

BID TO GET RED ZONE FOR \$1



Have your say

Have people been “locked out” of earthquake recovery? Should the Government sell the residential red zone to an independent trust? Email fraser.walker@starmedia.kiwi

FRASER WALKER-PEARCE

Groups want the Government to sell the residential red zone (above) to an independent trust – for \$1.

Avon-Otakaro Network and Eastern Vision have asked the Government to consider “writing off” the land in a bid to return control back to residents.

They say residents have been left out of decision-making on the future use of the red zone and earthquake recovery.

The bid was made in submis-

sions on the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Bill. The proposed bill exits the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority out of earthquake recovery and could see the Government leave control of the city’s rebuild to the city council in 2021.

A report on the bill is due February 25.

Avon-Otakaro Network co-chairman Evan Smith (right) said the bid was to increase the amount of community engagement in the recovery and take control away from the Government.



The trust would not be operated by Government nor city council.

But he said it will be difficult, because the Government would want a good financial return on the land.

A spokesman for Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry

Brownlee said he would not make comment on submissions.

Christchurch East MP Poto Williams (left) said it was a good idea but the Government was unlikely to go down this path.

“The cynical part of me says the Crown will want a return (on the land). My view is that I don’t believe they will just let it go.

Mr Smith said in the submission, people had been locked out of the red zone area.

“These are no-go areas that we venture into under threat of trespass or arrest,” he said.

He said the people had become “increasingly dis-empowered and disillusioned”.

“This is not a result of the earthquakes; it is a result of the agencies’ response to the earthquakes.”

In the submission, Mr Smith said if the Government looked to turn the area into a residential area it should avoid making “gated communities” or “extreme social housing ghettos”.

“Rather a pepper-potting of mixed-use housing should be considered,” he said.