

Media Release

New plan for Waimakariri residential red zones

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Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee has directed that a Recovery Plan be prepared for the future use of the residential red zones in the Waimakariri District.

"I have asked the Waimakariri District Council to prepare a draft of that plan which will identify the intended long-term uses of the residential red zone in the Waimakariri district," Mr Brownlee says.

"Initial ideas generated by public engagement on the future use of this land identified many people want green, open spaces to enjoy, particularly for recreational and community purposes.

"Further work has also been carried out to understand, at a high level, the physical characteristics of the land in the Waimakariri residential red zones to identify the potential opportunities for broad types of land use that would be appropriate for each area."

Waimakariri District Mayor David Ayers says it is very satisfying to be able to take a significant step forward in the future use of Waimakariri residential red zone land.

"Waimakariri District Council will be taking the lead role in developing the draft Recovery Plan, with the support of CERA, Environment Canterbury and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, and we will be seeking community feedback in the very near future," Mr Ayers says.

"The process still has some way to go – the most important aspect being that we reflect the community views on the future of residential red zone land and relate that to the practical and technical limitations that the land presents.

"But I am hopeful that by the middle of next year we will begin to see actions arising from this taking place."

Mr Brownlee says following on from the Supreme Court judgment in the Quake Outcasts case, it is clear that a Recovery Plan is the appropriate mechanism to identify options for the future use of this land.

"As well as future use, the draft Recovery Plan will also address matters such as how ownership, funding, and management of different spaces will be determined.

"It must also consider the social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts on the surrounding community, which I know from public consultation to date is important to Waimakariri residents," Mr Brownlee says.

The Waimakariri District Council will prepare a discussion document to be followed by a preliminary draft Recovery Plan, both of which will offer opportunities for public comment. It is anticipated that the draft Recovery Plan will be provided to the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery by June 2016.

The new legislation proposed to replace the CER Act, is intended to allow for the Recovery Plan to be completed. It is anticipated that the Christchurch residential red zones will also be subject to the Recovery Plan process, however timing for this is still to be determined.