

Media Release

Convention Centre developer and operator revealed

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Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee has joined Prime Minister John Key in announcing the selection of the preferred developers and operators for Christchurch's new Convention Centre Precinct.

"This is a big milestone for a project that will provide a major boost to the economic heart of the rebuilt Christchurch," Mr Brownlee says.

"Today we're pleased to reveal that Plenary Conventions New Zealand, a consortium of proven international infrastructure firm Plenary Group, and experienced local firms Ngāi Tahu Property and Carter Group, has been selected as the preferred development consortium for this very large project.

"The next step for the consortium is to formally enter into a master planning and development phase, where the Crown will work with Plenary Conventions NZ on the detail of the precinct ahead of construction.

"We're also pleased to announce today that leading international convention centre and hotel operator Accor has been selected as the preferred operator of the Convention Centre. Accor will also work with the Crown and Plenary Conventions NZ into the next phase.

"Plenary Conventions NZ has produced a concept model and images to demonstrate its vision of what the Convention Centre Precinct might become.

"While all parties need to work through the exact design and layout of the Convention Centre Precinct, these concepts demonstrate the exciting possibilities in front of us.

"I expect the release of these images will take many local people on a significant journey toward realising what a large part of their central city will look like.

"I acknowledge the process up to now has been quite lengthy, with only minimal information publicly available.

"There is a very good reason for this; we needed to ensure we followed a thorough, fair and considered approach to find the best possible development consortium and operator, and this process is ongoing.

"I'm confident the end result of this work will be a vibrant, world-class Convention Centre Precinct that attracts conference and convention visitors from all over the world, and delivers significant economic benefits for the Canterbury region.

"I see Christchurch's Convention Centre Precinct complementing other convention facilities around the country.

"The project remains on track for construction to begin in 2015, and for the centre to be open for business in 2017.

"Beyond the Convention Centre complex, the precinct is likely to combine hotel accommodation, hospitality, retail, and commercial and residential uses.

"This is a major project on a scale that may surprise some people.

"Christchurch is New Zealand's gateway to the South Island, and it's only fitting it has a properly designed, constructed and operated commercial showpiece like the Convention Centre Precinct.

"I'm confident we've brought together an excellent team of companies to deliver it," Mr Brownlee says.

The Crown has committed \$284 million to the project.