

Media Release

Milestone adds to changing face of red zone

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Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee says the last of over 300 relocations of Crown-owned houses from the flat land residential red zone marks a significant milestone in the clearance of this vast area of greater Christchurch.

"The final two Crown-owned houses have this week been transported from Burwood to Rangiora's Ashley Village, where new foundations had already been laid for them," Mr Brownlee says.

"They will now be transformed and on-sold by the private developer who purchased them.

"The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) has now made possible the completed relocation of 302 dwellings from the flat land red zone, and a similar number has been enabled by private insurers," Mr Brownlee says.

"The earthquakes caused significant damage to land in the eastern areas of Christchurch and in the Waimakariri District, which is why so many properties were zoned red.

"But while the land was terribly damaged, in some instances the homes themselves suffered limited or minimal damage.

"This whole-house relocation scheme has given a lot of people a new home in a timeframe that is only a fraction of a new build.

"CERA staff involved in the relocations have worked hard to provide as many homes and accommodate as many requests as possible, and the end result is a remarkable transformation of the red zone.

"The tidying and grassing of 500 hectares of cleared flat land is now almost 70 per cent complete, and there are only a small number of insurer-owned dwellings still to be relocated.

"If you rewind to four years ago when we first began the land zoning process, you will remember a very different looking area.

"The large, grassed blocks are now ready for whatever decisions are made for future use.

"A community engagement process on future use of Christchurch's flat land red zone, similar to that already completed in the Waimakariri District, will get underway in the near future," Mr Brownlee says.

A new Crown offer is currently being made to owners of vacant, insured commercial and uninsured properties in the residential red zone, along with the reopening of the original offer to insured property owners, and is open until 10 December 2015.