

Media Release

Further work underway to improve Avon River

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Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee says the latest work in the \$96 million Avon River Precinct will build upon the start made last year at Watermark, extending the restoration and revitalisation work on the Avon River all the way across the CBD to Fitzgerald Ave.

"At 3.2km and stretching up to 30 metres either side of the Avon River this is possibly the largest urban river restoration programme in New Zealand," Mr Brownlee says.

"Our objective is to restore the river as close as possible to its original condition, re-creating habitats for the fauna that form the complex cycle of life within a lowland freshwater stream.

"Although the constraints of an urban environment will always limit us to returning the river to the way it used to be, this restoration programme, coupled with other works in the precinct, will ensure that we have a healthy river, with a strong ecosystem, sitting comfortably alongside our city."

Works will include removal of the silt that blankets the floor of the river channel and washing of the gravel to remove years of built-up sediment. Treatment through rain gardens will clean stormwater from the roads before it enters the river.

The creation of overhangs and placement of rocks will provide habitats for fish, while planting and landscaping will support birdlife.

"All this will form an integral part of the experience of the Avon River Precinct, connecting people to the river and the river to the city in a way which will make it an outstanding and world-class attraction."