



Insurance claim for quake-damaged Christchurch heritage building finally settled

By Charlie Gates

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ALDEN WILLIAMS/STUFF

The earthquake-damaged Peterborough Apartments in central Christchurch has sat empty for more than a decade.

The owner of the historic Peterborough Apartments building in Christchurch has finally settled its earthquake insurance claim after nearly a decade of negotiations.

The neo-Gothic heritage building, built in the 1920s, has sat empty since it was damaged in the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes. The settlement may finally allow for its restoration.

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SUPPLIED

IN 2014, URBAN EXPLORERS PHOTOGRAPHED THE COURTYARD AND ABANDONED INTERIOR OF THE PETERBOROUGH APARTMENTS.

It was rescued from almost certain demolition when it was [bought by construction firm Ceres in 2012 for \\$19 million](#).

Ceres bought the 37 apartments from each individual owner, including former prime minister Helen Clark, and pledged to spend a further \$25m on restoration.

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A spokesman for Ceres said the insurance issues had now been resolved, but there was no start date for restoration.

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“There are a number of residual issues we are in the process of resolving with the previous owners and no work can commence until that is finalised.

“However, we are in discussions in respect of the future plans for the building but cannot at this stage advise anticipated time frames.”



URBANEX/STUFF

A corridor in the abandoned heritage building photographed in 2014 reveals the extent of some of the quake damage.

A spokeswoman for Christchurch City Council said the building had been removed from its list of barrier sites, [a catalogue of derelict buildings identified as obstructions to the city rebuild](#).

“The site at 25 Peterborough St has been moved to the ‘commitment to action’ list and council staff have held informal discussions with the landowner.”

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The decorative stairway of the building, complete with a stained-glass window, photographed in 1927.

Former Peterborough apartment owner Diane White-Johnson said she was unaware of any obligations to her from the new owner.

“We have all been paid out ... I would be very happy to see it fully restored and looking its happy self again.”

The building was previously home to the Teachers’ Training College, but was turned into apartments in the late 1990s.

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PRESS ARCHIVES/STUFF

The courtyard at the back of the Peterborough Apartments in 1959 when the building was a teachers' training college.

Following the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes, it was feared the apartments would be one of many heritage buildings demolished in the wake of the disaster.

The body corporate for the apartment owners did not have the funds to strengthen and restore the building.

Construction firm Ceres, which is overseen by its Florida-based owner David McIntyre, invested about \$40m in property and development projects in Christchurch in the years after the earthquake.

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PRESS ARCHIVES/STUFF

The view from the street of the heritage building in 1937.

The firm purchased Amuri Courts on Bealey Ave, Victoria Mansions on the corner of Victoria and Montreal streets, and a commercial space on Antigua St.

In 2012, McIntyre said he was proud to rescue the Peterborough building from demolition.

“We believe the retention will be seen as a significant cornerstone of the rebuild and will play an important role by enhancing the new architecture that will eventually be the new heart of Christchurch.

“What better gift is there to this community from Ceres in saving this building rather than sending it to the tip?”

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DON SCOTT/STUFF

Former apartment owner Di White-Johnson, pictured outside the building in 2011, would love to see it restored.

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