

Plan Change 29
Appendix 4c

Selwyn District Council

PLAN CHANGE 29:

SOUTHBRIDGE

ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESS 1 ZONE



A study to support PC29

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Southbridge, founded in 1865, has a rich heritage as a prospering farming and service town. Nowadays the township's businesses primarily provide daily needs services to locals, although there are still sizeable businesses that service the surrounding areas and provide jobs in the farming and manufacturing sector.

Southbridge's heart is the town centre- a linear alignment of buildings that have grown organically either side of High Street. Among commercial, industrial and community premises High Street houses three heritage items: the Memorial library, the community hall and the 'orange lodge'. These heritage buildings show potential to be used and enhanced as show cases for Southbridge. Their unique style and history should be utilised in the best possible way (e.g. use the orange lodge as a new use as a tourist destination - think Jo Seagar's cooking school). Future buildings need to be complimentary to the heritage buildings in style and colour.

High Street is the main route through the township and has an important role not only in terms of access, but also as a potential space for pedestrians and public life and community activities. The 20m wide road corridor could be transformed into a boulevard introducing new street scape elements, such as organised parking, increased footpath/cycleway widths, seating, landscaping and traffic calming measures. Shops and businesses are generally placed on the road boundary, which supports the boulevard concept and provides a good street frontage.

Southbridge's built structure consists of one storey residential houses, shops and commercially used premises to two-storey buildings with increased bulk and height to fit for their uses as workshops, a hotel or community facility. Residential houses are setback on site and located next or between communities, commercial or industrial activities. Over time some of the dated housing stock might be converted to offices or shops. The biggest challenge will be to incorporate the converted buildings so that they complement existing housing stock and heritage items and achieve a good street interface with High Street. Angle car parking within the section site could be used to bring existing buildings closer to the street frontage (see Diagram pg.17). Existing industrial activities may be relocated outside the town centre where increased traffic and manoeuvring could easily be accommodated.

Pedestrian routes are provided with footpaths both sides of High Street. The currently only pedestrian crossing is well situated opposite the community hall and neighbourhood reserve about half way down High Street. Further pedestrian space could be created by widening the footpath in parts. A 5road intersection on the southern end of the B1 zone is poorly designed and makes pedestrian crossings over Gordon and St John Streets as well as Taumutu Road difficult. Safe pedestrian crossings are a paramount for town centres. Solutions to this issue need to be addressed on a wider transport level, but measures such as signage or medians could be used as intermediate measures.

The majority of parking in the B1 zone is on-road. High Street has a wide enough corridor to introduce angle parking, landscaping and public seating as part of a traffic calming project. The

angle parking would not only group car parks that can be landscaped in front of shops; this layout also allows more car parking spaces to be built.

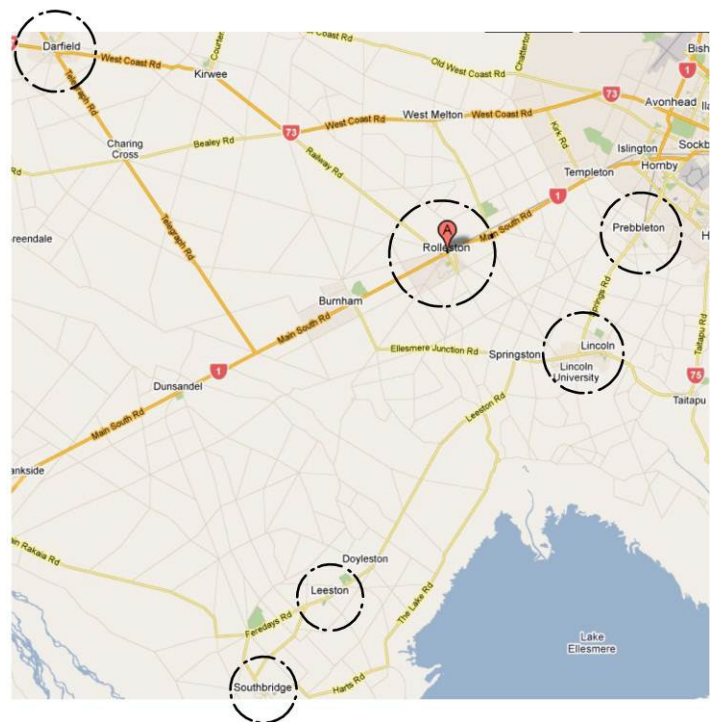
1. INTRODUCTION

The Selwyn District has one of the fastest resident population growth rates in the country. This growth not only demands space for residential housing, but also impacts on the use of existing, and provision and layout of future business development in the urbanised centres.

