

Locating Property Boundaries After Shallow Land Movement – the Canterbury Experience

Clare Robertson, Mark Dyer and Nic Donnelly (New Zealand)

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SUMMARY

In 2010 and 2011 the Canterbury region of New Zealand experienced a series of earthquakes (the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence) that caused extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure and caused the deaths of 185 people. Shallow land movement triggered by the earthquakes caused uncertainty in the surveying environment as, in the worst affected areas of Christchurch City, accepted survey practices were no longer sufficient to provide certainty on the location of property boundaries. These accepted survey practices were also resulting in different weightings being placed on evidence leading to different property boundary determinations. After listening to the concerns of surveyors in Christchurch, the Surveyor-General and Land Information New Zealand established a programme to investigate the problem and develop a solution in consultation with affected parties. This paper provides a brief overview of the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence and the impact land movement had on the surveying environment. It then goes on to describe the Canterbury property boundaries problem and the implications for affected parties. The potential options for resolving the problem are then outlined including the outcomes that potential solutions were assessed against.

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