different arrangement (hierarchy) of town centre(s) and neighbourhood centres. The options can be seen below:

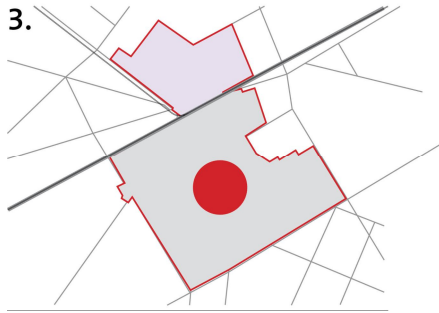
### Option 1 'Do Nothing'



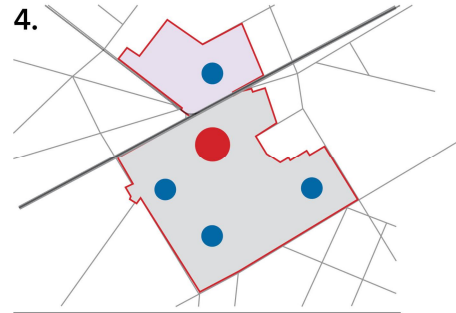
### Option 2 No town centre (only neighbourhood centres)



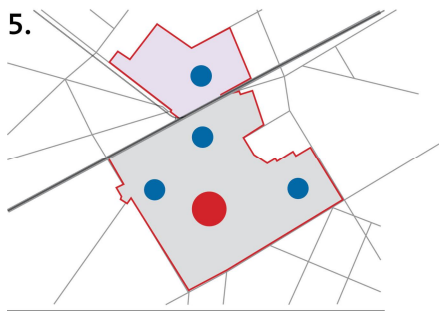
**Option 3 One large town centre (no neighbourhood centres)**



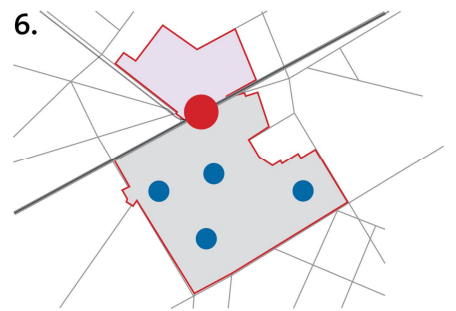
**Option 4 Enlarged existing town centre**



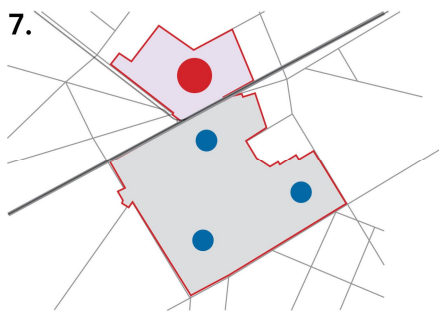
**Option 5 New southern town centre**



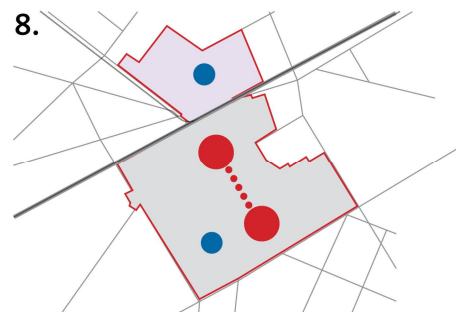
**Option 6 New town centre along State Highway (and railway)**



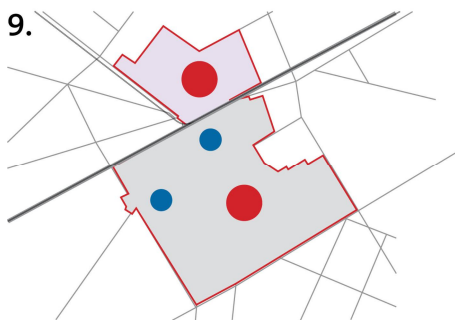
**Option 7 New town centre in Izone**



**Option 8 Two linked town centres**



**Option 9 Two separate town centres**



## **Next Steps**

Community feedback on the town centre issues and options raised as part of this document are welcomed. A brochure containing a feedback form will accompany the release of this document and will be sent to all Rolleston residents. Public consultation will be open until the end of February 2009, the outcomes of which will be documented in the Draft Structure Plan.

## Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

**Accessibility** The ease with which a building, place or facility can be reached by people and/or goods and services. Accessibility can be shown on a plan or described in terms of pedestrian and vehicle movements, walking distance from public transport, travel time or population distribution. (The Councillor's Guide to Urban Design, CABA, 2004)

**Business 1 Zone** – A commercial District Plan Zone (including both retail and non-retail)

**Business 2 Zone** – A commercial District Plan Zone (The Southern Business Hub - Izone)

**CPTED** – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design; a crime prevention strategy.

**CREDS** - Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy

**CRETS** - Christchurch Rolleston and Environs Transportation Study; a transport strategy for the Rolleston and Christchurch area

**CRPS** – Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (see RPS)

**Izone** – Izone Southern Business Hub

**LGA** – Local Government Act

**LTCCP** – Long Term Council Community Plan

**MuL** – Metropolitan Urban Limit; the limit; the proposed limit of future development of Rolleston to 2041

**NRRP** – Natural Resources Regional Plan; a plan for the sustainable management of natural resources in Canterbury

**PEL** – Property Economics Limited; author of Business Land Demand Assessment

**RMA** – Resource Management Act

**RPS** – Regional Policy Statement; resource management strategy

**RSP** – Rolleston Structure Plan

**SDC** – Selwyn District Council

**SR (1, 2, 3, etc)** – Development staging sequence as determined in the RPS

**UDS** – Urban Development Strategy; a growth management strategy for the greater Christchurch area

**Walkability** The extent to which the built environment is walking friendly.

(<http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/road-user-safety/walking-and-cycling/pedestrian-planning-design-guide/glossary.html>)<http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/>



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Town Centre Discussion Document

Rolleston is the largest town in the Selwyn District and is expected to experience significant growth over the next 35 years. The town is expected to grow from the current population of 6,800 people to approximately 18-22,000 in that time. As a result Selwyn District Council is developing a Structure Plan for Rolleston to provide a strategic framework to guide the development process for the next 35 years. The Structure Plan aims to support growth by planning for future needs ensuring adequate provision of open spaces, transport networks, community facilities and infrastructure. The Structure Plan will combine good urban design and appropriate land use allocation, providing balanced development that meets community needs.

The first stage in the development of the Structure Plan is the discussion of town centre options. There is currently no retail strategy for the town and retail growth has occurred as a result of individual developer aspiration largely un-coordinated with public investment in community facilities. Rolleston town needs a strong and vibrant town centre to act as a focal point for the community and draw passing trade. Possible options for the size and location of town centres are discussed in this report. The town centre should also include a mix of land uses such as community facilities and residential which complement the current retail provision and facilitate linked trips and walkability.

## 1.2 Study Approach - Methodology

There are two distinct stages to this process, the development of the town centre and retail/commercial options being the first. It is important for this issue to be addressed at an early stage to provide some certainty in relation to where commercial and retail development and the “town centre” should be located.

In the second stage, other layers (movement, social networks, open space, infrastructure, etc) will be further investigated and refined in the context of assessing different options for land-use and urban intensification. Understanding and documenting the inter-relationships between these layers will be an important step in the process.

## 1.3 Document Outline

This discussion document is the first of several reports being prepared as part of the Structure Plan process. It firstly describes a number of drivers, including population and demographic factors, the urban limit, existing town centre issues, Izone, identifies a vision for the town centre, and discusses the planning context. The planning and policy context within which the Structure Plan operates is examined including the position relating to the Regional Policy Statement and Urban Development Strategy.

A description of the current town centre is provided, followed by a discussion of good urban design and case studies from both New Zealand and overseas. These describe the process, successful built outcomes, and elements of best practice for a town centre. This leads on to discussion about possible town centre models for Rolleston.

An analysis of how all the aforementioned factors relate to Rolleston includes work already undertaken by Council and other parties in relation to future retail demand. Potential amenities and services for the town centre are identified, along with a range of criteria for assessing different options. Finally, nine possible “conceptual” town centre options are described, and the process for moving forward with short-listing, assessment and selection is presented.

Community and stakeholder consultation on this document is an important part of that process.



