



Christchurch

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## State of the nation

Welcome to the September edition of the Catalyst newsletter. September seems to have flown past and by the time you get this newsletter October will be virtually upon us. As of September 30th we put our clocks forward an hour in New Zealand making the time difference between here and the UK exactly 12 hours. This means that we'll have more time in the morning to ring the UK and discuss opportunities with you.

Once again Christchurch is the focus of this newsletter as this still remains the hub of activity in New Zealand. There is work ongoing in the rest of the country but in most cases the level of work is manageable and as such our clients are able to cope without adding to their teams. We know that this will change however and it will only take a small lift in activity across the board to see a significant lift in vacancies.

Even though it maintains its status as the biggest project in New Zealand, Christchurch still remains fairly quiet. Those who regularly read the blog will know that CERA's aspiration of delivering \$40m of civil work per month still remains unfulfilled with an average closer to half that figure currently being delivered. \$40 million per month still remains the target and most on the ground believe that this target will be hit at the start of 2013. Additionally with the announcement this week of the continued development of the Southern Motorway around Christchurch things will be getting very busy in the city.

Whilst the deconstruction looks to continue for the next 6 months the city blueprint has allowed developers and architects the opportunity to plan ahead for when construction can begin. Earlier this week a \$20m office and retail block became the first major development to be given approval since the release of the central city blueprint with the hope that many more will follow closely behind. Also the foundations have been put in this week for the temporary Christchurch Cathedral, a project that we discuss this month in a separate article.

The requirement for Civil Geotechnical and Structural Seismic Engineers from the engineering consultants remains but notably there is now a national requirement for

Traffic and Transportation Engineers. There is a need for Intermediate, Senior and Principle Traffic and Transportation specialists in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch so if your experience fits then we need to hear from you sooner than later. On the whole construction remains very stop and start as clients try to find their way forward but the expectation is that the start of 2013 will be a very busy time for the industry so those interested are advised to get in touch now. However one group in the construction sector with immediate requirements is the PQS companies. If you are an Intermediate or Senior PQS get in touch now as we have a number of clients looking to build their teams significantly over the next 6 months.

The rebuild in Christchurch is a massive undertaking and in over two years we're still at the very start of the project. Nobody could have predicted how long it would take to get things going and so far we've only just scratched the surface. It's going to be another ten years before we really start to see the new city taking shape and before that happens there will be a significant increase in recruitment across all sectors. There are so many areas of the industry that so far have had little to do with the rebuild but in the next 6 months could be struggling to find staff to keep up with their requirements. This is a long journey but those of you who are committed to be part of this project will get your chance. To increase your chances further follow us on Linked In, keep reading the newsletter and follow the blog so that when you do get that interview you'll be the most informed candidate our clients have ever spoken to. As always get in touch if you have plans to move/visit here or you just want to tell us how much you want to make the move; we want to hear from you!



## The Christchurch blueprint

Last month we made you aware of the announcement that the CCDU (Christchurch Central Development Unit) had just released the blueprint for the new Christchurch CBD.

Following on from that we are pleased to report that activity in relation to this has certainly begun to ramp up with a number of key projects having already been given the green light, plans submitted for approval within the private sector, and initiatives put in place to ensure a steady pace of development can continue without any unnecessary hold ups or red tape.

- Christchurch Hospital – the biggest health project in New Zealand History – has been given the green light this month with the NZ Government having approved \$10 million to support final business cases for both Christchurch and Burwood Hospitals, which are envisaged to be completed by Christmas. Furthermore, Health Minister Tony Ryall has announced the 4 members who will form the hospital redevelopment partnership group which will lead the largest public health system project in New Zealand History at an anticipated total of about \$600m.
- \$20 million office and retail block likely to become the first major CBD development to be approved under new rules set out by the CCDU – where – at time of printing; Amherst Properties Ltd – is due to receive the outcome of the commissioners' (urban design panel comprising representatives of the CCDU, The Christchurch City Council and Ngai Tahu – South Island Maori Tribe) ruling in respect of their submission last week for a proposed six-story office and retail block in Gloucester Street. If it is approved it is hoped that construction would begin as early as November and would take around 15 months to complete.
- \$40 million restaurant and bar precinct project to replace "the Strip" – Canterbury's richest family; the Gough's – who own the majority of what was the hub of Christchurch's hospitality playground; The Strip – hope to have plans ready to submit to the CCDU for approval in October, aiming to be able to commence construction early next year.
- Steady increases in Building Consents - Since the release of the Blueprint, Christchurch City Council has seen a continued increase in building consent applications – on average 34 per day. To cope with this, and further anticipated increases; Consents staff from other local authorities around the South Island are being prepared to step in to action if need be in order to safeguard the rebuild from being held up by any potential bottlenecks.

