

**FLETCHER BUILDING DONATES \$1 MILLION
TO PRESERVE HISTORIC CHRISTCHURCH BUILDING FACADE**

Auckland, 18 October 2011 – Fletcher Building Limited (“Fletcher Building”) today announced it has committed \$1 million to preserving Christchurch’s McKenzie and Willis building facade. The donation is part of the \$6 million pledged by the company towards the region’s earthquake recovery and reconstruction efforts.

The three-storeyed Edwardian style building on the corner of High and Tuam Streets was severely damaged after the earthquakes in February and June. Building assessments have deemed it too unsafe to retain, although engineers recommend the facade be saved due to its significant heritage value.

Chief Executive Jonathan Ling said “Christchurch has tragically lost many of its historic buildings over the past year, which makes it all the more important to retain those buildings that can be salvaged. We’re therefore delighted to be able to assist in preserving the facade of 179 High Street and ensure it continues to be a feature of the central city streetscape”.

The facade is one of the last prominent corner buildings left on High Street and is a category II historic place. Designed by the England Brothers – a prominent late 19th century architectural firm, the former A.J Whites building was purpose-built for the leading furniture manufacturer and retailer in 1910. The business remained there until it was bought in the 1980’s by Christchurch furniture retail firm McKenzie and Willis. With its original unpainted stone facade, the building is a modern interpretation of the more traditional classical commercial type with large window openings, leaded fanlights and an oriel window at the corner.

The donation is being managed through the Canterbury Earthquake Heritage Buildings Fund. Chair Anna Crighton said “The gesture of Fletcher Building to grant \$1 million towards the retention of the McKenzie and Willis heritage facade is extraordinarily special. It encourages and promotes the retention of a small precinct of other heritage facades in the High Street area and provides a visual reminder of some of our historic streetscapes and of the city’s glorious past.”

The McKenzie and Willis building joins the Excelsior Hotel, Victoria Black and Alice in Videoland (the old Post Office) on the growing list of buildings in the High Street area that are to be retained.

For further information contact:

Philip King
General Manager Investor Relations
Phone: + 64 9 525 9043
Mobile: + 64 27 444 0203

End

Editor's notes

- A.J Whites was one of New Zealand's longest established furniture manufacture and retail firms. It began trading in Christchurch in 1863 until it was purchased by McKenzie and Willis in the 1980's.
- The family-owned McKenzie and Willis is Christchurch's pre-eminent furniture retailer and is in its 105th year of trade.
- The England Brothers architectural firm were prominent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The firm was responsible for many of Christchurch's notable commercial, industrial and residential buildings including: Knox Church, McLeans Mansion, the Billens Building on High Street and the 3rd stage of Riccarton House. Many of these buildings have been lost in the earthquakes giving further significance to the retention of the McKenzie and Willis facade.
- The McKenzie and Willis building is part of a cluster of heritage buildings on High Street whose facades remain largely intact and can be conserved. This offers a unique opportunity for the High Street precinct to become a focus in the Christchurch rebuild and to re-emerge as a vibrant, attractive and successful retail precinct in the city. Other building examples include the Duncan's Buildings, Victoria Black, High Para Apartments, Cotters Electrical, the Excelsior Hotel and Alice in Videoland.
- The Canterbury Earthquake Heritage Buildings Fund was formed in January 2011 and supersedes the Mayor's heritage buildings appeal, kick-started by Fletcher Building's \$1 million donation in September 2010. The Fund provides assistance to the owners of earthquake-damaged heritage and character buildings with overcoming funds shortfalls, to ensure a number of historic buildings can be restored and retained.