

Business estate takes shape

Stage one in the construction of Ashburton's new business estate is moving at a cracking pace.

The Ashburton District Council project is running two months ahead of schedule and in spite of a few days where nor'westers battered the site, stopping work, no complaints had been received from neighbours.

Ensuring they were good neighbours was something the council and its contractors HEB Constuction Ltd had placed a high priority on said mayor, Bede O'Malley.

"This was something the Ashburton District Council worked particularly hard on and HEB have really got stuck in and supported our desires, Mr O'Malley said.

The majority of the gravel needed for the development has been sourced from spoil within the development itself and crushed on-site. And that fitted neatly with the council's desire to create as little waste as possible.

This work is now complete as is the majority of the road excavation, with the work in coming months now largely focused on construction of the road network itself and the underlying services.

Sales interest is strong with the marketing agents, Colliers, confident of securing a number of further deals in the coming months with parties currently in negotiations, Mr O'Malley said.

Council chief executive, Brian Lester said the recent traffic delays due to train shunting, highlighted the urgency of moving the rail yard from the centre of Ashburton to the business estate.

"The local community and travelling public will also be pleased that progress is continuing with the rail relocation feasibility. We were disappointed last year when central government funding agencies turned down our subsidy applications to assist with the multi-million dollar relocation, suggesting the problems were not deep enough despite the many delays traffic, including on State



Looking north over the Ashburton Business Estate. The proposed new rail site is to the left of the photo.

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Highway 1, experiences often on a daily basis," he said.

With the district supplying up to 50% of the entire world's exports for some commodities such as radish, clover and

carrot seeds, it was almost unbelievable that the central arterial route was shut down on a regular basis due to train movements, Mr O'Malley said

The current government's policy

favouring road over the wider benefits of rail enhancement projects characterised the district's frustration with central government over transport," he said.