

Hurunui sets future vision

■ Amberley growth plan finalised ■ Work to start on \$100m village and spa

By Kim Newth

LAST THURSDAY was described as "a red letter day" for Hurunui, as the district council voted to adopt a plan change to manage the future growth of Amberley.

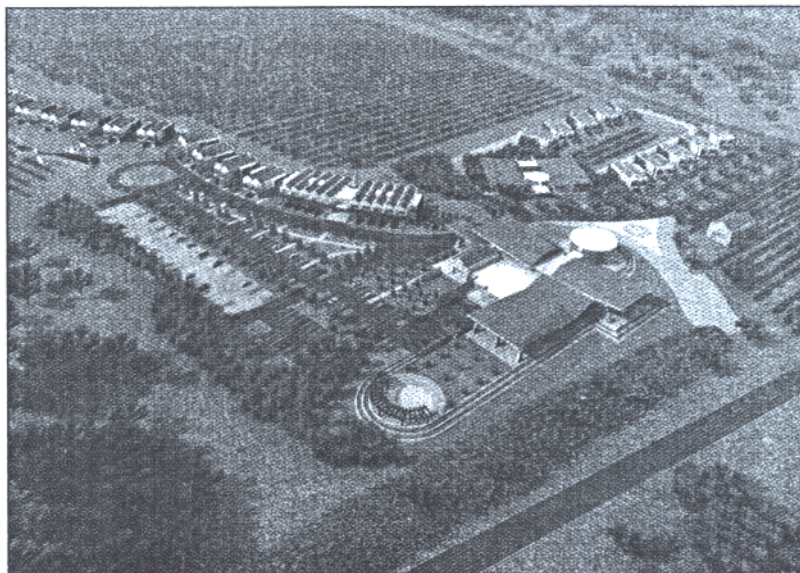
And, in another big boost for the district, Latitude Group has announced that earthworks begin tomorrow on the site of the \$100m Waipara Wine Village & Day Spa project. It will form part of Accor Group's Grand Mercure collection.

The luxury hotel will have 132 rooms, full conference facilities, a wine bar and restaurant, international alehouse, wine-tasting facilities and a luxury day spa.

The Latitude Group project, which will also include a Greg Turner-designed golf course, is projected to take 22 months and be fully operational by December 2009.

The start of work at the site comes less than a week after the Hurunui District Council finally nailed its long awaited growth framework for Amberley.

It has been four to five years in the making, involving extensive public consultation. Hurunui Mayor Garry Jackson said the township had his-



Birds-eye view: An artist's impression of the new \$100m Waipara Wine Village & Day Spa. Work starts on the site tomorrow.

torically grown in an ad hoc way.

"Now, for the first time in the history of Amberley, we have a comprehensive, coordinated plan (for managing growth)," he said.

Some key aspects include: protecting the town's country character; allowing for business activities in the Business Zone; recognising SH1 as integral to the town; ensuring an integrated transport network; and maintaining traditional residential

character (residential 1 zones) and a low density rural-lifestyle zone, while providing high density residential options close to the centre (in a residential 2 zone).

Landor Developments Ltd, which is proposing a new shopping centre for Amberley, responded favourably to last week's plan change, (known as Plan Change No. 13).

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New growth for Amberley and Hurunui: The district council voted last week to establish a framework to manage anticipated growth in the township.

Hurunui sets way forward

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Its director, Peter McClelland, described it as a major turning point. "This really is a red letter day," he said on Thursday. "The council has done quite well and it's pleasing to see that it's got there."

There will be a public submissions period, closing on May 2.

Mr McClelland anticipates being able to potentially start

the resource consent process by October, with construction of the shopping centre starting – in the area bounded by Carters Rd, Amberley Beach Rd and Pound St – in 2009.

And Ken Wimsett, of Latitude, said tomorrow would be a great day for the company and the district: "Waipara is the fastest growing wine region in New Zealand... The Waipara Wine Village and Day Spa will be a

total visitor, hospitality, conferencing, event and spa experience. It will also provide a focus for Waipara winegrowers to showcase their locally produced wines. The start of work on this project is another step towards Hurunui and New Zealand joining the international trend of wine tourism."

Mr McClelland estimates about 190 jobs will be created in the region from the projects.