

Media Release

LURP to provide speedy residential growth

Release Date: 06 December 2013

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee says the creation of the Land Use Recovery Plan (LURP) will go a long way towards easing housing pressures, with new options for development across greater Christchurch.

"The LURP provides certainty across the community, informing land owners, infrastructure providers and others by outlining new areas that can be developed for new housing and businesses," Mr Brownlee says.

"As many as 40,000 residential sections could be developed by 2028 within the greenfield priority areas under these revised rules.

"The aim is to use amended intensification rules to deliver 8,000 to 10,000 new dwellings in Christchurch City within the next 5 years.

"Getting more sections and houses to market sooner is the only thing that will ease Christchurch's accommodation pressures.

"Putting this recovery plan in place enables the Regional Policy Statement, and the Christchurch City, Waimakariri District and Selwyn District plans to be amended to specifically allow for the greenfields development and localised intensification.

"It allows for some Christchurch residents to look at the option of subdividing the land they already own, provided their section is big enough, and this too will bring housing opportunities that would not otherwise have been possible."

The LURP was initially developed by Environment Canterbury with the input of a wide range of interested individuals, organisations and groups. Its focus stretches between Lincoln, Prebbleton and Rolleston in the south, to Kaiapoi and Rangiora in the north.

Mr Brownlee says direction from the public has been clear as post-quake recovery has progressed.

"There is a keen desire to see well-designed, people-focused and sustainable developments along with affordable housing and reduced urban sprawl.

"This plan allows for that by giving a very clear direction about where and how new development can occur, in a manner that best assists our region's recovery."

Mr Brownlee says the defined actions within the plan will be undertaken collaboratively by central and local government agencies, and various other authorities.

"The strategic partners across Canterbury are working closely to make this plan viable and practical, and able to address the burgeoning issues as soon as possible.

"It's another example of the agencies all doing their part to bolster our region through our recovery."

For more information about the LURP visit www.cera.govt.nz/lurp

Copies of the LURP will also be made available in council service centres and public libraries across greater Christchurch next week.

About the Land Use Recovery Plan

The earthquake sequence in Canterbury that began on 4 September 2010 caused massive damage to housing, commercial buildings, underground infrastructure and transport networks.

Over 7000 dwellings will need to be demolished or re-located in the residential red zone and as many as 9000 other houses may need demolition.

Population dispersal and changes to business locations have impacted on economic activity, transport patterns, proximity to employment, entertainment and recreation.

The current Regional Policy Statement and Christchurch, Waimakariri and Selwyn district plans do not address the demands that now exist.

The current Regional Policy Statement and Christchurch district plans are relatively prescriptive regarding where development can occur and under what rules.

Existing Resource Management Act planning processes could take 3-5 years (excluding appeals) to amend current plans to reflect the changed circumstances arising from the earthquakes.

Similarly, related land transport planning and local government planning documents are now in serious need of revision.

In general, the inability to amend the planning framework quickly enough to meet predicted rebuild peaks (from late 2014) and uncertainty about how amended plans would address recovery issues has impaired recovery; new planning rules are needed quickly.

The Government recognised this need for change early and the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery used his powers under section 27 of the CER Act to amend the planning framework in 2012, to make more land immediately available for residential and commercial development.

In doing so the Minister took guidance from the decade-long and widely consulted process undertaken by all the local authorities in the greater Christchurch area, known as the Urban Development Strategy.

This was essentially an agreed position by all local authorities – the Urban Development Strategy partners – on where Christchurch and its neighbours should grow in the years to 2040, based on expected population growth.

Then the earthquakes hit and much more residential land was needed much sooner.

However, the Minister's decision to bring more land to market by adding a chapter to the Regional Policy Statement was judicially reviewed by landowners unhappy that their land hadn't been included in areas opened up for greenfields residential development, in particular inside the Christchurch International Airport 50 decibel noise contour.

The High Court and then the Court of Appeal decided the Minister should have used either the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Strategy and/or a Recovery Plan to put in place these measures.

So in October 2012 Environment Canterbury, working with Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District and Waimakariri District Councils, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (collectively, the Urban Development Strategy strategic partners), and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) requested they be directed to develop a Land Use Recovery Plan to address land use planning and related transport and infrastructure issues for the greater Christchurch area.

In November 2012 the Minister used his powers under the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act to direct Environment Canterbury to lead Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District and Waimakariri District Councils, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, NZTA and CERA to develop a Land Use Recovery Plan.

A draft Land Use Recovery Plan was delivered to the Minister by Environment Canterbury in July 2013.

The Minister asked for public comments on the draft plan, and received 149 substantial submissions which have now been summarised and analysed.

The Minister has now received a final plan which will do four things:

- Help address housing supply issues in greater Christchurch
- Support business and industry recovery through zoning and land supply
- Lower development hurdles and speed recovery

Clarify where and when development will occur

The plan was approved by the Minister on 6 December 2013.

<https://youtu.be/M0SmRwbZF08>