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RAVENSWOOD PROGRESSING ACROSS THE BOARD Appoints City Care as Preferred Tenderer for Civil Works

With major earthworks, roading and other civil works about to get underway onsite, North Canterbury's largest new commercial and residential development is marking a new phase, with demand strong, full first-tier funding secured and consents issued.

Ravenswood Developments has just appointed City Care as its preferred tenderer to undertake the civil works for the new development, 20 kilometres north of Christchurch. Civil works are expected to begin onsite in March 2017 and will include major earthworks, roading, services – including fibre broadband, storm water management, and the realignment of the Taranaki stream.

Christchurch-based City Care is a large, national provider of infrastructure construction, maintenance and management services.

Ravenswood general manager, Paul Croft says the company was delighted to be able to appoint City Care to undertake the significant development works.

"We believe in supporting Canterbury businesses wherever possible, in order to keep the impact of our investment local, stimulate regional growth and support local jobs," says Paul Croft.

"This fits well with City Care's aim to use their own people, who live and work in the communities in which they serve, to deliver their contracts.

"We have also been impressed by the range of capabilities City Care has demonstrated, particularly in the Canterbury rebuild, coupled with their technical expertise in the development of roading and infrastructure," says Paul Croft.

City Care's Executive General Manager – Civil Construction and Building Construction Paul Blackler says the Ravenswood project is a significant win for the company.

"City Care has established a strong reputation in the construction of subdivision infrastructure after completing several high-profile projects in recent years. We are very pleased to be working with Ravenswood on this important development, and we look forward to helping create a welcoming, vibrant community for the residents," says Paul Blackler.

Wide-ranging progress

In addition to the appointment of City Care, Mr Croft says Ravenswood is making progress in a number of key areas.

"We are now finalising the final loan documentation with our funding partner, Bank of New Zealand, and all our consents have also been issued," Paul Croft says.

“This is great news, marking a very exciting phase for Ravenswood. With civil works due to start in March, we expect construction to be completed around December 2017, with titles expected shortly after.

“We have been very heartened to receive a large number of enquiries regarding commercial leasing options from a broad range of commercial operators.

“We now also have 80 residential lot contracts in place with very good enquiry coming through. Earthworks on stage 1 of the residential area are expected to commence not long after the commercial.

“Our light industrial sites are selling well, with only 10 remaining for sale from the original 36 lots. We have had interest from a diverse range of small business operators wanting to set up business in Ravenswood as well as investors who see this as a real opportunity for the future.

“One of the main attractions has been Ravenswood’s high profile location adjacent to State Highway 1, coupled with the significant growth in the region,” Paul Croft says.

Currently 18,000 cars per day travel past the Ravenswood site on SH1, which provides access to the development for a direct local catchment of over 12,000 people.

Murray Powell from Motivation deSign in Woodend is one of the purchasers of a light industrial lot who will relocate his signage business to Ravenswood.

“This gives me the opportunity to get in at the early stage of the development, invest in my own commercial premises and be my own landlord. And I can continue to service my customers from the wider North Canterbury region from a purpose-built building in a very central location with easy access from State Highway 1,” Mr Powell says.

Other investors include Mike Greer, who has recently purchased land to build two childcare centres within Ravenswood, one in the commercial precinct and one in the stage 1 residential area. Mike Greer Homes has also purchased a number of stage 1 residential sections at Ravenswood and will be offering house and land packages on those lots.

Mike Greer believes the rapidly-growing Waimakariri District provides excellent commercial investment opportunities.

“The population of the District is expected to increase from 50,000 to around 76,000 by 2031 - a rise of 52%. We have already invested in other North Canterbury developments and Ravenswood provides a good opportunity for us to invest early as we believe it will become a major commercial hub for the area,” Mike Greer says.

Bypass underway

Ravenswood has also recently reached agreement with NZTA on the purchase of a piece of Ravenswood land near the roundabout on State Highway 1, which will form part of the Woodend Short Eastern Bypass.

Paul Croft said the Short Eastern Bypass will make Ravenswood a very strategic location for commercial operators as the motorway will end at the roundabout at the entrance to the commercial precinct.

“This was one of the reasons why major commercial operators, such as New World, BP, and McDonalds, have already committed to being part of the commercial precinct,” Paul Croft says.

“The progress on the Bypass is also significant because it marks a new stage in the regional roading strategy that will see congestion on journeys to Christchurch become much less of an issue.

“With NZTA’s Northern Corridor motorway project about to start, the Western Belfast bypass well advanced, and the future Short Eastern Bypass in preparation, North Canterbury commuters will find a much eased roading network,” Paul Croft says.