

Need FOR Change

Canterbury Museum's Proposed Redevelopment Project





“A visit to a museum is a search for beauty, truth, and meaning in our lives. Go to museums as often as you can.”



Kia Ora

Canterbury Museum has been on the same site for 150 years – since October 1870. With more than 750,000 visitors a year, we are Te Wai Pounamu's (South Island) most visited indoor tourist attraction and an important and significant contributor to the city and regional economies.

The Museum is an iconic feature of the Christchurch Cultural Precinct and the wider city. The Museum not only has the only remaining undamaged neo-Gothic buildings in the city, but also cares for the heritage-listed Robert McDougall Gallery.

More than 2 million items of Canterbury's heritage, its taonga (treasures), are housed or displayed at the Museum. The Museum collections have an estimated value in excess of \$1 billion, but of course they are held in trust and can't be sold. We are one of the country's oldest museums, but sadly those years have taken a toll on our buildings. We now need to protect Canterbury's taonga, including our heritage buildings.

The Canterbury Museum Trust Board is proposing a redevelopment of the Museum in response to the need to actively position and shape its future for the next 100 years. This is not a nice to do project. This is a response to a set of challenges that threaten the future of the Museum itself as a physical structure and as an important community function.

We would like to create a fit-for-purpose Museum and upgrade our visitor facilities for all of you to enjoy for years to come. We need your help. Your opinion is important to us and we want to hear what you have to say about your Museum and what you'd like to see in the proposed redevelopment.

In the following pages you will read about why the proposed redevelopment is needed. As we embark on the proposed redevelopment journey there will be plenty of opportunity to provide feedback along the way before final decisions are made and plans produced.

We look forward to your feedback.

Ngā mihi



David Ayers

Chair, Canterbury Museum Trust Board



Anthony Wright

Director, Canterbury Museum

Need FOR Change

Canterbury Museum is embarking on a proposed redevelopment project that is critical to the Museum's ability to remain open. We face many challenges as we look forward 100 years to be a world-class facility for storing, protecting, celebrating and respectfully remembering our heritage and stories, including the Canterbury earthquakes.

Canterbury Museum acquires and cares for world-wide collections from human and natural history, with a focus on Canterbury and the Antarctic. Access to these collections drives research, inspires learning and ignites imagination through stories that surprise and delight our visitors. The values underpinning our proposed redevelopment include:





Our beautiful buildings

Canterbury Museum has been on its current site since 1870 when the first Benjamin Mountfort designed building opened to the public. The Museum is actually seven separate buildings built between 1870 and 1995 that cover more than 90% of the site. The heritage buildings, mirroring the Christ Church Cathedral at the other end of Worcester Boulevard, are our greatest treasures.

The nineteenth century buildings were earthquake strengthened in the 1990s. As a result, the Mountfort-designed buildings are the only Gothic Revival buildings in the city that were not extensively damaged in the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes.

Our twentieth century buildings have been well past their use-by date for some time. While they're safe to visit and work in, the earthquakes made a number of issues worse.

Cracks in the buildings mean pests can get in. There's no air conditioning or insulation, which means the temperature and humidity cannot be properly controlled. The buildings leak in places when it rains and only some areas have sprinkler systems.

We are likely to need to replace a large portion of the twentieth century buildings and add base isolation across the site. Base isolation is the norm for museums in other earthquake prone areas of the world. Many international exhibitions won't come to buildings like ours due to the risk of earthquakes.

This will offer further protection to the nineteenth century heritage buildings, protect the collections, and improve the visitor experience and the behind the scenes work of the Museum.

The proposed redevelopment will strengthen the heritage buildings and protect and restore lost features. Our proposed redevelopment will celebrate the original architecture and reflect city founders' intentions for the Museum's exterior. We will work within the guidelines of the New Zealand Historic Places Act (1993) and we plan to bring back the original flèche (slender spire) on the Rolleston Avenue facade. A Heritage / Conservation Architect will be engaged as part of the consultant design team, to provide input during all stages of the redevelopment process.

Unlike most museums, there is no centralised control system and no way to regulate temperature and humidity in our buildings.

These temperature and humidity issues are causing damage to precious artefacts, some from prehistoric times.

The earthquakes also resulted in multiple non-structural micro cracks, and the aged roof and wall claddings mean a number of the buildings leak. These conditions are damaging the collections. The collections are also unprotected in the event of another significant earthquake.

We've delayed work for years pending a redevelopment but now we are having to dig into reserves to maintain and patch up obsolete buildings and services. Currently bare wiring runs through corridors, water pipes through storerooms and we spend a lot of our time patching up problems.

Our exhibition spaces are constrained by lack of services and flexibility. Our visitor facilities are stretched beyond breaking point and our collection storage areas are cramped and scattered. The visitor experience is impacted as the Museum only has one lift and insufficient toilets. The dated interior detracts from the exhibits and just 1% of our vast collection is able to be displayed at a time. More space will allow us to improve the experience for our visitors, and enable us to show off more of our incredible exhibits.

