



# **Canterbury**

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

## **Proposed Sale of Land at Hanmer Springs**

### **Summary of Submissions**

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This document is available on the Canterbury District Health Board web site:

<http://www.cdhb.govt.nz>

## Introduction

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The Canterbury District Health Board wishes to thank all those individuals and groups who contributed to making a submission on the proposed sale of the Former Queen Mary Land at Hanmer Springs.

This Summary of Submissions sets out the key points and issues raised by the submissions received as part of the Canterbury District Health Board consultation process.

The Summary of Submissions will be forwarded to the Minister of Health, together with Canterbury District Health Board's recommendation relating to the proposed sale.

When sales of hospital land and buildings are proposed, District Health Boards are required, under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to obtain the Minister of Health's approval to the sale. Before considering approving the sale the Minister must be satisfied that the Canterbury District Health Board is aware through consultation, of the views of the Canterbury/Hanmer Springs population to the sale of the land.



Jean O'Callaghan  
**Chief Executive : Canterbury District Health Board**

## The Consultation Process

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In September 2003, the Canterbury District Health Board commenced the consultation process for the proposal to dispose of the former Queen Mary Hospital land in Hanmer Springs. The process included:-

- 1 Sending copies of the Consultation Document and Submission Booklet to known stakeholders.
- 2 The publication of notices in the Christchurch Press and the local Hanmer Springs newspaper from early August to mid September 2003.
- 3 Posting the Consultation Documents on the Canterbury District Health Board website.
- 4 Supplying the Hanmer Springs Public Library with copies of the Consultation Documents.

The Consultation Document provided a brief background of events leading up to the sale proposal, why the DHB wishes to sell the property, and the key components of the proposed sale process. The document requested feedback on three questions which were included in the Submission Booklet attached to the Consultation Document.

Submissions could be made either in writing, by email or verbally. If a verbal submission was made, Canterbury District Health Board staff would record the view communicated.

## Feedback

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A total of 94 submissions representing at least 304 individuals were received within the timeframe set in the proposal document. A breakdown of these is as follows:-

Type of Organisation	Number
Local Government	3
Local Lobby Group	2
Non-Government Organisation	4
Not responding as part of an organisation	36
Other	6
Unknown/not stated	43

Nearly one third of all the submissions came from within Hanmer Springs (31/94) and just over two thirds from within the South Island (66/94). There were also 17 submissions from the North Island, two from Australia and nine that were unknown/not stated.

Over half of the submitters requested a copy of the Summary of Submissions (49/94).

# Responses to the Questions

## Introduction

Each question is identified with a summary response below the question followed by a comment from the Canterbury District Health Board.

Of the 94 responses received in relation to this consultation many of the submitters did not answer the specific questions raised in the consultation booklet as individual questions. Rather, they chose to discuss their points as part of a general opinion. These submissions have been discussed under Question 1 which follows for ease of reference.

## Question 1 – Do you think the land should be disposed of? If not, why not?

Of the 94 submissions received 11 submitted YES the land should be sold, 3 did not specify yes or no and 80 stated that the land should not be sold.

Of the 11 who submitted YES the majority of these submissions had conditions attached to their YES. Submitters were happy to see the land sold but wanted certain restrictions imposed on the sale, such as to whom the land was sold or to what purpose the land was put once sold.

*"Yes, provided that once the land is cleared for sale, it should be offered to the people of Hanmer Springs ....."*

*"Do it BUT use wisdom in doing so".*

Other YES submissions had no conditions attached at all.

*"The sale of the land should be for the greater common good of all Canterbury Health subscribers not just to appease the whimsical fancies of the pipe dreamers".*

Of the 80 submissions that stated NO, there were a number of common themes which came forward as to why the submitters felt that the land should not be sold.

- 1 The first theme which was apparent in 34 of the NO submissions was that the land should not be sold because its sale would mean the closure of the drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility on the site.

*"Recently I attended a workshop in Queen Mary and was shocked to hear that the programme had been closed and that the land was to be sold to a private group .... The value of the work that has been done at Queen Mary is world renown and to see this disappear would be a great tragedy."*

**Canterbury District Health Board Comment** - The sale of the land in itself will not mean the closure of the current facility on the site nor the end of the service provided. The sale of the land is subject to the current lease in place which has 16 years to run. The sale will simply mean a change in landlord for the tenant.

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- 2 Another key point to emerge was that the land should not be sold but should be retained for a hospital/medical facility/rest home/reserve. This point was raised in 20 of the NO submissions.

*"I do not wish to see the land disposed of. It should be used for the purpose of a hospital or rehab centre for sick and needy citizens".*

*"It would make a great old people's home".*

**Canterbury District Health Board comment** – as outlined in the Consultation Booklet, the Canterbury District Health Board has not had a health or disability purpose for the land at Hanmer Springs since 1997 and it is not envisaged that it will require a 15.5 hectare site in this location in the future. Further, as outlined above, the land cannot be utilised for any of the stated purposes because there is a lease of the entire site in place with 16 years to run.

