

Media Release

First call for residential proposals in frame

Release Date: 21 February 2014

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee says the development of housing within Christchurch's new frame will provide exciting opportunities for inner-city living and help with renewal of the central city.

The first call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for working with the Crown to develop the new community has been released today through the Government Electronic Tendering Service (GETS).

Mr Brownlee says the new community will comprise around 750 medium density homes in a mix of four to six storey townhouses and apartments.

"These new homes will be built around contemporary urban parkland with spaces for community gardens, rain gardens to clean the stormwater and the exciting development that is the Margaret Mahy Family Playground.

"There is already a strong sense of community within the four avenues but we need more people to make the best use of the \$2.9 billion investment the government is making, and to support the private sector as they build new offices, hospitality venues, retail and other ventures," Mr Brownlee says.

"We want a diverse community living in the city's heart – empty nesters, young families, creative professionals, key workers and everyone else who wants to contribute to a thriving central city – a true reflection of the make-up of the new Christchurch."

Together the East and North frames have a gross land area of 14.6 hectares, of which just under half will be offered up for development.

"The Crown will build the central park, as well as the Margaret Mahy Family Playground and streetscape, and provide serviced Super-Lots to help developers build each stage of the new community," Mr Brownlee says.

Each Super-Lot will support about 50–80 new homes and will be built in stages over the next five to 10 years. The bid process will select one or more development partners and the Crown will enter into an agreement with them to begin to build the new mews, townhouses and apartments.

"In order to ensure that the best outcome for the city is able to be achieved, this agreement will establish the standard of design, the timetable for construction and the commercial arrangements which will see the developers funding the work.

"This project is about supporting the central city to thrive again with a new residential precinct that will showcase what a great lifestyle the inner-city can provide," Mr Brownlee says.

Development criteria will see a density level of 100 residences per hectare with buildings no taller than 21 metres. Other uses will include those which support residential living,

along the lines of cafés, crèches, community facilities and corner shops – all important parts of the convenience of inner city living.

Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU) general manager design and planning Don Miskell says the frame's design emphasises public safety, with a central park area that is small enough to give a feel of ownership by the residents on its fringes, but large enough to be utilised as a public space by the wider community.

"It will have cycleways and footpaths, along with simple open space that will be a haven for both locals and visitors," Mr Miskell says.

"This development is one of the things that will set Christchurch apart from other New Zealand cities.

"You just have to look at the other works underway in the area to get a great idea of what kind of green, accessible, functional inner-city neighbourhood this will be.

"That includes having a redeveloped river-front just a stone's throw away, the Margaret Mahy Family Playground next door, the 50 metre-wide central park area between the housing, the dedicated retail precinct just around the corner and all the pubs, clubs and eateries that a city this size demands."

Mr Brownlee says developing a new central neighbourhood in this way is a bold move.

"But I firmly believe it will become one of the most sought after and enjoyed areas of the city."