

Amberley Ward Profile

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Photo: Jane Thompson

Amberley Ward Profile

Background and History

Named after Amberley in Derbyshire, Amberley was originally established as a result of the arrival of the railway in 1876. The township continued to grow and became an important farming service centre. Amberley has grown significantly since the 1950s and was the first township in the Hurunui District with a water supply scheme undertaken by a county council (1957).

Amberley's southern neighbour, Leithfield, is one of the oldest townships in Canterbury; Leithfield was founded in 1857 by John Leith as an important coach stop and to provide services to the surrounding farming and milling area. In 1863 Leithfield boasted one of the first flour mills in North Canterbury and the only one to be powered by wind. The village flourished in the 1870s when it was the only business centre at the time, between Kaiapoi and Kaikoura.

The beach settlements of Amberley Beach and Leithfield Beach developed as residential suburbs between 1950 and 1990, and their current populations have grown dramatically.

Recreation / Visitor Attractions

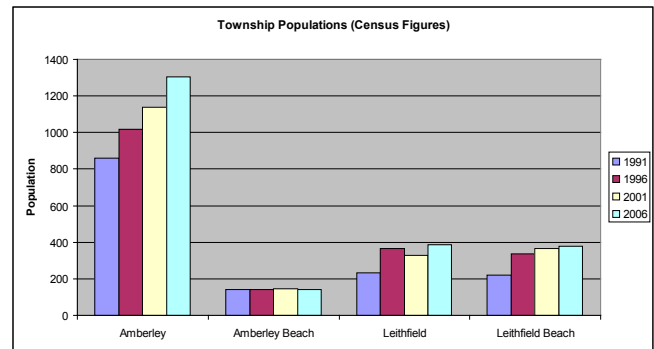
Located on State Highway 1, Amberley Township is a busy rural service centre with an impressive range of cafes and shops. The area is renowned for its impressive country gardens and offers a variety of accommodation options for visitors. There are very handy beach walks, rivers, lakes and mountains to explore - including the Mt Grey scenic walkways. Several parks and reserves can be found in the township, and the local Amberley Domain is always popular for sport and recreation events, agricultural shows, and leisure activities. Amberley is ideal as a country retreat with its nearby beach golf course and the award winning wines and restaurants in the neighbouring Waipara Valley Wine Region.

Today Leithfield village offers a fabulous walk, known as the Kowai Walkway, a well maintained track from the historic Old Leithfield Hotel to the coastal settlement of Leithfield Beach.

Present Profile

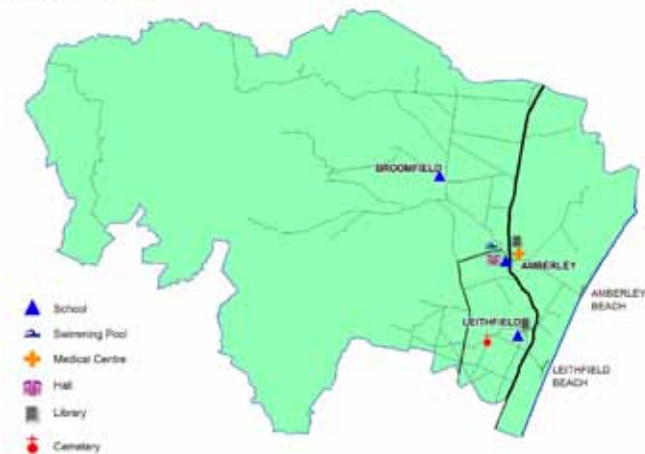
Population

The population of the Amberley Ward, based upon figures from the 2006 NZ Census, is approximately 3700 people. This is estimated by Statistics New Zealand to have risen to approximately 3900 people by 2009, and is projected to further increase to approximately 5000 people by 2031.



- The Amberley Ward is the largest community in the Hurunui District. The ward makes up over one third of the total district population, with a steady growth in residents.
- Amberley's population profile is somewhat older than the Hurunui average. 29% of Amberley's residents are aged 65 years and over, compared to 25% for the Hurunui District, 24% for the Canterbury Region, and 21% for New Zealand as a whole.
- Amberley is about a 35 minutes drive from Christchurch. The township's close proximity presents an advantage for residential growth, offering commuters a country lifestyle while still being able to work in the City.
- The State Highway 1 runs through the centre of the Amberley Township. While this is a great strength for development and growth, visibility and accessibility, it simultaneously creates challenges for road safety, noise and heavy transport effects.
- Both the Amberley Township and Leithfield Village experienced notable urban expansion and development in recent years, including increased lifestyle block development, however this has slowed in line with the current national and international economic climate.
- The Amberley Ward also experienced substantial growth and development in the Glasnevin area, including large scale viticulture plantings, and subdivision activity. Reflecting the current economic downturn, this rate of growth has now eased.
- A Concept Plan was developed by and for the Amberley community, and includes far reaching planning on many fronts, including urban and commercial zoning, social and recreation activities, streetscaping and branding. The concept plan was developed through several public meetings and a consultation processes that commenced in 2004. After an extensive process, the Amberley Township Plan was conceived and finalised in 2008.
- The Amberley Ward offers a wide range of services and facilities.