An increase in residential areas will most likely result in new business growth to service the surrounding residential areas.

Selwyn has 22 classified 'townships'; of which 6 have Business 1 (B1) zones. The Selwyn District Plan sees B1 as "pleasant areas for people to work and live in, where higher density housing can be established within an environment with good amenity and aesthetic values." For each of the townships the Plan identifies preferred growth options to encourage a compact, consolidated urban form that enables the development of a vibrant and thriving town centre.

This study looks at the status quo of the existing B1 zoned area within the town centre of Southbridge. Southbridge has been chosen as an example for a small village with existing B1 land. The present study analyses the township using specific parameters (see methodology) to highlight opportunities for improvement and to identify town specific constraints and issues. Special focus is given to their use as highly frequented pedestrian areas; including practicality and safety of pedestrian movement, urban form, parking arrangements and car park design, amenity and public spaces and potential for future expansion or infill.



2. METHODOLOGY

Research on the township included site visits. The Rolleston Structure Plan, the Lincoln Structure Plan, the Leeston Township Study, the Darfield Development Coordination Resource and Ellesmere: The Jewel in the Canterbury Crown have been reviewed in regards to business and town centre development. These literature findings have then been confirmed onsite utilising the same parameters (listed below) to eventually form design principles for strategic recommendations on currently undeveloped B1 areas as well as suggestions for redesign on existing sites.

Parameters that were analysed are:

4.3	Built form, character& heritage
4.4	Retail, community activity and infill potential
4.5	Pedestrian routes and crossings and their accessibility and safety
4.6	Street frontage (layout& quality)
4.7	Public & Pedestrian orientated space (location, quality)
4.8	Parking (location, layout, design)

2.1 Aim

The following study aims to identify what needs to be done to a) keep current character (if desired), b) enhance current area or c) achieve the B1 Design principles listed in the Selwyn District Commercial Design Guide.

2.2 Areas zoned Business 1

The following diagrams show the location, shape and size of Business 1 zoned areas within the individual town centres.

The majority of townships in Selwyn show linear development along a main route. The individual development on both or one side(s) of a major strategic or arterial road is a historic development