This rabbit was on display in the Living Canterbury exhibition; his fur was eaten by case moths.



Need FOR Change

More space to tell stories of our shared history

The history of Christchurch and Canterbury Museum begins not with the buildings but with the land and people.

We have a long relationship with Ngāi Tūāhuriri and we are working closely together to ensure the redevelopment occurs in genuine partnership with tangata whenua, rūnanga and iwi. The Cultural Narrative they have gifted to the Museum weaves together the cultural values, traditions and history of Ngāi Tūāhuriri. It recognises the rights and guarantees provided under the Treaty of Waitangi and respects the mana of the local hapū, iwi and all peoples now resident in this land.

The proposed redevelopment is an opportunity for Ngāi Tūāhuriri to lead, inform and help design the representation of past and current Māori culture and stories on display in partnership with Museum staff.

Iwi Tawhito – whenua hou Gallery



More space to bring back treasures & display all of our exhibits

Canterbury Museum is home to internationally important objects from Canterbury, Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world. This includes the most significant collection of objects relating to the heroic age of Antarctic exploration and discovery and a large collection of Ngāi Tahu taonga.

Currently only **1%** of our collection can be displayed at any one time and some of the collection has never been seen by the public.

One of the treasures of Canterbury Museum, the Okarito Blue Whale skeleton (26.5 metres long), requires a space appropriately sized to allow for a dynamic and exciting display of this large and important exhibit. The bones are fully conserved but not currently assembled as a whole skeleton. The proposed redevelopment will bring this incredible exhibit out of storage and back on display.

Professor Paul Scofield, Senior Curator Natural History with the Blue Whale skeleton that is in temporary storage.

Blue Whale skeleton on display in the former Garden Court, 1995.



We recently acquired medals that were awarded to the great Antarctic explorer, Ernest Shackleton. These medals are in storage and have never been seen by the public. We want to share them and hundreds of other new Antarctic exhibits in a proposed greatly expanded Antarctic Gallery.

More public space that is safe, welcoming & comfortable for everyone

Redevelopment will bring the visitor experience into the twenty-first century and the digital age. New, fit-for-purpose facilities will attract and meet the needs of more than one million visitors – locals and tourists – a year.

Our current buildings and visitor facilities are overstretched and ill-equipped to cope with growing number of visitors.



We have:

- One small lift – it moves people and collection objects, and often breaks down.
- Limited toilets.
- A small cafe on Level 4 and a constrained retail shop in the foyer.
- Limited welcoming spaces for visitors to gather and orient themselves.
- A small education room that is difficult to access.
- No temperature control across most of the building. In the peak summer season, exhibitions can be congested and some spaces are unbearably hot and stuffy.

This will only get **worse** over time.

Sir Edmund Hillary's tractor in the Antarctic Gallery

More space for new exhibitions that are accessible, relevant & inspirational

Every year we stage 10 to 12 temporary exhibitions. These range from large international touring exhibitions to Museum-curated exhibitions based on the collections, and smaller community initiatives.

New exhibition space will allow us to tell more of the stories that are important to Canterbury and in a range of different ways. Modern technology would be integrated into the building, finally bringing the Museum into the digital age. New purpose-built exhibition space will allow us to host major international shows that we are unable to host in the current small, inflexible spaces.

Visitors enjoying the temporary exhibition, Ancient New Zealand: Squawkzilla and the Giants.



More space to welcome & host visitors

Our current foyer area is cramped making it difficult to properly welcome all our visitors and we have limited spaces where we can host guests and hold other special occasions. Multi-purpose and flexible gathering spaces will better enable us to provide the hospitality – manaakitanga – that is appropriate for guests.

Lynne-Harata Te Aika of the Museum's Ōhākī o Ngā Tīpuna (left) greets Tashina Eastman from the Confederated Tributes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Oregon, USA, during a repatriation ceremony.



More storage to extend the life of our collections

We have 2.3 million items in the collection. Poor quality storage is putting these at risk and constraining our ability to accept more items of community heritage. The various collections are stored piecemeal throughout the building in stores that are congested and have poor environment controls.

We can't control the temperature or humidity in most of the Museum which causes objects to deteriorate. A redeveloped museum will protect the taonga (treasures) we care for on behalf of Canterbury.

This elephant is stored in an attic space above one of the ground floor galleries, along with thousands of other treasures.

Humidifiers at work in the basement storage area.



More room for new education spaces for lifelong learning

The Museum provides a range of education and public programmes delivering significant educational benefits and opportunities. Redevelopment will mean dedicated, modern learning spaces for the thousands of school children who visit us each year so they can learn in an environment that meets today's learning needs.

Generations of Cantabrians have been educated at the Museum; last year almost 35,000 people, including 16,700 school students, participated in Museum delivered programmes.