- Building Consents: In relation to building consenting Christchurch Council is aiming to have applications for smaller projects (less than \$150,000) processed in five days or less, medium projects (between \$150,000 - \$500,000) in 10 days or less, and large consent applications processed within 20 days.
- Scirt (Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team) will spend \$40 million a month at the peak of the rebuild according to the alliance of the 5 key construction contractors' infrastructure works programme released this month. \$2.2 billion will be spent over the next 5 years, which will involve around 1000 kilometres of new roads, 400 kilometres of new sewer mains, 100 kilometres of new water mains, and 63 new bridges (45 foot and 18 road).
- NZTA (New Zealand Transport Agency) released its 8 year plan for Christchurch roading - circa \$800 million spend – which will include major works such as the completion of four-laning of Russley Road, major upgrades to main arterial roads such as Harewood, Wairakei and Memorial Ave, an airport bypass and a western Belfast bypass.
- Christchurch "Cardboard" Cathedral : Work has commenced on the temporary Christchurch "Cardboard" Cathedral as discussed in a separate article.

All in all a very promising start to the rebuild kicking off and heading in the right direction.

(facts and figures sourced: The Press)

To view an animated version of the Christchurch Blueprint, click on the link below or copy and paste to your browser. Alternatively if you missed out on last month's newsletter; send an email to [ahopkins@catalystrecruitment](mailto:ahopkins@catalystrecruitment) with the word CHCHBLUE in the subject line and you will be automatically sent the link to a simple booklet that we have put together comprising a series of articles explaining the key components of the Blueprint.

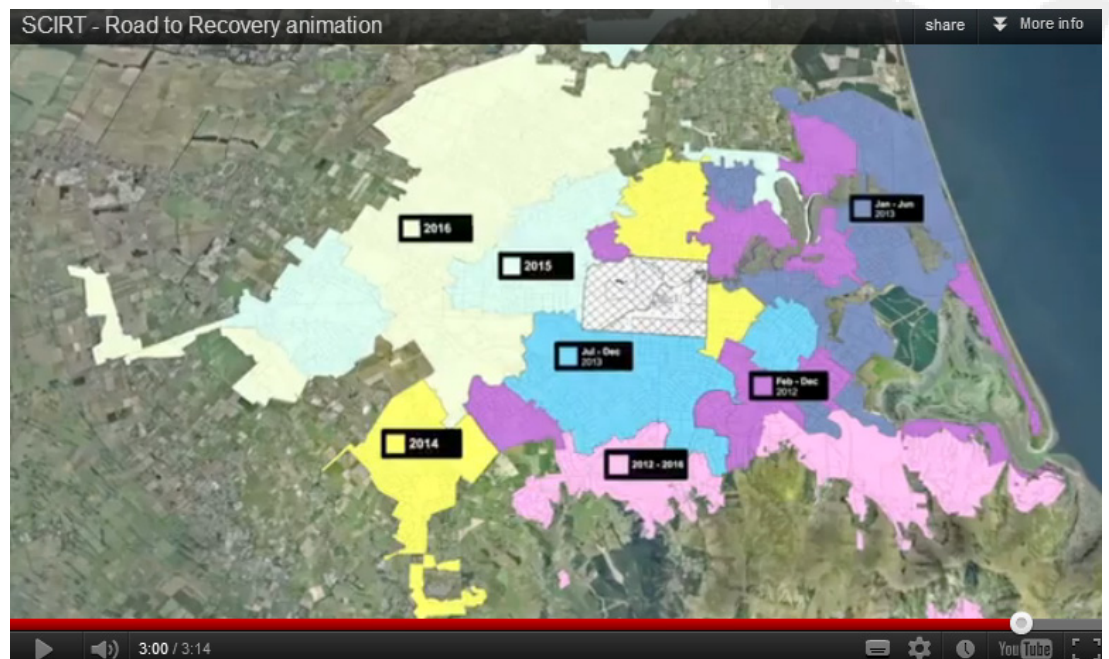
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## The road to recovery

The Christchurch Rebuild is the largest construction programme the country has ever seen. Demolition continues but some construction has now begun.

There are a number of factors affecting the rate at which the rebuild is progressing, so the Stronger Canterbury Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) have produced a video outlining the timescales involved. This will go some way in illustrating the fact that an entire city won't be rebuilt in 6 - 12 months. There is at least a decade's worth of work in Christchurch; some projects won't be taking off until some years into the future.







“My life has changed greatly for the better as I now have a job with bright prospects and look forward to building a successful career here in Christchurch..”

