

## 8. National Erebus Memorial

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/1217236

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Duncan Sandeman, Manager Office of the Mayor & Civic Services

### Confidentiality



<b>Section under the Act:</b>	The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.
<b>Sub-clause and Reason:</b>	s7(2)(a) - The withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. s7(2)(i) - The withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).
<b>Public Interest Consideration:</b>	To allow Community Board members to receive the briefing ahead of effected stakeholders.
<b>Potential Release Review Date and Conditions:</b>	15 September 2025 Once a decision paper has gone to the Council.

### 1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

<b>Timing</b>	This information session is expected to last for 30 minutes.
<b>Purpose / Origin of the Information Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This information session aims to brief Community Board members on potential locations within Ōtautahi Christchurch for the National Erebus Memorial, and to seek feedback on these shortlisted options. The session follows a wider process led by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage (MCH) to find a suitable, respectful, and community-supported site for the memorial.</li><li>Seek feedback on these locations.</li></ul>
<b>Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>On 28 November 1979 Air New Zealand flight TE901 collided with Mt Erebus in Antarctica resulting in the deaths of all 257 on board. In the aftermath Operation Overdue was launched to recover the remains and investigate the accident.</li><li>The Ministry of Culture and Heritage (MCH) is leading the effort to establish a national memorial to commemorate the disaster. Although initial efforts focused on Auckland, challenges have prompted them to consider alternative locations including Wellington and Christchurch.</li><li>In December last year, Councillors were briefed and indicated support for the Mayor to write to the Secretary for Culture and Heritage, inviting MCH to consider Ōtautahi Christchurch as a potential site for the National Erebus Memorial.</li><li>On 9 December 2024, the Mayor sent this invitation to MCH, noting the Council's willingness to work collaboratively to identify a site that honours the dignity and significance of the memorial.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A working group — led by Professor Jacky Bowring of Lincoln University and including Council staff and representatives from MCH and Ngāi Tūāhuriri (Whitiora) — identified and visited potential sites within Christchurch.</li> <li>In addition, collaboration with Christchurch International Airport Ltd (CIAL) explored potential locations within the airport precinct, which were evaluated by the working group.</li> <li>Through this process, three sites have been shortlisted for detailed evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45 years after the worst peace-time disaster in NZ history there is no national memorial.</li> <li>There are compelling reasons why Ōtautahi Christchurch could be the home of the memorial.</li> <li>Christchurch has extended an invitation to MCH to consider the city as a potential site for the memorial. We are not bidding for the memorial or in competition with Auckland.</li> <li>There is growing urgency to establish the memorial as many direct family members of those lost on TE901 are advancing in age.</li> <li>The home for the memorial must be in a community where it is welcomed.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed evaluation of each proposed site will follow, alongside targeted community engagement, as required.</li> <li>Following this, a report recommending a preferred site will be brought to Council for consideration. The preferred site may then be offered to MCH as a proposed location for the memorial. This is expected to occur by the Council meeting on 3 September.</li> </ul>
<b>Useful Links</b>	<p>National Erebus Memorial Site Selection Documents:  <a href="https://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/national-erebus-memorial-site-selection-documents">https://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/national-erebus-memorial-site-selection-documents</a>.</p>

### Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A 	Mayor's Message to Families on the 45th Anniversary	25/1217381	5
B 	Mayor's Letter to MCH	25/1217383	6

### Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

<b>Author</b>	Duncan Sandeman - Manager Office of Mayor & Civic Services
<b>Approved By</b>	Duncan Sandeman - Manager Office of Mayor & Civic Services

## Office of The Mayor



### Message from Phil Mauger, Mayor of Christchurch

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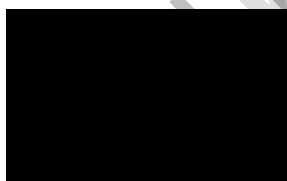
As we gather today to remember the horrific tragedy that occurred on this day 45 years ago in Antarctica I would like to offer, on behalf of the people of Christchurch, heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of those who perished, as well as those who responded to the disaster as part of Operation Overdue.

Today, we remember the 257 souls lost on that fateful day and acknowledge the deep sorrow that continues to resonate in the hearts of those who loved them. While time has passed, the memories of those lost have not faded; their lives, passions, and dreams live on in each of you who remember them. We honour their legacies and the unbreakable bond of love that connects them to us still.

We also remember those who raced to Antarctica to recover the remains of those on the flight and to investigate the accident and how their lives were changed forever.

We stand together with you, united in grief and remembrance, as we mark this day in our city of Christchurch and across New Zealand. May this service bring you a sense of peace, comfort, and the support of a community that stands with you.

We will never forget. May the memories of those we have lost be a blessing to us all.



Phil Mauger  
Mayor of Christchurch

## Office of The Mayor



9 December 2024

[REDACTED]  
Ministry of Culture and Heritage  
PO Box 5364  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mac

### Invitation to consider Christchurch as the location for the Erebus Memorial

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you last week to discuss the proposed national memorial for the Erebus Disaster and for providing us with the background to the challenges the Ministry has had in finding a site.

I am writing to you on behalf of the people of Christchurch to formally invite you to consider our city as the location for the National Erebus Memorial. We believe Christchurch is uniquely positioned to honour the memory of those lost in the tragic Mount Erebus disaster, offering a setting that is deeply meaningful.

Christchurch has a long and proud history as a gateway to Antarctica. Our city's connection to the Antarctic continent is woven into the fabric of our identity, from the presence of the International Antarctic Centre to our role as a base for scientific research and exploration from the era of Robert Falcon Scott through to today.

As you know Christchurch was to be the initial place of return for TE901, where a small number of passengers were to disembark, there was to be a crew change, and the aircraft was to be refuelled. We are aware of the story that on hearing the aircraft was missing people across the South Island turned their house lights on in an attempt to guide the aircraft home. This heritage forms a profound link between Christchurch and the events of Erebus, making it a natural and symbolic home for the memorial.

In addition to our historical connection, Christchurch has had more than our fair share of tragedy. This has given our community a strong understanding for the need for manaaki for those who have suffered and been scarred, and I am confident this memorial would be cherished and supported by our citizens.

We are prepared to work closely with your ministry to identify a suitable site within Christchurch that reflects the dignity and significance of this memorial. We stand together with the families and members of Operational OVERDUE and our city is deeply committed to ensuring the Erebus Memorial provides a space of solace and remembrance for all New Zealanders.

Yours sincerely



Phil Mauger  
**Mayor of Christchurch**

**Item 8**

**Attachment B**