



Office of Hon Christopher Finlayson

D-271818

Attorney-General
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations
Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Associate Minister of Māori Affairs

28 MAR 2013

COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

Annette Main
Mayor of Wanganui District
Wanganui District Council
PO Box 637
Wanganui Mail Centre
WANGANUI 4540

Dear Annette

It was a pleasure to see you last night at the private fundraising function for the Sarjeant Art Gallery refurbishment project. I remain very supportive of the efforts of the Wanganui District Council to redevelop and earthquake strengthen the Sarjeant Art Gallery's Category I heritage building.

Thank you for your letter of 4 March inviting me to meet with the Council. In this letter you suggested the meeting could be a formal meeting with the Council or we could meet on an informal basis to discuss in confidence the underdeveloped issues referred to in my letter of 18 October 2012, and to progress a shared understanding of my expectations for this significant project. As already indicated by my office, I would be available to meet with you and a small delegation of Councillors on 5 April at 11am (rather than attend a formal Council meeting).

As you are aware I cannot make a Regional Museums Policy grant to a project until the applicant can provide the necessary evidence to support such a decision. My officials have given your team clear advice on what the Council must do so that it will be possible for me to grant government monies to the Sarjeant Art Gallery redevelopment project.

I understand Council's progress with addressing these matters has been slowed by competing urgent priorities for its limited resources, particularly a revision of the town sewerage system.


As Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, I remain steadfast in my belief the Sarjeant Art Gallery's redevelopment project is an excellent fit with the Regional Museums Policy, subject to the underdeveloped issues with this project being addressed.

I strongly encourage the Council to commit to the costs of securing resource consents, and commissioning detailed architectural and engineering designs so that informed Quantity Surveyor costings can be produced. I note this level of supporting evidence will be needed by other major sources of philanthropic funding. Having this work done will serve to significantly increase the likely success of your major fundraising campaign for this project. Once the Council has attended to the issues the funding will be available.

I recommend your team continues to engage directly with officials at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage so that you may draw upon their expertise. It will be important for your team to keep my officials fully informed on progress, including any barriers to progress, so they can provide your team with helpful guidance.

I look forward to hearing this project is moving forward into the detailed design stage.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Finlayson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hon Chris Finlayson
Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

Cc: Kevin Ross, Chief Executive, Wanganui District Council
Pete Gray, Deputy Culture and Community Manager, Wanganui District Council
Greg Anderson, Senior Curator, Sarjeant Art Gallery