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Christchurch International Airport understands solution for quake ravaged Kaiapoi

Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL) says it understands the Government’s decision to facilitate the rezoning of some new land for housing in one area of Kaiapoi, in the wake of the devastating earthquakes.

CIAL Chief Executive Jim Boult says the decision is not ideal for the airport because it opens up new areas of land for housing under the 50 dBA noise contour, but at the same time it reinforces the 50 dBA noise contour as the limit for residential development across the rest of greater Christchurch.

“We understand the situation in Kaiapoi is unique and this is the only way for Kaiapoi to rebuild. Unlike other parts of Christchurch there is no other land available at Kaiapoi to replace the loss of the Red Zone. Importantly for the airport, the decision reinforces the importance of the health and economic factors that make the air noise boundaries a vital part of Canterbury’s future development and regional planning,” he says.

Mr Boult says the airport company was clearly concerned any decision to ease development limitations inside the noise contours would impact on its future operations, by exposing it to a risk of complaints about noise in future.

“It is well known that we have been fighting against just such an outcome through the Environment Court, which we have always seen as the appropriate forum for a decision on land use within Kaiapoi.

“However, Court processes are very lengthy and we appreciate the extraordinary circumstances that have led to this decision.

“We are pleased the Minister has confirmed this will be a one-off situation to allow new development in the 50 dBA contour.

“All parties have made it clear to us they consider this an exceptional situation. They recognise there is land available within Christchurch and Selwyn areas, outside the noise contours, for new residential development. This means that land can be developed over the next 30 – 50 years without compromising the airport’s ability to operate 24/7.”

Jim Boult says CIAL will now look at amending its appeal against parts of the Regional Policy Statement relating to development at Kaiapoi to align with the Minister’s direction.
For further comment, please contact:

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Christchurch International Airport – New Zealand’s Tourism Gateway

Christchurch International Airport welcomed nearly 6 million passengers in 2008/2009, ranking as New Zealand’s second largest airport. The Airport occupies a unique position economically, as the South Island’s busiest and most strategic air connection to the world’s trade and tourism markets. In addition, the airport plays an important role as the South Island’s major domestic hub servicing all New Zealanders, enabling passengers to connect to a full spectrum of destinations throughout New Zealand. Christchurch International Airport is a major driver of the regional Canterbury economy, generating airport precinct related jobs for nearly 5000 people.

Christchurch International Airport is owned and operated by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL). CIAL was established as a limited liability company in 1988, and ownership of CIAL is now shared by Christchurch City Holdings Limited with 75% and the New Zealand Government with 25%. The company’s vision is to be recognised as New Zealand’s leading tourist gateway.

Christchurch International Airport is a carbon neutral company and has received carboNZero certification from Landcare Research following a detailed measurement and analysis process. CIAL is the first airport company in the Southern Hemisphere to attain certified carbon neutral status and is the second carbon neutral certified airport company in the world.

Visit christchurchairport.co.nz for more information.