

Are we really prepared for disaster?

Responding to the lessons from Christchurch

Catherine Forbes, GML Heritage

ICOMOS, ICORP, ANZ Cultural Heritage Risk Preparedness Working Group







Canterbury Earthquakes Christchurch





Independent study
Impacts of
earthquakes,
emergency response
and recovery on the
built cultural heritage
of Christchurch

Individual and
focus group
interviews

Christchurch City
Council
Heritage Officers

Heritage New
Zealand
Pouhere Taonga
Heritage Officers

ICOMOS
New Zealand

Architects and
Engineers

Local residents

Mayor of
Christchurch

Study findings



Christ church Cathedral – Stuff.co.nz, pool picture, 1/3/2011

1.
Built heritage was not included in emergency plans for the city or Civil Defence charters, operating procedures or training scenarios



2. Heritage legislation was suspended under the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act (CERA)



<https://www.edimaps.com/christchurch-cbd-map/>

3.
Decisions were made
by outsiders who had
no association with
the place and limited
understanding of its
heritage values



Fence around the Red Zone – sweenyseas.com, June 2012

4.
Heritage buildings
were **difficult to
identify** in the rubble



5.
Damage assessments
were carried out by
engineers with **limited
expertise** in assessing
heritage buildings



CCTV Building
Stuff.co.nz, Feb 2011



Columbo Street
Stuff.co.nz, Feb 2011



5.
Damage
assessments
were carried out
by engineers with
limited expertise
in assessing
heritage buildings



ATT 47186 Aerial Post Demolition, November 2012 – CERA

6.
Limited time to
assess buildings,
challenge demolition
orders or record
buildings prior to
demolition



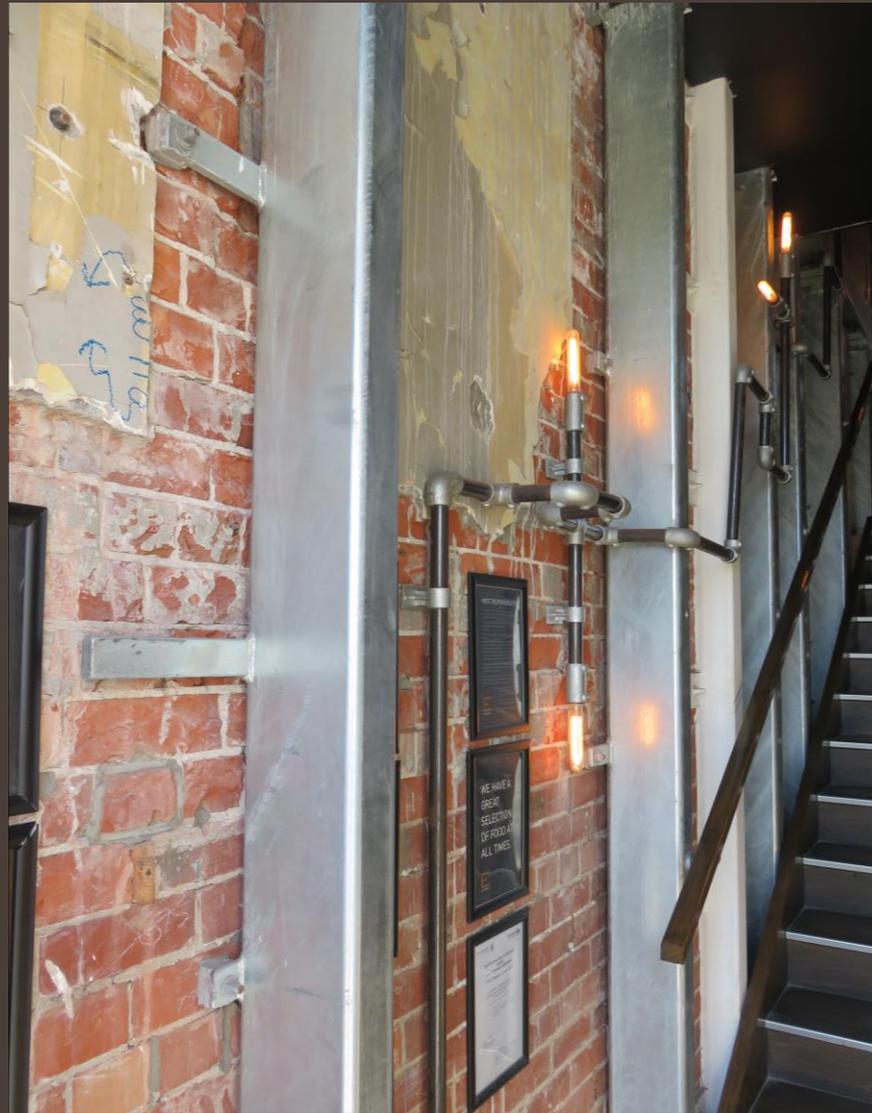
Clean up: Making buildings secure – heavy machinery demolishes an earthquake-damaged church – [Daily Mail](#), 25 February 2011

7.
Heritage listings were
inadequate in
identifying heritage
values and attributes
to challenge
demolition orders in
court



90–96 Chester Street East – George Kuek, 2011

8.
Historic interiors
have been
delisted



Interior of commercial building



Great Hall, The Arts Centre
Catherine Forbes , 2016

9.
Conflicting
values attached
to cultural
heritage by the
community and
property owners



Wharetiki House
George Kuek, 2011



Christ Church Anglican Cathedral
Catherine Forbes, 2016

10.
Making **insurance**
claims was
extremely difficult



One of the oldest houses in Christchurch – **ABC**, 16 February 2016

11.
Materials and
artefacts were not
saved from the
demolition of historic
buildings



Former Press Building, Cashel Street, Christchurch – Schwede66

12. Focus on **large lot development** and anchor projects lead to demolition of heritage properties and **loss of the historic development pattern**



The Christchurch Central Recovery Plan – Architecture Now, 1 August 2012

13.
Cost of
reconstruction is
extremely high



The Arts Centre, Christchurch
Catherine Forbes, 2016



Commercial Building, Christchurch
Catherine Forbes, 2016

Conclusions

- Built heritage not considered in
 - emergency planning for the city
 - or in the emergency response and recovery.
- With the scale and complexity of the situation, owners, responders, the National Government and Local Government were simply not prepared.

Response:
ANZ ICOMOS
Risk
Preparedness
Working Group

- Promote the **protection of cultural heritage in times of disaster**
 - (natural or human made, fast and slow onset, including climate change)
- Contribute to the **national promotion of risk preparedness** for cultural heritage
 - in accordance with Australia and New Zealand's commitments to the
 - **UNISDR Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**

Response:
ANZ ICOMOS
Risk
Preparedness
Working Group

- Promote cooperation with government, emergency services and civil defence
- And the inclusion of cultural heritage in emergency plans at local, regional, state and national levels

Response:
ANZ ICOMOS
Risk
Preparedness
Working Group

- Build the capacity of heritage professionals in disaster risk management planning and emergency response for cultural heritage
- and establish a network of professionals that can respond responsibly to emergencies as they arise.