- 3 Other submitters felt that the land should be retained as part of a park to be enjoyed as it currently is, by all members of the public.

*"It (the land) must retain its public ownership to ensure its values are preserved for the prosperity of Hanmer Springs and all those who come to it for its beauty and the rest and relaxation it provides".*

*"Truly one of the jewels of the South Island it continues to bring enjoyment to many, why wreck it?"*

**Canterbury District Health Board comment** – the entire site is currently leased and none of it is available or open to the public for any use without the consent of the tenant. There are significant areas of the site not suitable for public access.

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### **Question 2 – Do you think the Canterbury District Health Board should retain the land? If so, why?**

Many of the comments received expanded on question 1 above.

In addition to the 11 submissions that stated the land should be sold and that the Canterbury District Health Board should no longer be the owner of the land, a further 6 submitters stated that even though they didn't want the land sold they didn't want the Canterbury District Health Board to retain the land either.

*"No! I think it should be offered back to the Government so it may be reinstated as a national treatment centre."*

*"The land does not necessarily need to be maintained by the Canterbury District Health Board but retained in the manner it currently is, i.e. garden/therapeutic environment by another party."*

Other key points were that the Canterbury District Health Board should not retain ownership but that the land should be owned by Government, that it should be retained in public ownership or that it should be owned by the Hurunui District Council.

**Canterbury District Health Board Comment** – the land does not need to be owned by the Canterbury District Health Board for the current use of the site to continue. The use of the site is secured by the lease which is in place and a change in ownership will not necessarily affect this.

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### **Question 3 – Do you have any other issues about the proposed sale you would like to raise?**

Many submitters spoke of their own personal experiences as a patient of the former Queen Mary Hospital or the experiences of family members who used the service provided from that hospital prior to its closure in 1997. Others spoke as employees or patients of the current service provider on the site.

A number of submissions (7) commented that the land had been gifted to the Crown, the Canterbury District Health Board or the people of Hanmer Springs for use as a hospital. Another comment in this regard was that the land was subject to reserve status and could not be sold.

*"This land was given to New Zealanders for the use of rehabilitation of New Zealanders. If disposed of it will probably be used for tourism purposes which is totally alien to the purpose it was given."*

*"Since it (the land) was gifted to the people of Hanmer Springs it must remain in public ownership."*

**Canterbury District Health Board comment** – in 1997 Healthlink South Limited (now Canterbury District Health Board) commissioned a report from Terralink in relation to whether the land in question was subject to the offer-back provisions of the Public Works Act 1981. In that report and in subsequent reports commissioned by the Canterbury District Health Board the background to the land was investigated and signed off by the Office of the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

These reports confirmed that there are no records of the property prior to 1860 which indicates that the property was acquired by the Crown from the Ngai Tahu Tribe via the "Kemp purchase" of June 1848. These reports further confirmed that the land has never left the Crown's ownership since its original purchase from the Ngai Tahu Tribe. Consequently the land could not ever have been gifted to the Canterbury District Health Board, the Government or the people of Hanmer Springs.

Secondly, subsequent investigations have revealed that while the land did have reserve status up until 1981, in that year the land was declared by Gazette as being vested in the North Canterbury Hospital Board in fee simple. This legislation effectively removed the reserve status on the land and vested it in the hospital board as owner of freehold land.

Many submissions stated that the community wanted the Canterbury District Health Board to reach agreement with the current tenant of the site and the Hurunui District Council to purchase the land. Submissions along these lines were received by the Hanmer Springs Community Board, Queen Mary Hospital Limited (Hanmer Clinics Limited) and the Hurunui District Council, as well as others who wished to remain anonymous.

**Canterbury District Health Board Comment** – Crown Land in the Canterbury region is subject to the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act (1998) which gives Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu a right of refusal to purchase the property. Further in relation to this particular piece of land a right of refusal was granted to the tenant as part of the lease agreement.

## Summary

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Of the 94 submissions received, a considerable majority stated that they did not wish to see the land sold. Of these, a considerable number were related to the issue of closure of the facility provided on the site rather than the sale of the land itself.

The Canterbury District Health Board does not provide or fund the provision of the current service from the site and its continuation will not be affected by the sale of the land itself.

Many submissions related to concerns local residents have with regard to the considerable development happening within the area and with regard to potential development of the land in question and its future use. The Canterbury District Health Board acknowledges that these may be real issues for the people of Hanmer Springs however the Canterbury District Health Board believes that the Hurunui District Plan and the provisions of the Resource Management Act are the appropriate forums for these concerns to be addressed.

Following the consultation process a recommendation will be made to the Board of the Canterbury District Health Board and if the Board decides to proceed with the sale an application will be made to the Minister of Health for approval for the sale to proceed.