AMBERLEY WARD



In addition to the numerous shops and commercial premises, the Ward is fortunate to have three primary schools, two preschools, two playcentres, a medical centre, a swimming pool, a community hall and two libraries (The Hurunui Memorial Library in Amberley and a community library in Leithfield). The Ward has many amenities including a cemetery and several blocks of public toilets. The Amberley township is home to the ward's volunteer fire and ambulance services and two full-time police officers. Council's main office, including the Council Chambers, is located in Amberley.

Ward Governance

District Councillors are responsible for representing the interest of their ward, setting Council policies and monitoring the Council's performance. They are elected every 3 years by the voters of their ward.

The Amberley Ward is currently represented by three councillors: *Russell Black*, *Andrew Smart* and *Julie Coster*.

In addition, the Amberley Ward also has an elected *Amberley Ward Committee* which includes amongst its varied responsibilities the overseeing of the Ward's water and sewerage schemes, and the *Amberley Recreation Reserve Subcommittee*. The Amberley Ward also has the *Amberley District Residents Association*, the *Leithfield* and *Leithfield Beach Residents Groups* and the *Amberley Beach Residents Association*.

Priority Community Outcomes

People living in the Amberley Ward identify the following three community outcomes as the most important:

1. *Clean water and air*
2. *Water systems (water, storm water, sewerage)*
3. *Accessible health and social services*

Key Long Term Opportunities and Challenges

- The number one Amberley Concept Plan (ACP) priority project that was identified was in regards to residential and commercial zoning. After a

lengthy consultation process, the submissions on a proposed District Plan Change to address these concerns were considered in late 2008 by a hearings panel made up of an independent hearings commissioner and three Councillors. (The District Plan Change process is regulated by the Resource Management Act.) The Hearings Panel's recommended decision on the Plan Change was adopted by Council on 17 February 2009 and will be publicly notified during March 2009. If there are no appeals made to the Environment Court then the Plan Change will become operative. Council will in the meantime, initiate a work programme accordingly to continue with Amberley's growth and development strategy. To find out more about the Plan Change decision, refer to Council's website: www.hurunui.govt.nz.

- The need to upgrade the Amberley Swimming Pool was also highlighted during the ACP process, and subsequent investigations have found that the pool has a very limited life expectancy – and not expected to be unusable after 2018. Estimates to replace the pool to the community's desired standard in 2018/19 are around \$3 million. Extensive consultation will be carried out prior to any final decisions being made.
- The Council has recently adopted a draft Walking and Cycling Strategy, which aims to facilitate the desires made by some members of the Community to improve the Walking and Cycling linkages within the Hurunui District. Of particular importance for the Amberley Ward are the proposed commuter routes from Amberley to Amberley Beach (2010/11), Amberley to Waipara (2011/12), and Amberley to Leithfield (2012/13).
- The Amberley Ward beaches from Ashworths to "the Rocks" are included in the Northern Pegasus Bay Coastal Management Plan which has recently been received by Council. This Plan contains a number of recommendations, including a requirement that all vehicles on Northern Pegasus Bay must obtain a permit and obey all conditions of the permit including, a speed limit for vehicles of 10km/h around people and 30km/h on the open beach, in addition any vehicle on the beach must be operated below the high tide mark. The Plan also recommends that a ranger is appointed to ensure compliance with the permit system.
- A '1 in 50 year' and a '1 in 25 year' flooding event created havoc in the Amberley Ward in 2008. As a result of the ensuing independent report, \$670,000 of recommended engineering works are now planned in the Amberley area to minimise the risk of future flooding. These include "beheading" the surface water flows from north of Amberley

to reduce flows in both Dock Creek and Eastern Drain, and a cut-off drain to catch water flowing from the heads north of Osborne and Courage Roads, and divert it around the urban area. Two new drains are recommended across the low lying flats north and south of Amberley Beach to eliminate the present complicated drainage system, and ensure the water discharging from Eastern Drain and Dry Gully gets to the lagoons quicker.