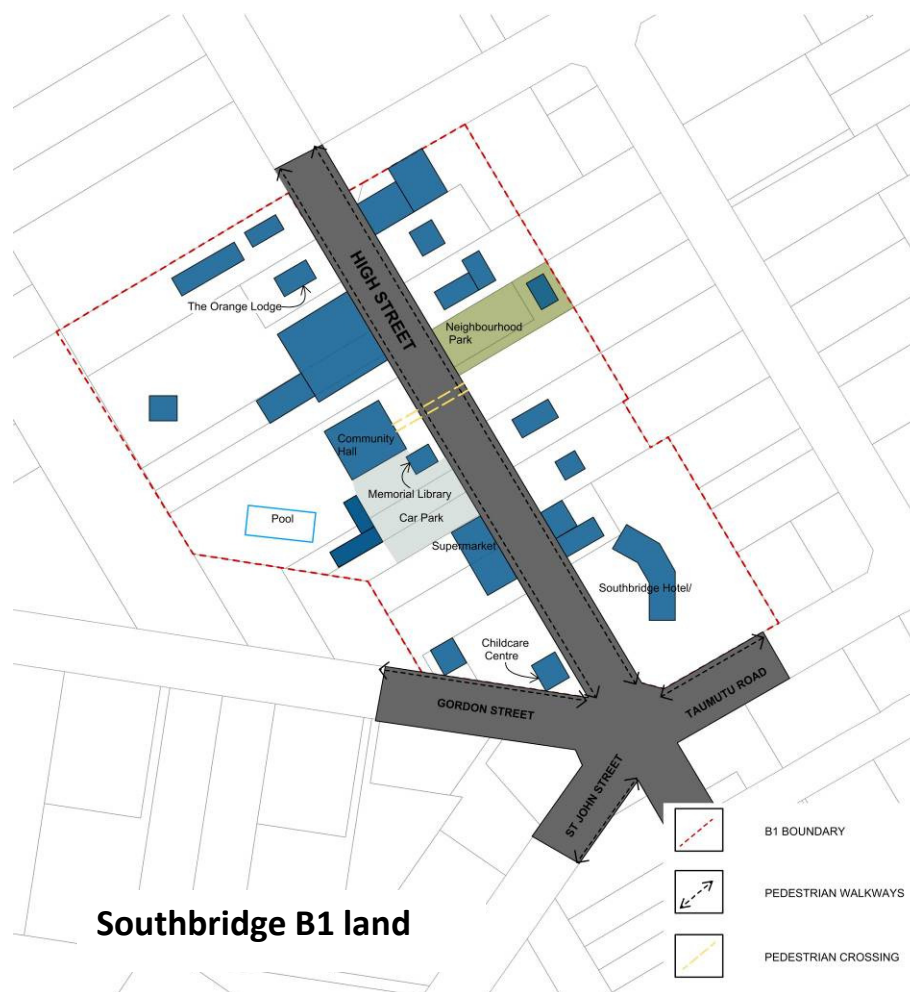
that derived from settlement along main transport routes, such as farm tracks and railway lines.

The ability to draw on by-passing customers, good advertising visibility and easy (car) access for shoppers is nowadays still the reason for development along collector or arterial routes. The resulting linear, elongated shape that developed as the town centre is typical for Lincoln (Gerald Street), Darfield (South & North Terraces), Leeston (High Street) and Southbridge (High Street).

3. STATUS QUO AND SITE ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Southbridge is a small rural service town, with about 735 residents in 264 occupied dwellings (Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006). The village is located approx. 6km southwest of Leeston. It contains a 3.2ha Business 1 zone that extends from Hastings Street to Taumutu Road along the main road through the township. The B1 zone contains a mixture of residential, business, industrial, retail and community activities. Three buildings are registered as heritage items in the District Plan.



3.2 BUILT FORM, CHARACTER& HERITAGE

Summary

- The townships built structure has grown over the years; it contains a mixture of building types, styles and colours in different levels of condition that make up the unique character of Southbridge;
- Buildings are used for industrial, commercial and residential purposes; some of the residential buildings have been converted for commercial use. There is potential for existing housing stock to be either converted over time for use as offices, retail etc. or to be demolished and rebuilt
- The Southbridge B1 zone contains 3 heritage buildings that are used for community purposes. The Community Hall and the Memorial library, which is currently unused, show similar architecture that reflects their role as community buildings. Both buildings stand out from the rest of Southbridge. The layout of the building and their character features could be utilised for future development. Orange Lodge, the third heritage item, is a two-storey red brick building used by the Rifle Club. This red brick building with arched windows could be used for other commercial uses. In fact all three buildings have the potential to become outstanding features in the Southbridge town centre;
- The two-storey high engineering workshop building is the only industrial used building within the B1 zone. In this location it stands out in terms of height, bulk and activity. The engineering business brings activity to the street at the same time it creates traffic and amenity issues. Alternative locations



The 4square supermarket and shops on High Street



The Memorial Library on High Street



Engineering workshop on High Street

should be discussed if a better use for the existing building could be found

- The in part two-storey Southbridge Hotel and Pub built in the 1950 marks the southern corner of the B1zone. It is highly visible from High Street, setback on site and has a special status within the built structure in Southbridge. Southbridge has a long history of hotels, with its first one being built in 1867; since then each of them have become an institution that remains in the township today.



