



DOIA21/22030717

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Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email dated 26 March 2022 to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). On 28 March 2022, part of your request was transferred to Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) for response:

Additionally, any information regarding plans for future purchases of motels for the purpose of transitional housing.

Transitional housing is temporary accommodation and support for individuals or families who are in urgent need of housing. It provides warm, dry, short-term housing for people and families who have an urgent need for a place to stay.

In addition to temporary accommodation, people in transitional housing are provided with support services to help them address their needs and move back into long-term accommodation.

People living in transitional housing contribute 25 percent of their income, which is in line with income-related rents for public housing and Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants. The balance is subsidised to providers by the Ministry.

It is intended that families and individuals stay in transitional housing for an average of around 12 weeks. They also receive a further 12 weeks of support once they have found a more permanent place to live.

The Ministry does not purchase motels for use as transitional housing. Transitional housing, which in some cases uses motels, is managed by accredited social service providers who are contracted by the Ministry to provide this service and are responsible for making sure the properties are warm, dry and well maintained.

These providers also support the people living there, helping them access services like Ministry of Social Development, budgeting advice and health services. Providers will work with people in transitional housing to actively support them in securing permanent housing.

As you may also be aware, in 2021 the Government announced that it would also directly contract motels in Rotorua to deliver emergency housing, making it easier for wrap-around support services to be delivered to whanau and tamariki living in motels.

A community-led housing hub in central Rotorua has also been launched, called Te Pokapū, to act as a single access point connecting people in Government-contracted motels with the right support services. These include services to help whānau settle into their accommodation, social worker support, Ready-to Rent programmes, budgeting training, numeracy and literacy training, and after-school and holiday programmes for children.

Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities (Kāinga Ora) continues to increase housing for whānau across New Zealand. It is moving forward with plans for public and supported homes in buildings and on land it already owns or has bought. Redevelopment is also underway across New Zealand, where Kainga Ora is replacing older existing homes with more warm and dry housing.

Kāinga Ora has purchased motels and improved these to make them suitable for transitional housing, while permanent homes are sought. Some of these transitional housing sites were purchased with the intent to redevelop the land in the longer-term once the short-term housing need is addressed as more permanent homes are built. These sites are often large, and offer flexibility for future redevelopment options.

Motels offer an opportunity to provide needed transitional housing, and some land is earmarked for future development to provide more homes. On a case by case basis, Kāinga Ora will buy a house or land where:

- a property is strategically located and acquisition would enable a significant uplift in development outcomes and numbers;
- redevelopment and/or retrofit activities require homes to re-house displaced tenants and there are no other homes available;
- existing leases are coming to an end and Kāinga Ora has the option to buy the property rather than lose it from its portfolio;
- there is a transfer of a housing portfolio from the current owner to Kāinga Ora (for example, the Nelson City Council housing stock); and
- there is a pressing need and no available public rental properties.

At the same time, the Government recognises that motels are not a suitable environment for vulnerable individuals, families and whanau and they are also not cost effective. That is why the Public Housing Plan was launched, in response to the increasing demand for public housing across New Zealand.

The Public Housing Plan 2021-2024 provides information about the location and number of an additional 8,000 public and transitional housing places that will be delivered by June 2024, and builds on the 2018 Public Housing Plan.

The Plan focuses on building new houses with Kāinga Ora leading the delivery. It is taking a deliberate, place-based and MAIHI (Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action) approach, collaborating with our partners in the community to develop and implement joined-up local solutions where the need for public housing is urgent.

Rotorua has been identified as one of nine priority focus areas where need for public housing has grown the fastest and a step change in delivery is required. There are approximately 220 new public homes under construction or being planned in total in Rotorua, with the first of these ready in mid-2022. You find out more about the Public Housing Plan 2021-2024 at www.hud.govt.nz/community-and-public-housing/increasing-public-housing/public-housing-plan/.

In addition, \$55 million has been committed by Government to address congestion and stormwater constraints on the East side of Rotorua and to enable future stages of the Ngāti Whakaue Tribal Lands Wharenui Rise development.

The Medium Density Residential Standard (MDRS) will be applied to Rotorua with three dwellings of up to three storeys able to be built on most residential sites without a resource consent, allowing the council to significantly increase supply. More information about the MDRS is available at www.hud.govt.nz/urban-development/enabling-housing-density/.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathon Fraser', is positioned above the typed name.

Jonathon Fraser
General Manager
Housing and Services Delivery