## 2.0 Drivers

There are various factors driving the need for a Structure Plan and a planned approach to the future town centre for Rolleston. These drivers include anticipated population growth, the future geographic extent of the town, the future vision for the Rolleston town centre, the town centre's relationship with Izone and community expectations. The location and nature of the town centre is seen by Council as the biggest issue requiring resolution for the successful progression of development in Rolleston.

### 2.1 Structure Plan Objectives

The overall objectives of the structure plan are as follows:

- To provide for the future growth of Rolleston based on population projections ensuring:
  - Appropriate and efficient use of the land and associated expansion of infrastructure to support future development;
  - Self-sufficient growth in terms of employment, housing, recreation and associated community needs;
  - Good urban design;
  - Protection of open space and landscape values;
  - The optimal rate of release of zoned land to ensure an adequate availability of land over time;
  - This will include assessing the need for and appropriate expansion of existing zones within Rolleston, the potential revocation of existing zones, and the introduction of additional zoning.
- To work in partnership with the community, landowners, developers and interested parties in order to obtain support for the Structure Plan, which may include re-zoning of individual parcels of land.

### 2.2 Population Growth

Rolleston has been identified as an area of intensive growth over the next 35 years. The current population is estimated to be about 6,800 people representing an 80% increase from the 2006 census and a 270% increase from the 2001 census. In 2006 Rolleston recorded a population of about 3,800 people (census) compared to 1,850 people enumerated in the 2001 Census.

In 1995 the Council approved a plan change to allow for the existing township of Rolleston to expand from a population of 1,000 to 4,500. In February 2003 Plan Change 60 allowed for population growth from 3,000 to 14,000.

Variation No.1 of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) determines target future household growth allocations for Rolleston. The growth has been staged into three phases until the year 2041. The following table summarises the target household development allocations for green field development.

**Table 1: RPS Household Growth Projections for Rolleston**

Stage	No. Households
Current Households <sup>4</sup>	2242
Stage 1 (2007 to 2016)	1130 (new)
Stage 2 (2017 to 2026)	2305 (new)
Stage 3 (2027 to 2041)	2048 (new)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,725</b>

### 2.2.1 SDC Population Predictions

In addition to the growth figures determined in the RPS, Selwyn District Council has developed a population projection model, which has been adopted by Council. This model predicts a 169% increase in population for Rolleston town from 2008 to 2014 and an increase in household numbers of 212%.

**Table 2: SDC Growth Model Summary**

	2008	2041	%age Change
Rolleston Population	6,819	18,368	+169%
Selwyn District Population	37,426	67,593	+81%
Rolleston Household Numbers	2,242	6,991	+212%

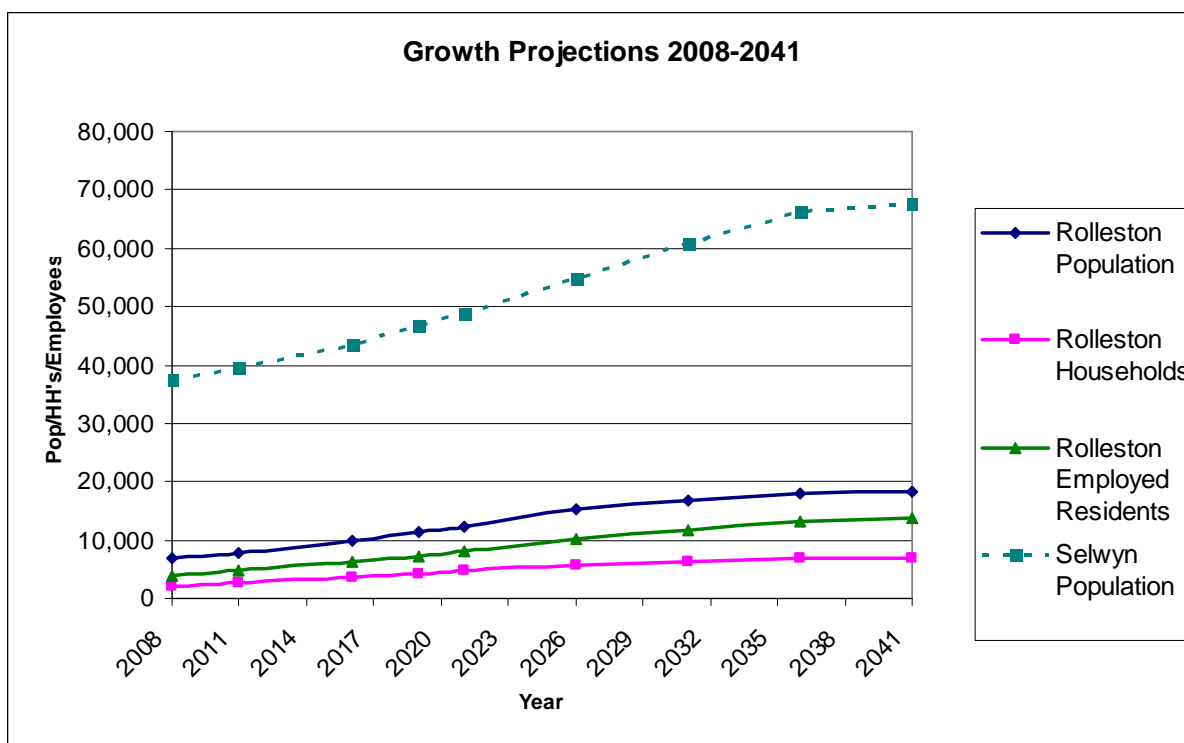
The predicted rate of population growth for Rolleston is significantly greater than that anticipated for the district as a whole. The Selwyn district is anticipated to grow by 81% between 2008 and 2041 to nearly 68,000 compared to 169% for Rolleston. This difference in the rate of population growth is apparent in the figure below.

