



Christchurch update – Infrastructure

May 2019

Christchurch continues to assert itself as the premier urban centre of New Zealand's South Island, sitting in the heart of Canterbury with its lush plains, pristine Southern Alps, and diverse Banks Peninsula.

Bringing visitors into Christchurch, having sufficient accommodation and hospitality offerings, and enabling efficient transport once they are here remain a focus for city authorities. Christchurch International Airport continues to welcome international visitor numbers at a higher rate than other New Zealand centres, and a new cruise ship berth at Lyttleton Port is set to open in late 2020.

Nearly seven million passengers travelled through Christchurch International Airport in the 2018 financial year. International visitor numbers grew 8.5 per cent to 558,000, despite the average increase across New Zealand being 3.9 per cent. As a gateway city to Antarctica, the airport remains a vital transport hub for international travel, trade and research.

The \$56-million cruise berth will assert Lyttleton as another base for cruise tourism in Canterbury, alongside Akaroa. More than 70 ship bookings have already been locked in for the port town. The facility will help to future proof Christchurch for the growing cruise industry and provide more flexibility for future visitors, with Akaroa still expected to take cruise bookings after the Lyttleton berth opens.

Alongside transport-related infrastructure, the city continues to bolster its accommodation capability. Christchurch currently has more than 2500 hotel beds, with this number set to increase with the opening of the central city Sudima and the Novotel at Christchurch International Airport. This number does not include motels, and alternate accommodation providers like Airbnb, which is becoming increasingly popular.

Christchurch's central-city buildings are among the safest in the country, quickly becoming modern landmarks. From the 2018-opened Tūranga central library, to the EntX entertainment complex, modern architecture is becoming a main attraction in Christchurch alongside heritage and green spaces.

The rebuild of Christchurch has peaked and is beginning to slow, allowing a city to come to life within its new buildings and rejuvenated public spaces. As life is breathed once again into New Zealand's second largest city, any still-empty city blocks now represent potential and future progress.

Christ Church Cathedral continues to be a talking point in Christchurch, with a decision made mid-2018 to restore the historic building. An engineering and design team was appointed to the project in May 2019 and progress can be seen in Cathedral Square.

International visitors continue to flock to the Transitional Cathedral, designed by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban, whose second Christchurch building will soon be under construction at the southern end of Cathedral Square. Inspired by Canterbury's braided rivers, the building will incorporate retail and office space, as well as a restaurant.

Construction of Te Pae, the city's new convention centre, is well under way, with an expected completion date of early 2020. The facility will include a 1400-seat auditorium, 200-booth exhibition hall and 24 meetings rooms, among other amenities. It dominates the northern end of Cathedral Square, making the most of the green border provided by the Avon River Precinct.

The road between Sumner and Lyttelton reopened in March 2019, providing not only a crucial link between these coastal areas, but also one of the most scenic coast roads in the country. Winding along cliffs high above Lyttelton Harbour, the road offers panoramic views of Banks Peninsula and Christchurch's often-overlooked coastal areas.

In a similar vein, the City Promenade opened in late 2018 to much jubilation. This two-kilometre stretch of shared walkway winds its way along the Avon River, connecting parts of the city for walkers, cyclists and electric-scooter riders. The promenade runs from Christchurch Hospital through to Margaret Mahy Playground, and takes in the National Earthquake Memorial, The Terrace, Te Pae, and Victoria Square.

Facts cheat-sheet:

- **Lyttelton Port is getting a new cruise berth**, set to open in late 2019. The facility already has more than 70 bookings, and will future-proof Christchurch for the growing cruise industry. Akaroa will continue to take cruise bookings after the new Lyttelton facility opens.
- **Christchurch currently has more than 2500 hotel beds**, with this number set to increase with the anticipated opening of several large hotels in 2019 and 2020.
- **Christ Church Cathedral will be restored**. The decision was made in mid-2018, with an engineering and design team appointed in May 2019. A final timeframe for completion is yet to be announced.
- **Te Pae, the city's new convention centre, is nearing completion**. The large-scale facility is set to be completed in early 2020, and will include a 1400-seat auditorium, exhibition hall and numerous meeting rooms.
- **The new City Promenade opened in late 2018**. This shared walkway runs alongside the Avon River, and takes in many prominent central city sites.
- **Sumner Rd, between Sumner and Lyttelton, was completed in March 2019**. Aside from being a crucial link between the two coastal areas, it is also a popular tourist route.