

Accelerated Process for Christchurch Replacement District Plan

Decisions on matters of priority to be made on the Christchurch Replacement District Plans by 28 February 2015

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee and Environment Minister Amy Adams announced the Government agreed to the request by the Christchurch City Council for an accelerated district plan review process.

An Order has come into force pursuant to the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 which modifies the *Resource Management Act 1991* and provides a streamlined process for the review of the existing Christchurch district plans (the Christchurch City Plan and the Banks Peninsula District Plan) and for the preparation of a comprehensive replacement district plan for the Christchurch district.

The Christchurch City Council must review the existing district plans and prepare replacements. The proposals will be publicly notified. Any person may make a submission on a notified proposal within 30 working days. The first replacement plan must be notified by **28 August 2014**.

A hearings panel in consultation with the Christchurch City Council will conduct a hearing into any submissions and decide whether to make any changes to a proposal. Sir John Hansen has been appointed via the Order as chairperson of the hearings panel, and the Ministers will appoint an independent hearings panel of at least three others to consider submissions and make final decisions on the plans. The hearing panel may permit cross examination and allow a party to question any other party or witness.

The hearings panel's decisions can be appealed to the High Court, but only on points of law.

Decisions on the replacement District Plan will be done in stages. Decisions on priority matters must be made by **28 February 2015**, with all decisions to be made by **9 March 2016**.

Any person may make a request to Council for a change to an existing district plan or the replacement district plan by following a separate process specified in the order. The Council must pass this request to the hearings panel, and the hearings panel can accept or reject this request (including for the reason that it would be unable to make a decision on the proposal by 9 March 2016).

The order can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2014/0228/latest/DLM6190883.html?src=qs>

If you would like further information please contact our Christchurch Resource Management Specialists: Mark Christensen, Jen Crawford, Alex Roberts, and Sarah Eveleigh.