

I ♥ CHCH – a Personal Journey Amongst the Re-build Rubble

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SUMMARY

Christchurch, to many New Zealanders, is... the biggest South Island city that was wrecked by earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. And: ‘why haven’t they fixed it yet?’ And: ‘surely there aren’t people still living in caravans?’

Christchurch, to fellow South Islanders, is ... evidence that Mother Nature shouldn’t be taken for granted. It’s also a city that has sucked-up huge construction resource – both manpower and materials.

Christchurch, to locals, is ... a city persevering with never-ending road works; suburbs of bare land where homes once stood; a wish-list of facilities delayed due to bureaucracy and increasing construction costs; a shadow of its former self; and yet, fundamentally, a city that has potential to be fabulous, as the abundant shoots of concrete and steel recovery sprout upwards.

In this paper, I will explore what it’s been like moving my family to post-earthquake Christchurch. I’ll give my impression of what goes on in a community that experienced a significant natural disaster, and is still grappling with the aftermath, the challenges, frustrations and (for some) despair, coupled with the renewed sense of community, anticipation, opportunity, and hope.