Furthermore, over this period household sizes are predicted to decline from an average of 3.04 now to 2.63 in 2041, resulting in a higher rate of growth of households than population.

The number of employed residents in Rolleston is also predicted to grow more quickly than population, which would result in a greater need for services for people who commute daily.

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<sup>4</sup> SDC figure based on census data plus estimates from new water/wastewater connections (May 08)



**Figure 3: SDC Growth Projections**

The household numbers shown in and Table 2 from the RPS and the SDC growth model are not identical. The RPS household numbers represent an allocation made for household growth, the SDC growth model has predicted growth in household numbers that fall within the allocation made by the RPS.

The overall growth in population and household numbers is significant, but also of importance are changes to the demographic profile of Rolleston. This makeup will also influence the type of facilities and amenities needed in the town centre.

Statistics New Zealand has produced population predictions for Rolleston that extend to 2031. These predictions even taking the 'high' growth scenario do not correlate with the level of growth SDC anticipates for the town. The Statistics New Zealand predictions have however examined population increases considering demographics. These trends have been projected onto the SDC growth model data and the following profiles produced.

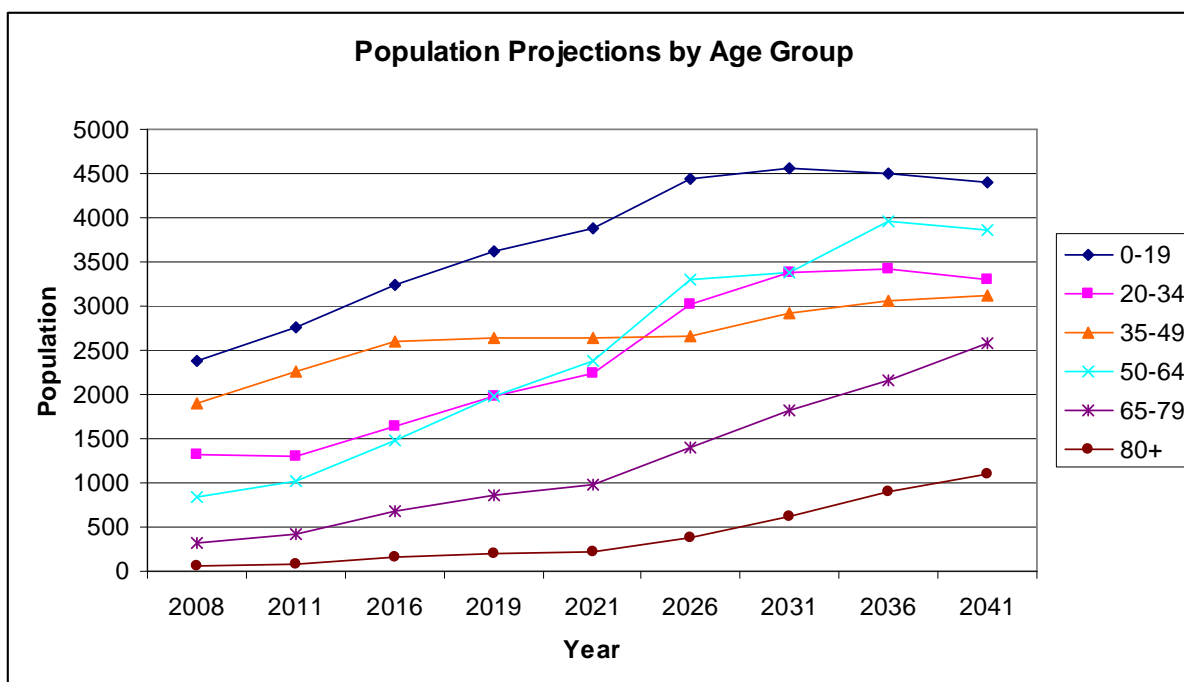


Figure 4: Population Projections Displayed by Age Group<sup>5</sup>

The projection profiles show the over 50's age group is expected to experience the greatest percentage of growth. The under 20's age group experiences a steady and slight decline in population from 2026<sup>6</sup>. The 20-50 year age bracket is showing a slower level of growth overall compared to the older and younger populations. Increases in both the old and the young population in Rolleston should be adequately planned for.

The population predictions used for this exercise do not indicate any notable variations in the proportions of male and female residents in the future population; 50/50 was used in the Statistics New Zealand predictions.

As a result of the current and future planned growth for the town, it is important to provide amenities for the future and existing population demographics of Rolleston at appropriate stages.

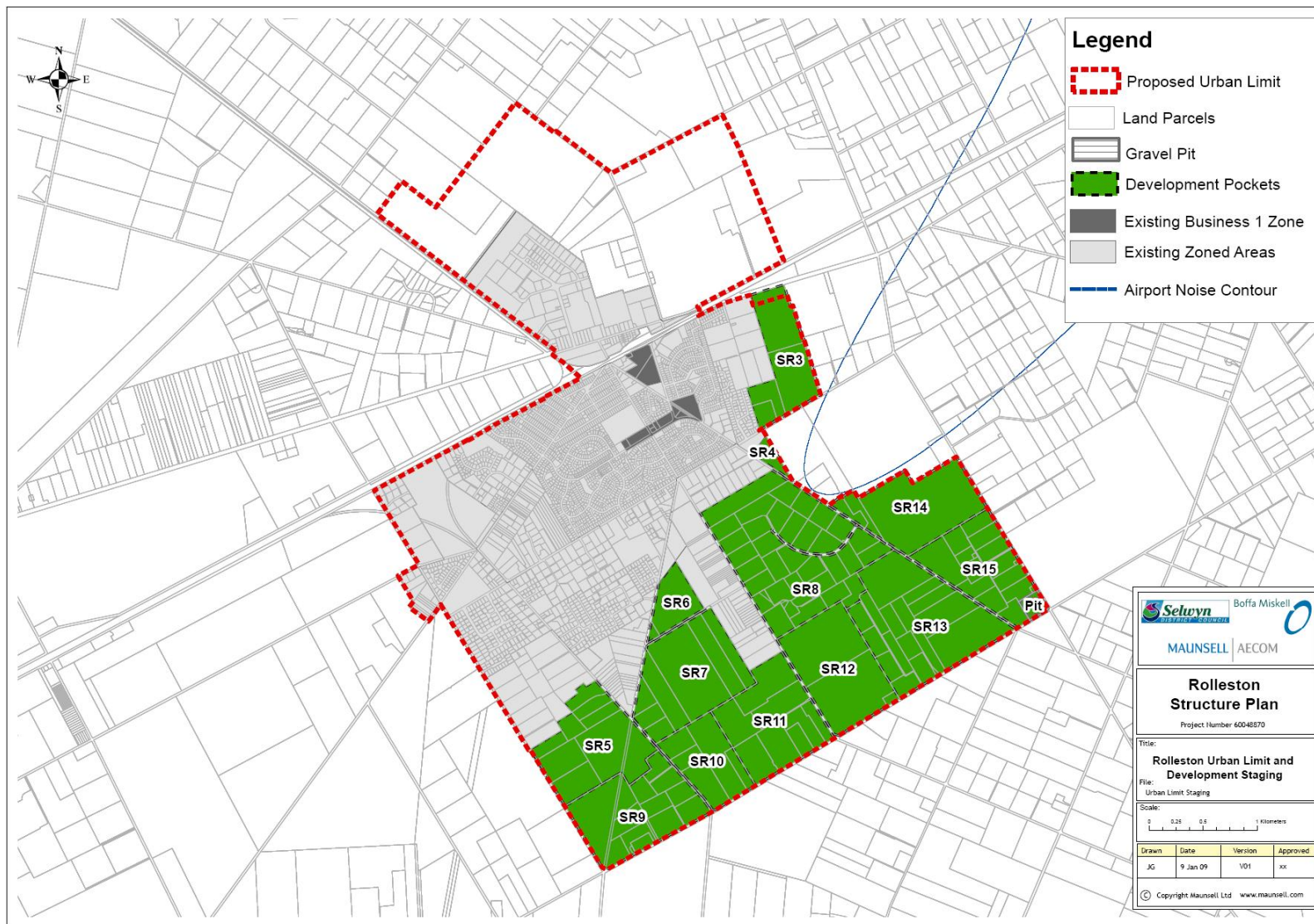
## 2.3 Urban Limit (Proposed)

