

Appendix 37: Residential Vacant Land Analysis

Residential Vacant Land Analysis

The land use needs for housing (recovery) are contained in Section 3.2.1 of the LURP. Strong demand for housing is anticipated in the future due to three drivers: temporary accommodation; accommodation for rebuild workers; and household growth from the existing population and migration. Projections for household growth in the Land Use Recovery Plan are for an additional 36150 households for Greater Christchurch by 2028 of these Christchurch is to provide 23,700¹. These are severed Actions in the LURP that provided², with a strong emphasis on intensification. Whether land is needed is largely a decision of the market but the Plan has a role in providing sufficient opportunities to enable market needs to be met. This involves a balancing exercise involving assessments of demand and supply of greenfields residential land, and an evaluation of location options against urban growth policies.

Demand for greenfields land.

Greenfields sections are one means of meeting projected housing demand. The key question is: how many (or what percentage) of the projected numbers of households will form in 'greenfield' sites, and how does this translate into amount of land? This can be matched to the projected supply of greenfields land and a judgment made as to when the Greenfield Priority Areas need to be made available for residential development and whether any additional residential land is needed to meet the household targets. Two main key variables in making this judgment are the percentage of household growth going to greenfields (as opposed to intensification); and the density at which greenfields development takes place. Table 1 below illustrates the sensitivity of land need to these key variables.

% of growth in Greenfields (total 23,700)	Density	HA needed
30 (70)	15	474
55 (45)	15	869
75 (25)	15	1185

(Numbers in brackets is the percentage of growth occurring through intensification)

The 70% is upper limit proposed by Mr Douglas Fairgray in his evidence to the Independent Hearings Panel¹. The City Council's vacant land register currently has 1990 hectares shown as vacant zoned residential land. This is made up of land in the greenfields priority areas, greenfield land rezoned in the Operative City Plan but not yet developed out (e.g. Masham) and ad hoc pieces of land that are currently vacant in residential areas. It also includes areas on the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula. The vacant land register does not include all Greenfield Priority Areas. It is important in the Christchurch context to recognise four broad categories of vacant land (Table 1).

¹ Land Use Recovery Plan, Table 1 Page 13

² 1 bid: Actions 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 19 for example

Table 1: Vacant Land Register 2015 (Rounded)

Christchurch 'flat' areas	970
Christchurch Port Hills	500
Banks Peninsula	340
Remainder	200
Rural but a priority area	100 (Highsted)
Future development	440

Stage 2 of the PRDP proposes to rezone the remainder of the Highsted blocks and the remaining Greenfield Priority Areas to Residential New Neighbourhood. This will, if they become operative increase the amount of vacant residential zoned land on the 'flat' to around 1500 hectares.

Take up rates

The average rate of take up of vacant residential land over the past 10 years has been 77 hectare / annum. However there are significant variances both over the period and within each residential zone. A closer examination of Table 1 reveals that for the various Living 1 and Living G Zones the rate of take up averages around 60 hectares per annum. Projecting this rate of take up out to 2028 the amount of vacant land taken up would be around 700 ha, providing for around 10500 houses of the 23 700 required (assuming 15 hh/ha). This is equivalent to 44% of projected growth being greenfields, and 56 intensification. Historically the percentage of new residential development has not exceeded this and given the amount of greenfields land available a 44/56 split seems reasonable. Under these assumptions, there would only be 200 ha of vacant flat land left in 2028 which is likely to create market pressures. This suggests that to be sufficient greenfields land to meet anticipated demand the remaining GPA's and rural land at Highsted would need to be rezoned (as they are proposed to be).

Note: Greenfields for the former Christchurch City means land that was undeveloped and zoned as 'greenfields' land following the decision on the City Plan in 1999