- A further report into Leithfield and Leithfield Beach flooding issues is pending. Council intends to include the estimated cost of these works into this planning document as well.
- There is also a proposal to fund these works over the whole of the Amberley Ward, rather than the separate rating system in place now. Both the Amberley Ward Committee and Council consider that all of the Ward will benefit from having good drainage systems in place.
- The steady increase in Amberley Ward's population, particularly in the Amberley Township, will ultimately create a need for expanded community facilities. Further expansion and development of the Amberley Domain, beyond that presently planned, may become necessary. New subdivisions need to include the provision of parks, reserves and walkways. Another long term challenge to meeting population growth and developers' and residents' expectations for the Amberley Ward will be the possible demands to seal existing gravel roads.
- The presence of State Highway 1 will continue to stimulate associated growth and development, whilst at the same time placing responsibility on the council, the community and Transit NZ to manage the associated effects of such traffic. Road safety, especially in regards to State Highway 1 traffic through Amberley's town centre has been a recent priority, and several projects have been carried out in the last few years. \$750,000 is planned to be spent on Main Street Development on Carters Road (SH1) between Courage Road and Amberley Beach Road during 2009-12. Plans include paving, kerb and channel, trees and landscaping.
- Amberley Ward's locality acts as a valuable 'gateway' to the Alpine Pacific Triangle, offering opportunities for further growth and profitable gains to the local tourism industry.
- A new water well is being developed in Lawcocks Road to address the increasing demand for potable water in Amberley. Test samples have confirmed

both quantity and quality of the water in the bore and the new well is expected to be commissioned in the first half of 2009.

- The Amberley sewer upgrade and extension plans have received some opposition, but Council is confident that although a notified consent hearing will mean a delay in the works programme, the site is designated for the purpose in the District Plan and it is not a new activity. It is therefore anticipated that consent will ultimately be granted.
- The new, nearby Pegasus Town development may create both opportunities and challenges. Possible adverse impacts on the Amberley Ward, include competition for growth, additional traffic volumes and longer commuting times between Woodend and Christchurch. Possible positive impacts include more employment opportunities with less commuting time - Amberley Ward could be a satellite base for staff for the new township. The proposed new High School would be the closest one to the Amberley Ward.
- The Amberley Ward is an aging community with 29% of its population aged 65 years and over (*Stats NZ Census 2006*). This results in a greater demand to meet the requirements of this demographic, such as pensioner housing, increased medical centre usage, passive recreation facilities etc.

Key Planning Assumptions

The worldwide economic downturn is likely to have a negative effect on growth and development in the Amberley Ward. However, the recent drop in petrol costs may offset this somewhat as the cost of housing is cheaper than in urban areas closer to Christchurch and the Amberley Ward is commutable. Amberley Township is also popular to an increasing number of retirees. State Highway 1 remains a major economic strength and safety works carried out over the past two years have lessened the pedestrian safety challenges for the community. The outcome of the proposed District Plan change will likely have an influence on development in upcoming years.

| Key Projects | Year Planned | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|----------|-------|
| | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012+ |
| Amberley town centre upgrade | \$250,000 | \$359,000 | | |
| Amberley Pavillion | \$70,000 | \$10,000 | | |
| Amberley Beach local reserve | \$6,000 | | | |
| Leithfield footpaths, capital works | \$15,000 | | \$11,000 | |
| Leithfield Beach Community Centre reclad and paint | \$30,000 | | | |
| Pensioner Units heating and insulation | \$40,000 | \$51,000 | | |
| New Amberley Beach toilets | \$50,000 | | | |
| Amberley Beach Road | | \$1,323,000 | | |
| Amberley Recycling Depot relocation | \$1,900,000 | | | |
| School active warning signs | \$22,500 | \$15,000 | | |
| Renew pipework | \$309,000 | | | |
| Construct additional reservoir | | \$406,000 | | |
| Electrical renewals | | | \$5,000 | |
| Install new bore – Leithfield Beach | | \$110,000 | | |
| Construct new pumpshed – Leithfield Beach | | | \$8,000 | |

For more information on these projects please refer to the Activity Section of this document

Amberley Ward - Sample Properties

| Property | Capital Value | Water | | No of Fixed Charges | Actual Rates 2008/2009 | Proposed Rates 2009/2010 | Increase/(Decrease) | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| | | Supply | Units | | | | \$ | % |
| Amberley Township | 270,000 | Amberley | 209 | 1 | \$1,256.09 | \$1,285.33 | \$29.25 | 2.33% |
| Amberley Township | 550,000 | Amberley | 238 | 1 | \$1,583.44 | \$1,597.94 | \$14.50 | 0.92% |
| Amberley Beach Township | 195,000 | Ashley Rural | 0.5 | 1 | \$1,328.85 | \$1,394.42 | \$65.58 | 4.94% |
| Amberley Rural | 2,800,000 | Ashley Rural | 1 | 0 | \$3,129.76 | \$3,142.27 | \$12.51 | 0.40% |
| Leithfield Township | 220,000 | Ashley Rural | 0.5 | 1 | \$1,262.41 | \$1,257.69 | (\$4.71) | (0.37%) |
| Leithfield Beach Township | 205,000 | Leithfield Beach | 1 | 1 | \$1,189.10 | \$1,175.06 | (\$14.04) | (1.18%) |

For more information on the Sample Properties see Appendix 5 of this Document