## Will Drennan

### Case study of moving to NZ

Current Employer: Arrow International – Christchurch

Will contacted Catalyst mid-February of this year having moved from the dismal economy in Ireland to work in Australia two years prior. Unfortunately he had found that the work and living conditions in Australia were not aligning with his career and lifestyle ambitions. Will was specifically interested in opportunities in Christchurch; his research having shown that such a move would get his career back on track, while at the same time offering him the better standard of living that he was looking for. In order to assist with making him as attractive to potential employers as possible Will applied for a working holiday visa, and arranged a short visit to New Zealand for the sole purpose of being available for face to face interviews with prospective clients. A move that paid off, and a week after his first interview he was offered a position as Site Manager with Arrow International.

#### What inspired you to consider moving with your family to New Zealand?

My inspiration to move to New Zealand initially stemmed from my working in remote conditions in Australia. Not wanting this lifestyle anymore and with difficulty in securing metro based work I decided a change and move to New Zealand would be a good option. Especially with the workload ahead of the building industry in Christchurch. I figured if I secure a job I will be working and living in the same city. So I made the move...

#### Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

I moved over April 24th so I have not been living here very long and have only ever been to Christchurch. However during my time here to date I have found it a good city to live, friendly locals, good beer and am enjoying the New Zealand ski season.

#### How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

Again I have been here a short time but since arrival I have dived into my work with both feet. My life has been very work focused so far but with the arrival of my partner I hope to experience more outside of work. So I am confident things will only get better. My life has changed greatly for the better as I now have a job with bright prospects and look forward to building a successful career here in Christchurch.

#### What one thing would you have done differently?

One thing I would have done differently.....If I had had more time when I arrived I possibly would have tried to sit some more interviews to get a better feel for market rates and job prospects out there. In saying that I am quite happy with my package received from Arrow

#### What one thing do you wish you had known about before moving?

I guess the shortage of accommodation here and the standard of many places for rent was a shock for me. There are very few furnished properties (furnished properties are not common in NZ – Ed) and it is very hard to secure something nice in a decent area. I should have researched a little more before moving out.

#### What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

Well referring back to my last point. Spend time considering what you want from where you live and do some research before coming out into the types and availability of rental property. Also coming from Oz I became soft and had to adjust to the cold again.. It's cold here!! Well for the winter months anyhow!.

#### Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move for you and your family?

Yes I am fully confident making a move to Christchurch was the right move. I have secured a position with a solid outfit who will have no shortage of work and offer great career progression. I also believe with the outdoor lifestyle offered I will have all I need here for recreation. I would make the same choice again. Let's hope I will continue to feel this way as time passes.

#### Useful facts

1st interview to offer	7 days
Offer to arrival	5 days
Time since arrival	154 days

## The Catalyst Team



**Andy Hopkins**

ahopkins@catalystjobs.co.nz



**Phil Ponder**

pponder@catalystjobs.co.nz



**Mireille Verdonkschot**

mverdon@catalystjobs.co.nz



**Fran Stevenson**

fstevenson@catalystjobs.co.nz



**Sam Phillips**

sphillips@catalystjobs.co.nz

### Address:

PO Box 17405  
Green Lane  
Auckland 1546

Level 2  
642 Great South Road  
Ellerslie  
Auckland 1051

### Phone:

+64 9 307 6111

### UK freephone:

0808 234 3587

### Fax:

+64 9 307 6110

### Website:

www.catalystjobs.co.nz

## Foundations laid for cardboard cathedral

The construction of Christchurch's cardboard cathedral is starting to get underway this week with concrete foundations being laid at the buildings Latimer Square site.

The temporary cathedral has been specifically designed by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban to seat 700 people and if all goes to plan is expected to open in February two years after the deadly earthquake. The 23m high church will serve as a replacement for the Anglican Christchurch Cathedral, which was severely damaged in the February 2011 earthquake and is currently being demolished.

Due to the issue of liquefaction the cathedral foundations are deep and as such over 750 cubic meters of concrete was poured into a 900 millimetre deep concrete raft, this required over 45 trucks to deliver the material and was laid over a 7 hour period. It has been specifically designed this way to normalise any ground deformation in the event of a quake.

Once the foundations are laid the cardboard cathedral will be made using a number of materials including steel and timber rather than just the unconventional building material it is named after. The cathedral will also use 320 six metre long 120 kilogram cardboard tubes as part of its structure which will be coated in polyurethane and joined together in groups of three with laminated beams put inside, the cardboard tubes are set to go up on site in October. Holmes project engineer Jamie Macgregor said the cardboard tubes being used as beams would be reinforced inside with special timber.



Construction manager Stephen Lynch says there will be no need to worry about the structure's strength. "It is a really robust material, it really is. It is something I have never worked with before, but it has proven itself to be very tough and resilient." (Source: NZ Herald)

It has been reported that the cardboard cathedral will be made to 100% of the building code and will last for at least 50 years.



Source: The Press

Photos: Iain McGregor