

Media Release

First compulsory acquisitions in Christchurch CBD

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The Crown is using its post-earthquake powers of compulsory acquisition for the first time to ensure the crucial rebuild of central Christchurch is not held up, says Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee.

"Progress to date by the Crown in purchasing central city properties has been very good, with the vast majority of land already secured for priority anchor projects without any compulsory acquisition being required," Mr Brownlee says.

"However we have now reached the point where we need to compulsorily acquire a small number of properties.

"It is important for the recovery of the whole city that we push on with the development of these anchor projects, which will in turn give confidence to private sector developers to progress their own projects and benefit the whole economy."

A proclamation has been signed for the compulsory acquisition of properties at nine addresses in the northern most four blocks of land designated for the new East Frame. Further compulsory acquisitions are likely to follow in other anchor project areas.

The properties are being acquired under Section 55 of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011. A proclamation to take land must be approved by both the Governor-General and Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, and publicly notified and gazetted, before the land is vested in the Crown on the fourteenth day after the day on which it is gazetted.

Compensation will be based on the market value of the property at the date of the acquisition. The owner and any other person who suffers a loss in the compulsory acquisition have the right to appear before the Earthquake Recovery Minister or his delegate to make representations on the compensation.

Properties to be compulsorily acquired by the Crown include those where the parties have been unable to reach agreement on price, and situations where compulsory acquisition is the most practical method to acquire those properties owing to the individual circumstances.

The Crown now owns 55 per cent of the total land area it requires for the Anchor Projects, which equates to 171 of the 345 properties. All purchases to date have been based on independent expert advice on fair values of land and built property.