

Hon Grant Robertson

MP for Wellington Central

Minister of Finance

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Minister Responsible for the Earthquake Commission

Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage



2 June 2020

Pamela Dziwulska
Chair, ICOMOS New Zealand

James Blackburne
President, Historic Places Aotearoa
c/o icomosnzsecretary@gmail.com

Tēnā kōrua

Thank you for your letter of 7 May 2020 regarding the importance of supporting and promoting the conservation of our heritage places as New Zealand looks to recover from the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. Your email has been referred to me for response as it falls within my delegated responsibilities as Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage.

I agree that our heritage places will play an important role in New Zealand's recovery, given the social, cultural and economic benefits that they generate for owners, local communities and New Zealand as a whole. For this reason, the recent Budget 2020 announcement contained several heritage-specific initiatives, including an extension of funding for the Heritage EQUIP programme, and further support for conservation projects by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT).

In addition to Budget 2020, I am also hopeful that initiatives from our COVID-19 response package, such as the reintroduction of depreciation for commercial building owners and the \$1.6 billion *Trades and Apprenticeships Training Package*, will help to support positive outcomes for heritage places and conservation projects across New Zealand.

This Government is proud to support heritage conservation projects in New Zealand. In addition to heritage specific funds operated by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage (the Ministry) and HNZPT, several significant heritage conservation projects have received funding through the Provincial Growth Fund. As you have noted, heritage projects will also be eligible for funding via the 'shovel ready' infrastructure project programme.

As you mention in your letter, the Ministry is currently undertaking an assessment of New Zealand's system for protecting heritage, to ensure that our system is enabling meaningful protection for places that communities value. I have asked Ministry officials to keep you informed with developments on this project, and to seek your input and feedback as appropriate.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you both for the ongoing efforts of your respective organisations to advocate on behalf of New Zealand's heritage places. Advocacy is an essential part of our heritage system and I am extremely grateful to individuals such as you who take time to advocate on behalf of New Zealand's heritage.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Grant Robertson', written in a cursive style.

Hon Grant Robertson
Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

cc Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Hon David Parker, Minister for the Environment