Southbridge Hotel& Pub- Entrance and car park off High Street

Status Quo

Over a century ago, the business part of High Street had plenty of two-storeys. Naturally the township's built structure has changed over the years. Some of the earlier buildings are the community hall, dating back to 1930, or the Hotel built in the 50's. Nowadays both sides of High Street contain a mixture of building types and styles in different levels of condition that house a mixture of land use activities.

The majority of the east side contains older style one-storey housing; a converted cottage is now used as a business. A two-storey corrugated iron warehouse type building is situated on the corner of High Street and Hastings Street. The Southbridge Hotel/Pub is a two-storey building set back on the corner of High Street and Taumutu Road. The west side of High street contains a number of two-storey buildings used for non-residential activities, including an engineers' workshop, the heritage 'orange lodge' used as a rifle range, the community hall, the memorial library, the swimming pool, the supermarket, various shops and a child care centre.

The buildings that house those activities are equally different- ranging from old brickwork, corrugated iron, weatherboard and stone cladded buildings with varying heights and widths. The stand-alone two-storey u -shaped Southbridge hotel on the southern end of High Street marks the vertical anchor among the otherwise single storey buildings on the east side. The engineers' workshop provides a counterbalance on the west side of High Street.

Site Analysis

The built form of the B1 zone can be summarised as a mixture of individual buildings and two small shopping parades. The architecture reflects the style of the time the buildings have been built. Types range from beginning of the century heritage buildings, comprising of the Town Hall, the Memorial Library and the Orange lodge, to residential buildings from the 60's.



Orange lodge- Heritage building

There is only one newer residential building next to the neighbourhood reserve within the B1 area. Residential housing stock within the town centre is orientated on site to face the road and having access off it. Front yards are landscaped in a way to compliment the built form. With the exception of some very dated housing stock the appearance of the buildings compliments the village character.

Buildings have been used for different activities and converted to suit these over the years. The colours and style used for the commercial/industrial buildings reflect Southbridge's current use as a rural service town with a railhead heritage. This non-coherent 'style' is typical for a small scale village that has changed in size and function and adds to its rural character.

The two-storey building on the corner of High Street and Hastings Street is going to be demolished and the site is going to be replaced with a new building which will house the volunteer fire station.

The existing engineering workshop is dominant in terms of size and bulk in this location. However a transition in height is provided by a row of one-storey shops adjoined to the west. Adjacent residential housing is well setback on site. In the future this residential site could be used for an extension of the workshop or another row of shops fronting the road.

Despite mixture of heights and building lines a coherent look is achieved by most of the commercial bulk fronting High Street (and being placed on the road boundary) and all residential houses having a relationship with High Street. The wide road corridor of High Street provides ample width to accommodate multi-storey level buildings either side, while still maintaining the open feel of a main rural road.

3.3 RETAIL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND POTENTIAL FOR INFILL

Summary

- The overall impression of Southbridge's town centre is that of a formerly successful service town at the end of the then railway line that has over the years reduced in size and importance
- The existing shops, engineering workshop and supermarket are important components and create business; Additional complimentary businesses could be envisaged in the town centre
- Some buildings have already been converted for business use over the years; there is further potential to convert (dated) residential housing along High Street into offices, doctor's practices etc.)
- The heritage Memorial library is unused, the 'Orange Lodge' used by the Rifle Club could be used to make Southbridge a destination

Status Quo

The B1 zone contains at the moment one empty store and one section is vacant next to the Neighbourhood reserve. A new use for the building on the corner of High Street and Hastings Street for community use is proposed. Most of the sites are occupied with buildings and structures- car parking is largely on road.



Southbridge High Street- supermarket& shops

Site Analysis

The occupation and number of operating shops& businesses has fluctuated in the past. The current situation reflects Southbridge role as to provide daily need services to local residents.

A site currently vacant next to the neighbourhood reserve is proposed to be used as an extension to the reserve, which would allow extra space for larger event community uses.

Southbridge's business zone has a real mixture of uses. Existing housing stock



Southbridge High Street-residential housing

ranges from in good - bad condition. The east side of High Street in particular has residential housing that is dated and in need of maintenance.

