New social housing developments to go ahead

Christchurch City Council has given the go-ahead for up to 22 new social housing units to be built on vacant land in existing complexes in Spytaky and Aranui by the end of this year.

Tenants will go out next week for the design and build of between eight and 14 new one-bedroom units on the Maconnaise-Carter Cut site in Spytaky and between eight to 12 new one-bedroom units on the Knightsbridge Lane site in Aranui.

This proposal is part of an overall strategy to repair or replace social housing units which were either damaged following the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes or are in the housing red zone.

Mayor Bob Parker says this is clear evidence that the Council’s social housing repair and rebuild programme is well and truly getting underway. Repairs will also be carried out on a total of 247 units by the end of this year.

Of the Council’s 247 social housing units, 205 remain open (86 per cent of the total number of units).

“Today’s decision is a huge step forward for the Council and is part of a concerted effort to speed up the repair and rebuild of our social housing complexes.

“The Council is committed to providing good quality social housing for its tenants. This is a piece of work that has been underway for some time and we’re now looking forward to urgently progressing these plans.”

The Council is currently looking at a number of other sites which may be available to build social housing units. It is also exploring public/private partnership opportunities to rebuild units.

The Council last year identified 28 social housing as one of its top 30 projects for funding. Further investigations and, where possible, repairs, are included in its Facilities Rebuild Plan programme.

For more information about the Council’s top priority projects and repairs being carried out on other Council-owned facilities visit:

www.ccc.govt.nz/haveyoursay

Repairs to start on city’s historic war memorials

Repairs on several war memorials are underway, with the aim of completing the work by Anzac Day.

After being partly dismantled almost a year ago, work is progressing on the Burwood War Memorial on New Brighton Road, says Council Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager John Mackie.

The remaining steps and four will be removed, new cast and then the original granite memorial will be replaced. It will take a specialist conservator, stonemason and contractor four to five weeks to complete this work.

Final repairs on the Heathcote War Memorial and Pigeon Bay War Memorial are also getting started.

“It is immensely satisfying to see these treasured memorial being restored to their former glory,” says Mr Mackie.

Meanwhile, plans to repair the Bridge of Remembrance and Archibald Park remain in progress, with work expected to start in the middle of this year.

“The repair process is complex as it aims to add a stronger structure, better able to withstand any future earthquakes. We expect to complete the work in two years.”

Mr Mackie says the Council understands it is important the community can mark the 100-year anniversary of the beginning of World War I in August 2014.

“We will be working with contractors to see if it is possible to have parts of the bridge open in some form for an event next year.”

The stone work on both the Arch and the Bridge will be reinstated and repairs using methods sympathetic to the heritage nature of the structures. The foundations will be improved to allow the structure to be in a controlled way any future earthquakes.

Commercial consent values top five hundred million in last 12 months

The value of works for major commercial building consents has topped $500 million dollars in the last 12 months, exceeding figures for the last six years.

Major commercial projects are those where the value of consented building work is over $1 million. The Council’s figures show from the beginning of March 2013 to the end of February 2014 the value reached $557.5 million. This is $56 million more than the same period for 2009-2010 when the Christchurch International Airport project took the total value of works for that year to $540.2 million.

The value of consented work is listed on the application form for a building consent in the customer and reflects cost estimates for the build. Planning Committee Chairperson Sue Wells says the figures provide positive news for the business sector and the local economy.

“The combination of a confident, determined private sector and hard work from the Council on processing consents can only be good for the local economy. It will result in more building activity, more jobs and more spending taking place in our local economy.”

The Council’s consenting staff are processing 85 per cent of all commercial consents within the 20 days required and staff are committed to reaching the 85 per cent target set by the Council.

“It’s interesting to take a closer look at processing times for major commercial projects. When no further information is requested from an applicant, which means they have submitted a complete and technically accurate application, we are processing applications in an average of 12 days, five days ahead of the required statutory time frame.”

Chairperson Wells says that this shows what can happen when the Council and customers work together.

“Major commercial projects tend to be rebuilds with complex technical requirements. I really recommend a pre-application meeting as one of the best ways to find out what to include in an application and to get the Council staff and applicants table-ready on the project. That means fewer requests from the Council for more information and can save owners of major commercial rebuilds time and money – it’s simply a smart investment and an important part of the rebuild tool kit.”

The majority of the city’s building consent were for major commercial projects across the city with of the projects within the central city’s Four Avenues.

Free dog microchipping service now on Wednesdays

From Wednesday 1 April, the Christchurch City Council’s free dog microchipping service will be offered from 11am – noon each Wednesday.

The service is offered at Christchurch City Animal Shelter (6 Metro Place, Bromley) and for all dogs registered and resident in Christchurch. No out-of-district dogs will be microchipped by the Council.

These microchips, each about the size of a grain of rice, can be inserted into the small ear tag on your dog’s neck. The procedure is as painless as an injection and takes about two seconds.

When scanned, the microchip number distinguishes your dog from any other dog in New Zealand and helps reunite lost pets with their owners.

Dog owners are strongly discouraged from bringing any unaccompanied dog to the Animal Shelter for microchipping. It is very risky to bring dogs to the shelter that have not been vaccinated against parvovirus.

Have your say on the city’s future

The draft Christchurch City Three Year Plan is out for public comment – make sure you take a look at what’s inside and have your say on the city’s future.

The draft plan sets out what the Council wants to do over the next three years, how much these services and projects will cost, and where the money will come from.

Information sessions across the city start today, with open days in the Dome at Hagley Park from 10am to 4pm on today (Tuesday 26 March), 10am to 4pm tomorrow (Wednesday 27 March) and 10am to 4pm on Thursday (30 March).

Find out about other information sessions, see copies of the plan and get a submission form at Council libraries and service centres or online at www.ccc.govt.nz/haveyoursay.

Public consultation closes at 2pm on 16 April.

The draft Christchurch City Council Plan is available to view from Wednesday 27 March in any of the Council’s information and service centres. It is also available online at www.ccc.govt.nz/haveyoursay.

The final date for written comments is 5pm on Wednesday 1 April 2013.

The Council is also holding three drop-in sessions on Saturday 6 April along the pathway’s route at:

- McCormacks Bay Reserve (near the Mt Pleasant Community Centre)
- McCormacks Bay Road, 8am–11am

The draft Concept Plan is available to view –

- from Wednesday 27 March in any of the Council’s information and service centres.
- is also available online at www.ccc.govt.nz/haveyoursay.

Available City 100 metro

27 March