

Media Release

Response to Earthquake Memorial Press article

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Michelle Mitchell, of the Memorial project steering group:

It is important people know that the short-listed designs in their current form are still to be developed, with input from groups such as those who lost loved ones or were seriously injured in the quakes, and therefore will be significantly enhanced when the public is formally asked for feedback on the developed designs in the new year. We know it can be difficult to judge from the current images what the potential for the design is in physical terms.

The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, and its partners the Christchurch City Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, have been very mindful of running a process that is fair and provides every opportunity for input from the various interested parties, while also being fair to those who submitted the more than 330 designs. We wanted the short-listed designs to be developed in a way that was not influenced by exposure to the other designs.

We would urge people to consider that these designs do need to be developed before reaching any conclusions about whether or not they could be turned into a suitable Earthquake Memorial. After the short-listed designs are developed, they are due to be presented again to the bereaved families and seriously injured, and then to recovery leaders, key stakeholders such as first responder organisations, and for feedback in a public exhibition.

After receiving feedback, an evaluation panel made up of arts professionals, experts in architecture and landscape architecture and a participant from the families who lost loved ones in the February 2011 earthquake will make a recommendation on its preferred design to a Memorial Leadership Group. This group is made up of the Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, the Mayor of Christchurch, Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage. The final decision on the Memorial design rests with the Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Nicky Wagner.

We remain confident that the end result will be a fitting memorial that honours the lives of those who died in Canterbury's earthquakes, as well as acknowledging the shared trauma of Cantabrians and recognising those who participated in the rescue and recovery operation after the February 2011 earthquake