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New commercial centre for Amberley supported

Retailers are mostly pleased with plans to develop a new commercial precinct away from the main road in Amberley.

By Kim Newth

AMBERLEY'S retailers are mostly upbeat about the prospect of the town's commercial core shifting from State Highway 1 to an area between Pound Stand and Amberley Beach Rd.

In recent days, local developer Peter McClelland and associates have floated their intention to transform 3.5ha of bare land to the east of the Westpac Bank and pharmacy to include a shopping area with a village feel.

A gymnasium, supermarket, garden centre and boutique bar are among some of businesses being mooted.

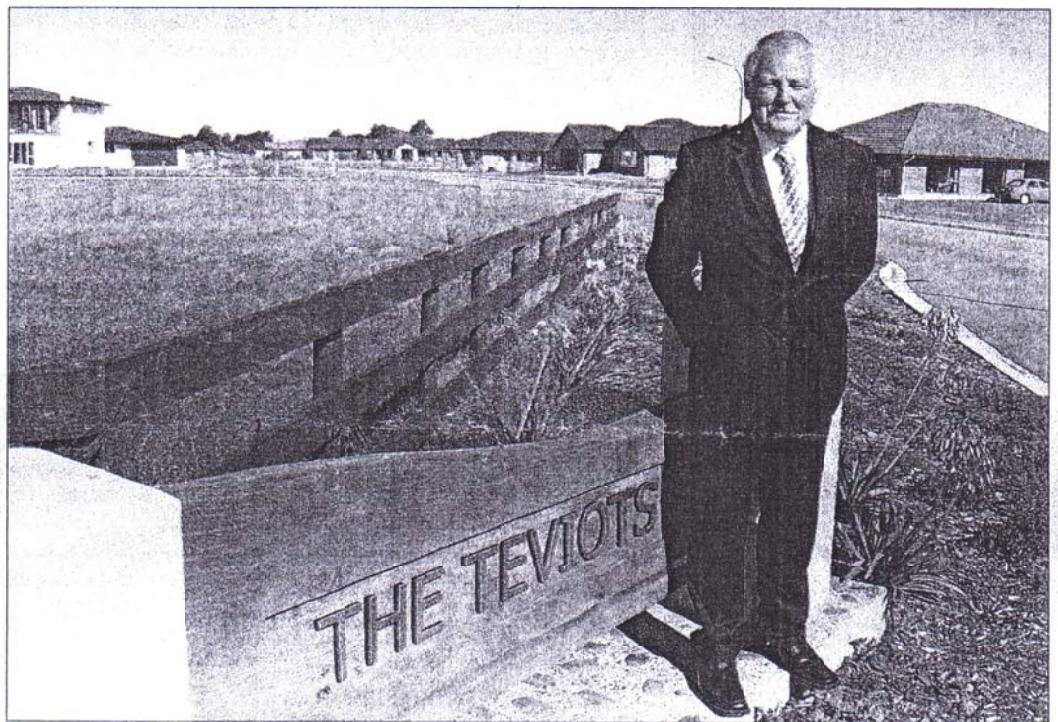
At the same time, the Hurunui District Council has been considering a raft of possible plan changes for Amberley; these also include the encouragement of a new core precinct of commercial activity off State Highway 1, on undeveloped land behind the new library and old mall.

At a meeting on Thursday, the council stopped short of putting the plan changes out for wider consultation. Instead it asked its staff to do some further work, particularly on roading matters.

However, it seems unlikely the delay will derail the overall thrust towards a new look for the town.

Amberley Four Square owner Dale Gallagher, for one, is keen to see a new retail centre get off the ground.

He's long been dissatisfied with his current premises on Carters



Growth area: Developer Peter McClelland believes residential growth such as The Teviots will help to support a new commercial area to the east of Amberley's Westpac Bank, off Carters Rd (SH1).

PHOTO: KIM NEWTH

Rd (SH1) and would be keen to move his business into Mr McClelland's new development.

"Peter is well aware of my intentions. He has been in touch with the corporate body behind my store and I've been in discussions with them too. I want to progress it further," Mr Gallagher said.

"Provided the site gave us all the things we needed in a supermarket, like good access and car parking, I'd be happy to move there."

He believes development of

commercial activity between Pound St and Amberley Beach Rd could also help to eliminate some of the town's traffic safety woes.

"There are major issues now with regard to safety crossing the main road."

Mr McClelland confirmed he'd had calls from local businesses wanting to relocate into the proposed development.

The driver for a new commercial core for Amberley is partially coming as a result of the council

signalling its intention to allow more – and higher density – residential development.

The Teviots housing development off Amberley Beach Rd is an example of how the town is growing. Mr McClelland has another chunk of land earmarked for residential development near The Teviots.

The council has also pencilled that in as an area for possible new residential growth.

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