Infill or conversion potential could be within these residential sections. The occupation of the corner site Hastings/ High Streets with the volunteer fire brigade will be a new component to High Street and if well integrated a real asset to the community. The rifle club site with the Orange Lodge has heritage status and community value and would be suited to careful restoration and increased use. The other heritage



Southbridge High Street-residential housing converted to business

building, the Thompson Memorial Hall library is currently not in use, but in prominent location for a community use. The west side of High Street contains an industrial type engineering operator who could potentially be relocated in the future. This would free up land for increased business use along the main street.

3.4 PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND CROSSINGS AND THEIR ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

Summary

- Southbridge's B1 zone shows good pedestrian accessibility along both sides of High Street
- The five road intersection at the southern end of the B1 zone forms the spoke of a wheel and is currently a hazard for pedestrians to cross due to layout of the roads, lack of pedestrian crossings and the overall formation of this intersection
- Footpaths on High Street are well formed; their width could be however increased to accommodate seating areas and general more space for shops to advertise their goods
- The one pedestrian crossing along High Street is well located opposite the neighbourhood reserve and the community hall; traffic calming measures before and after this crossing will ensure that cars have to slow down and give way to pedestrians

Status Quo

The B1 zone has wide footpaths both sides of High Street. A pedestrian crossing links the community pool, hall and memorial library with the neighbourhood reserve on the other side of High Street. There are footpaths on one side of Gordon Street, St John Street and

Taumutu Road, which are all coming off the southern end of High Street. The intersection of these 5 roads forms the spokes of a wheel.

Site Analysis

Southbridge's centre shows good street space with plenty of width and good integrated public spaces. For the length of High Street the provided pedestrian crossing about half way through the Business 1 zone seems appropriate. Younger traffic members use the footpath for cycling along High Street and the width and formation is appropriate to do so. More width is needed in areas where space for seating or advertising goods is required. Some of the carriageway width could be used to increase pedestrian space at strategic locations along High Street.



Corner High/Hastings Streets- Pedestrian/cyclist routes

The corner of High Street and Gordon Street needs to be looked at for upgrading in terms of safety and walkability. The corner site is currently occupied by a childcare centre. Informal works have been carried out on this corner. A short cut for pedestrians has been created. This space could have been used as a communal gathering place or safe crossing point. At the moment the way the intersection is formed makes it not only very hard for pedestrians to safely get from one side of the road to the other; it is also difficult for drivers to establish who has the right of way and who hasn't. This intersection requires further investigation from a traffic point of view. A road hierarchy and the forming of the roads according to their function need to incorporate safe pedestrian crossings.

3.5 STREET FRONTAGE (LAYOUT& QUALITY)

Summary

- Most of the commercial bulk is placed on the road boundary having a good road frontage with High Street
- Most of the residential houses are setback on site, but orientation, windows, entrance ways and amount of landscaping in the front yard still allows a good relationship with High Street

Status Quo

The majority of the commercially used buildings front High Street, with the exception of the Southbridge Hotel/Pub which is setback behind a car parking area on the corner of High Street/Taumutu Road. All of the residential houses are well set back from the road. Their front entrance is off High Street.

Site Analysis

Southbridge's B1 zone has a good, active frontage. Shops and businesses have windows, regular openings and an interesting façade due to the different type of activities. Buildings are able to create a good interaction with the road and passing customers and foot traffic. The exception is the hotel, which is setback from the road behind a car park. A tall closed boarded fence prevents the hotel from achieving active frontage on the side with Taumutu Road. The residential houses that are setback from the road are able to create a relationship with the street by having their front (main entrance and windows) towards High Street. The front gardens have low



Street (shop) frontage of High Street

level plantings that allow the visual connection from the road to the houses' entrances, which would not be the case if high hedges or rows of trees would be planted along the road frontage.

The 5 road intersection at the southern end of the B1 requires buildings to be situated along the road boundary to strengthen the street frontage.