Our current education facilities are cramped and we can only offer limited digital education opportunities.

Another 30,200 people enjoyed public programmes at the Museum last year ranging from gallery tours and talks to much-loved family favourites, *Night at the Museum* and *The Great Museum Santa Search*. We have very limited space for innovative public

programmes and have to hold public talks and lectures in the Bird Hall, a gallery which is ill-suited, has limited technology, no air-conditioning, plastic seating and is nowhere near a lift.

Children from Sockburn School

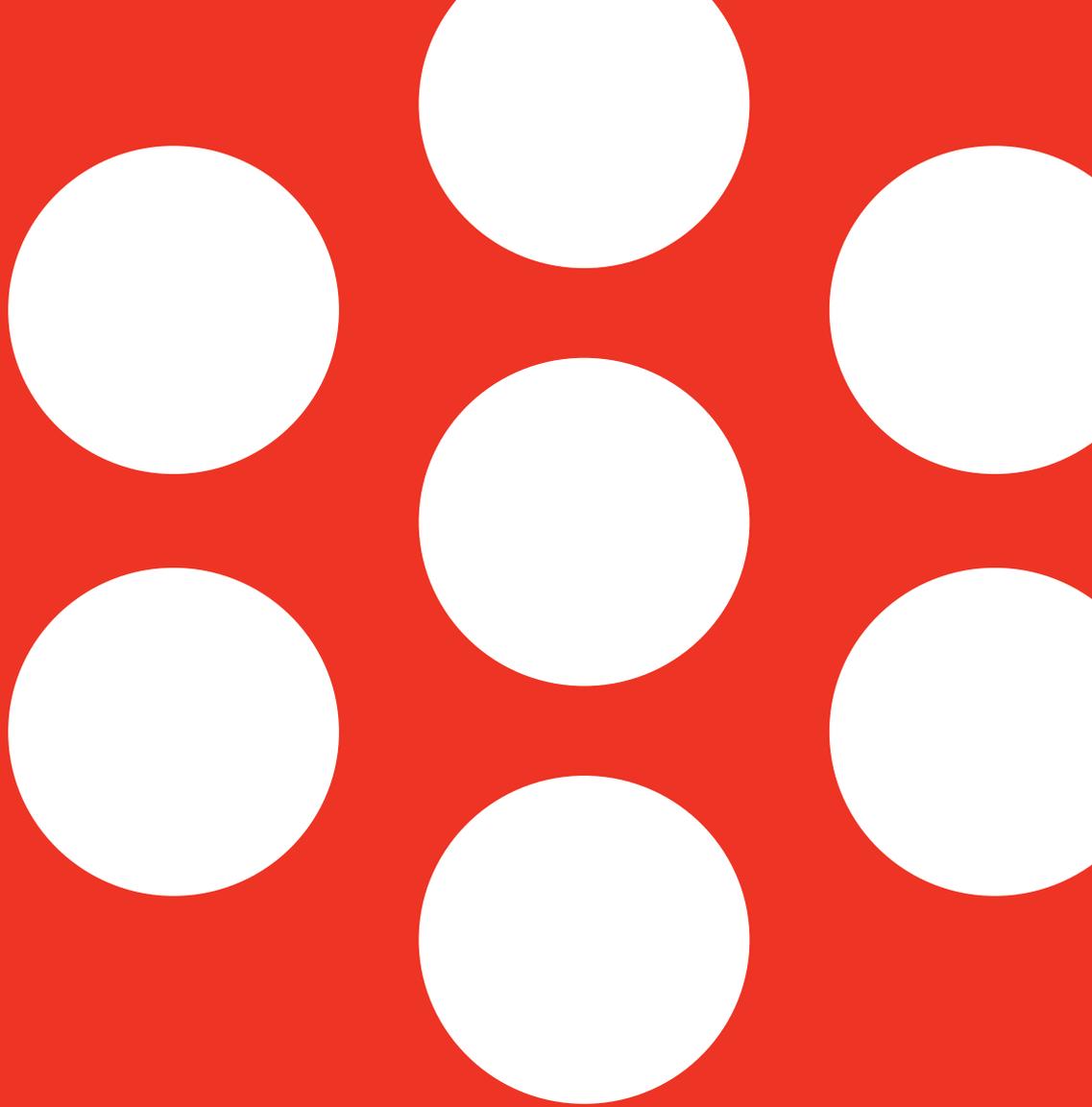


Your opinion is important to us – we want to hear what you have to say about your Museum. The whole community will have plenty of opportunities to understand our predicament and help us find solutions to how we can ensure the Museum has a sustainable future.

For more information and to tell us what is important for you go to www.canterburymuseum.com

Young visitor enjoys our annual programme, Night at the Museum.





Published by the Canterbury Museum Trust Board

Canterbury Museum, Rolleston Avenue,
Christchurch 8013, New Zealand

P 64 3 366 5000

E info@canterburymuseum.com

www.canterburymuseum.com