

1 July 2017

Right Reverend Victoria Matthews
Bishop of Christchurch

Dear Bishop Matthews

I write as someone privileged to have been elected to serve the city of Christchurch at this important time in our history. At this time, you are the leader of the Diocese of Christchurch, the 8th Bishop since the Diocese was established in 1856. This was the same year that Christchurch became both a city by Royal Charter (New Zealand's first city), and a seat for the Bishop.

In many respects, our interests are just as intertwined today as they were when the first European settlers to this part of the world established a Church of England settlement they called Christchurch. The images on the City's coat of arms above reflect this inextricable connection with the Mitre at its heart. The words underpinning those images; *Fide Condita, Fructu Beata, Spe Fortis* – commonly translated as "Founded in Faith, Rich in the Fulfilment thereof, Strong in Hope for the Future" – find resonance today in the decision the Church will make about the future of ChristChurch Cathedral.

Since the Minister supporting Greater Christchurch Regeneration, Hon Nicky Wagner, released the Cathedral Working Group report, it has become apparent that the Government's extremely generous offer needs to be backed by the City of Christchurch. We need to do that in consultation with our community; but in the meantime we have taken stock of the overwhelming support your poll showed for action to be taken. Inaction is holding the city back. If a decision were made to demolish the Cathedral, the inevitable legal proceedings mean years of further uncertainty.

The Cathedral Working Group Report provides a solution that everyone can back – the Government, the Council, the Heritage groups, both statutory and community-led. We as a Council have now carefully considered the report and are fully prepared to back that solution. Having a statutory framework agreed across the political spectrum means that we do not have to contemplate any legal proceedings, and the planning can get underway.

On Friday night the Christchurch City Council voted unanimously to support in principle the Government's offer with a \$10 million grant of our own, the terms of which will be consulted on immediately following the Synod decision. The Council will also consider as part of its Long Term Plan process contributing to operating funding to support the broader Cathedral visitor experience, and noted that the Chief Executive can execute her authority to provide in-kind support for the reinstatement process.

Although this is a recognition of ChristChurch Cathedral's heritage status and the important contribution it makes to civic life and the Christchurch visitor experience, it is in fact the desire for certainty about the future of Cathedral Square and what that means for our city's recovery that drives my desire to see resolution.

In 1856, we needed city status to have a cathedral, and now in 2017, we need our Cathedral to help restore our city's status and to enable the heart of our city to beat once more.

I am pleased the Government has been able to draw together an offer of support for reinstatement; an offer which will allow the Church Property Trustees to proceed with certainty, and which meets the Church's present-day requirements for a Cathedral.

It is also a proposal that I consider enables the Trustees to avoid a decision that will inevitably lead to costly and lengthy legal proceedings.

As the Mayor of Christchurch, I hope that the Anglican Synod, having been offered the responsibility to determine the fate of the ChristChurch Cathedral, understands that the recovery of the heart of the city now lies in their hands as well – we need certainty for our city to fully recover and fulfil the potential that regeneration offers.

I am available to speak to members of the Synod and respond to any questions they may have.

I remain yours 'strong in hope for the future'.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lianne Dalziel', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line that spans across the page.

Lianne Dalziel
MAYOR