3.6 PUBLIC SPACE (LOCATION& QUALITY)

Summary

- The wide main street with its mixed bag of activities gives plenty of opportunity to be upgraded, beautified and intensified. Depending on how the township will grow in the

future this could be in the way of outdoor seating areas, small plazas, widened footpaths and safe pedestrian crossings.

- The area in front of the Community Hall facing north-east could be used for community activities and outdoor seating
- To have three heritage buildings within a Business zone is unique for the Selwyn District. Their special heritage character needs to be preserved and enhanced. Alternative uses for the memorial library and the Orange Lodge could help to strengthen the town centre
- An unused bus shelter on High Street could be removed, relocated or become part of the adjacent building

Status Quo

Southbridge shows some good pedestrian orientated space with having wide pedestrian footpaths on both side of High Street. Public space is well integrated and distributed along High Street. The 'millennium gate' marks the entrance to the community car park. The Business 1 Zone contains one Neighbourhood Reserve with a playground and a seating area in front of the communal car park in the centre of the township. A section next to the Neighbourhood Reserve is currently vacant. A bus shelter situated next to the shops and the supermarket is used as a school bus drop off point.



'Millennium gate'- entrance to community car park

Site Analysis

The wide street corridor allows for an increase in public and pedestrian orientated space. A widened footpath could be appropriate for outdoor seating, the presentation of goods or for safety reasons (Child care centre). The community car park needs upgrading and its use for different outdoor purposes should be investigated (e. g annual activity/market/exhibition). This could potentially be achieved with the purchase of the land adjoining the playground which is privately owned, but which has the potential to provide extra space to the existing green space in a central location. The bus shelter could be used in the future for public transport (e.g. a shuttle bus to Leeston or Christchurch or for coaches) should the population increase and such services become feasible.

3.7 PARKING (LOCATION, LAYOUT, DESIGN)

Summary

- Car parking with the town centre is dominantly on-street car parking which works well for short term (shopping) activities
- Demand for extra car parking in front of shops could be provided for by angle-parking on one side of High Street in conjunction with landscaping and wider footpaths
- The community hall/swimming pool car park would benefit from marking each space and some landscaping/ surface treatment to reduce hardstand area



Car Parking along High Street

Status Quo

The majority of parking is parallel on-street parking, in front of the individual business premises. Residential properties have some on-site car parking. A communal car park off High Street is situated next to the Community Hall and Swimming Pool. The Southbridge Hotel has off-street car parking in front along High Street. The Southbridge Childcare centre has a number of car parking spaces off Gordon Street.

Site Analysis

Having the majority of car parks within the road corridor of High Street and not on-site allows for a good street frontage. The wide road corridor of High Street has the potential to be redesigned as a boulevard; car parking being an essential part of it. Ideally this would happen in a comprehensive matter where a mixture of well landscaped and integrated parallel and angle car parking along both sides of High Street could be developed. Having the carparking arranged this way would result in the same (or more) number of car parks, but would give more space to customers on foot and space for seating and the development of public space.

Some off-street parking is likely to occur in the case where residential houses get converted into businesses and the building is setback from the road. A limited amount of car parks in the front of such buildings is acceptable, as long as appropriate landscaping is used and the relationship between building and street can still be retained. Due to the amount of car parking that is available on road this should only affect a very limited amount of car parks.

The community car park in its central location next to heritage buildings could be upgraded by reducing the hard stand area with some trees in addition to perimeter landscaping. For better organisation the marking of each car birth would be beneficial.

4. DESIGN PRINCIPLES= RECOMMENDATIONS

The following measures need to be explored in order to enhance the current township of Southbridge and how to achieve this by following the design guidelines for future business development.

