

Media Release

Short-list for Earthquake Memorial designs

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Six design concepts have been short-listed for the Canterbury Earthquake Memorial and will be further developed before going on show for the public to have their say early next year.

The Memorial – to be built on the banks of Ōtākaro/ Avon River between the Montreal Street Bridge and Durham Street - will honour 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.

The Government, Christchurch City Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu invited Memorial ideas from around the world, and more than 330 submissions were received from 37 countries.

"The feedback from the panel evaluating the design submissions was that the standard was very high," says Michelle Mitchell, of the Canterbury Earthquake Memorial project steering group.

"It was not an easy task to reach a short-list, but those that have been chosen are all of a very high standard, and any one of them - once further developed with feedback from key parties – could become a powerful symbol of remembrance and recognition."

The submitted designs were short-listed by 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.

The short-listed designs have been shared with bereaved families, and those seriously injured in the earthquakes.

The people behind the six short-listed designs have been invited to further develop their concepts before presenting them again to the bereaved families and seriously injured, and then to recovery leaders, key stakeholders such as first responder organisations, and the wider public.

After receiving feedback from these groups, the evaluation panel will make a recommendation on its preferred design to a Memorial Leadership Group 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.

"It takes time to come to build a consensus on what design best honours and acknowledges all those affected by the earthquakes," Ms Mitchell says.

"To put it into perspective, the Kobe Earthquake Memorial Museum opened seven years after the 1995 earthquake."

The Government has set aside up to \$10 million for the Memorial, along with \$1 million from the Christchurch Earthquake Mayoral Relief Fund. The intention is for the Memorial to be completed in 2016.