

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kaiapoi Zone C Rebuild And Repair Programme Delayed

The Minister of Earthquake Recovery, the Hon Gerry Brownlee, has requested the Waimakariri District Council delay the start of its Kaiapoi Zone C rebuild and repair programme for earthquake affected residents in Kaiapoi, The Pines Beach and Kairaki.

Following the 7.1 magnitude earthquake on September 4 last year, scientific advice was that this was a 1-in-500 year event. However, further analysis now estimates this to be a 1-in-100 year event evidenced by more faults in the Greater Christchurch area than previously thought.

"What this means is that for a building with an expected life of 50 years, there is a 50% probability of a quake like we had in September in the Greater Christchurch area sometime in that building's lifetime," Council Chief Executive Jim Palmer said.

"Therefore, the design of building foundations and land remediation work needs to be of a standard that ensures homes can withstand that sort of event and help protect people's safety."

Due to these further investigations the Minister has strongly advised the Council delay its original 28 June start date for the first two housing clusters for a period of some weeks. The delay is likely to have flow-on effects for the rest of the rebuild and repair programme, due for completion within the next three years.

As for Christchurch, the investigations will also consider any changes to the risks posed from flooding and tsunami as a result of ground level changes.

"It is prudent for the Council to wait for this information to ensure decisions are made in the best interests of affected residents and the wider Waimakariri community. We also need to consider the impact of changes to the Department of Building and Housing's Building Code", Waimakariri District Mayor David Ayers said.

Mr Palmer says the Minister has advised the Council that Government appointed engineers are reviewing likely design solutions and costs to achieve higher standards in land remediation and building foundations.

"While waiting for further advice, many homeowners may not be able to settle with their insurer or the Earthquake Commission (EQC)."

Mayor Ayers said "The Minister has signalled he wants to be sure that areas of Kaiapoi, The Pines Beach and Kairaki are treated the same as those in Christchurch where a similar review is being undertaken. Accordingly, the nature and extent of land remediation and rebuilding work undertaken, as well as the timing of that work may change - but we will not know that until this investigation work is complete."

Mayor Ayers says the Council is disappointed by the setback in the programme as it was committed to getting the remediation work underway. "We know that this will be unsettling news for a large number of residents and we'll continue to keep all residents up to date as soon as we have information that we can share"

Support is being made available through the Waimakariri Earthquake Support Service at the Kaiapoi Earthquake Hub, 24 Sewell Street, and Support Co-ordinators are currently organizing a door-knocking campaign in addition to a drop-in service which will operate from the Kaiapoi Earthquake Hub for two weeks, starting on Monday 20 Jun from 10am to 2pm on weekdays and 10am to 12 noon on Saturdays.

Attached is:

- a copy of the Minister's letter to Waimakariri District Council.
- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

For more information contact:

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David Ayers
Mayor
Phone: 03 311 8900
Email: david.ayers@wmk.govt.nz

Jim Palmer
Chief Executive
Phone: 03 311 8900
Email: jim.palmer@wmk.govt.nz

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