4.1 Fit in with the surroundings (Scale and size, form & configuration, ability to be integrated)

- Make sure that buildings suitable for conversion fit with the surrounding sites in terms of scale, size and location on site. Sheds and larger buildings need to have a transition in height to surrounding lower (residential) buildings. Incorporate openings up to or on the second level if possible
- Respect adjacent (heritage) buildings and their character and style when replacing housing stock with commercial activities. One way of doing this is use neutral colours, limited height and appropriate landscaping
- New business development should occur next to existing businesses (e.g. adding to a row of shops); the dual character of the B1 zone with both business and residential land uses needs to be taken in consideration
- Restore Southbridge's heritage buildings and make them show cases along High Street (maintain vistas, e.g. between neighbourhood park and community hall). Identify additional or new uses that won't affect their heritage status but will give them purpose and life.
- Follow existing building lines (one-two storey) and position new buildings on road boundary

4.2 Activate the edges

- New/ converted buildings need to align along road frontages. This is especially important on the corner of High Street with Taumutu Road and Gordon Street, where at the moment a good street frontage is lacking

- If existing buildings are setback from the road and are converted to business ensure that there are plenty of entrances and windows towards High Street to encourage an active frontage
- Minimize hardstand areas on the street front with plenty of low level landscaping, which helps to form boundary but also allows views in and out of the site

4.3 Provide Space for Public Life

- Improve the public car park by marking each car park; incorporate some landscaping between spaces
- Widen the footpath on the eastern side along shops to create pedestrian orientated space. Where possible wrap seating area around building corner for better orientation.
- Incorporate tree plantings that add to the boulevard character of High Street
- Extend the neighbourhood park by including the adjacent vacant site and create a public square/gathering space and an area that can be used by different user groups

4.4 Favour the pedestrian

- Consider the widening of footpaths either side of High Street to create a combined off road foot/cycle path (informally used as such at the moment by younger members of the public)
- Increase width of footpath at strategic points(shops, supermarket) to gain additional pedestrian orientated space, but also to reduce carriageway width and force traffic to slow down through the town centre
- Create marked pedestrian crossings over Taumutu Road and Gordon Street as part of a redesign of the 4 road intersection.
- Consider establishing a pedestrian precinct along northern and southern portion of High Street to encourage traffic to slow down at this point; this could be achieved by different pavement, wider footpaths, reduced carriageway width, planting and seating areas;
- There is already a budget for traffic calming measures along High Street through the B1 zone, which is put on hold due to the one off earthquake levy; landscaped seating areas and open gathering places could be developed at the same time

4.5 Car Parking

- Retain majority of car parking on-road; some angle-parking in front of shop fronts with higher demand of car parks (e.g. supermarket) could be developed as part of an upgrade of High Street
- On-site car parks (in the case when residential buildings get retro fitted to office etc.) need to be limited and well designed to still allow for active street frontage

4.6 Landscaping

- Introduce street trees along High Street to support the character and structure of a boulevard type street scape. Trees add visual amenity and are part of a rural environment. Trees also provide shading and could be used within seating areas along High Street.
- The communal car park next to the pool and community hall would benefit from plantings that would soften the hard stand area
- Planter beds along High Street could be used as part of road calming measures, as well as to provide amenity and to help forming a main street character

4.7 Signage

- Signage within the pedestrian walkway (e.g. sandwich boards) outside busy areas (e.g. supermarket) are to be kept at a minimum; Bright coloured signage is not acceptable for the three heritage buildings

4.8 Design to prevent crime

- If Southbridge retains a mixture of uses within the Business Zone this has advantages in terms of increased 24/7 activity and passive surveillance from residential landowners. This not only adds activity but also increases the safety feeling for residents.