The urban limit for the future development of Rolleston to 2041 was determined following public and stakeholder consultation and was formally adopted by Council in July 2008. The extension of the urban limit into the area which is currently 'green field' changes the dynamics of the current town and its centre. The extent of the town under the new limit provides a driver for review of the location and nature of the current town centre. The urban limit forms the basis for Variation 1 to the CRPS (ref to cl4.2.3)

A plan showing the urban limit and staging sequence adopted by Council can be seen in Figure 5.

<sup>5</sup> Age group proportions extrapolated from Statistics NZ data (extended to 2031) and applied to SDC growth model (to 2041).

<sup>6</sup> Noting lower confidence in data trends beyond 2031.



**Figure 5: Rolleston Proposed Urban Limit and Staging**

## 2.4 Community Expectations for the Town Centre

Through community consultation and general feedback from the community it is evident that the existing town centre does not fully meet the expectations of the current members of the community . If the town centre is to meet the needs of an expanding population, planned growth is required. There is a key driver for community interaction within the town centre, for it to act as a focal point and to be more than just a retail area.

## 2.5 Town Centre Relationship with Izone

The Southern Business Hub (Izone) is a key addition to Rolleston that brings revenue, employment and status to the town. Izone's geographic isolation from the residential and retail areas of the town means its needs require specific consideration due to the separation of Izone from the town by SH1.

Izone is and will continue to be a major employer in the town. Izone aspires to be the distribution centre for the South Island bringing employment and revenue to the town. In order to attract and retain businesses and quality staff, appropriate facilities are required.



Figure 6: Vacant Plot at Izone

Determining what facilities should be provided within Izone, how Izone will influence the development of the town centre and how it complements but differs from the town centre are important aspects to be included in the Structure Plan. Izone will result in large numbers of non-resident employees coming to Rolleston on a daily basis and therefore it is expected that there will be a need for accessible retail to service the immediate and daily needs of those employed in the Izone area.

## 2.6 Vision for Rolleston Town Centre

During the development of this discussion document aspirations for the town centre have been expressed by various parties, including the community during urban limit consultation, Council staff and Councillors. These have been formed into the following statements that help to express the future for Rolleston Town Centre. These statements are intended to help guide the thinking for discussion of town centre options and are dynamic and not pre-determined by Selwyn District Council.

Rolleston and its town centre should be:

- A self sufficient town where the community work, live and play (as promoted in the RPS/UDS)
- A town centre that meets the needs of the communities it serves
- A town centre that is flexible to the changing demographics of Rolleston
- A life style centre that serves the rural communities
- A town centre with a strong identity
- A town centre that plays a key role in the community beyond retail outlets
- A town centre that is well linked to the community with walking and cycling routes
- A town centre where walking is part of the experience
- A town centre that is a pleasant place to be day and night

- A town centre with quality owner operated shops
- A town centre which acts as a gathering place
- A social hub for the town with a density of people
- A town centre rich in culture
- A sustainable and viable town centre
- A town centre co-located with community facilities
- A planned town centre that meets the needs of the current population and plans for the future