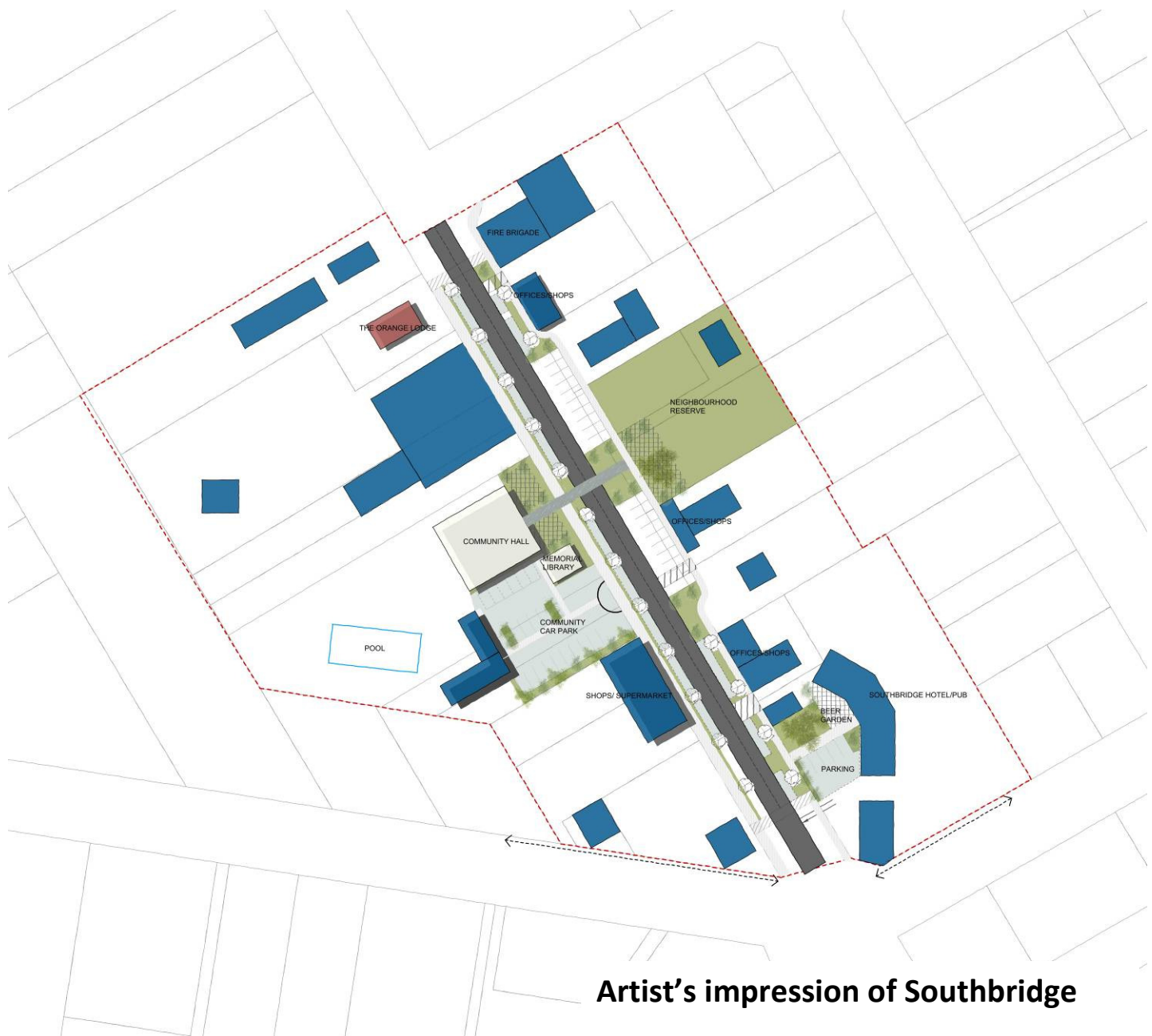
4.9 Respect residential neighbours

- Southbridge's B1 zone is a conglomeration of land use activities that have developed and grown over the years. Respect existing residential housing when converting to commercial uses as residential activities are most likely to be the most sensitive one. If well incorporated residential and commercial activities are beneficial for each other.

5. CONCEPT PLAN

The following Concept Plan is an artist's impression of what the town centre could look like from a bird's eye view if the measures would be followed through:

The plan shows a conversion of most of residential to business, street scape measures such as: seating areas, angle parking, improved community car park, boulevard landscaping, the removal of a dated building, conversion to offices, traffic calming measures, safe pedestrian crossings, solution for corner, a real entrance to Southbridge, Orange Lodge used now as the cooking shed/ cooking demonstrations...



Artist's impression of Southbridge

APPENDIX 1 URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS TABLE

APPENDIX 2 B1 DESIGN PARAMETERS TABLE