



Cathedral's dome rises through the roof

Engineers have recovered the “virtually undamaged” internal dome of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament by lifting it out in one piece.

Before the dome was lifted through the roof, Opus structural engineer Jamie Lester said engineers “do not know the weight of the structure we are lifting out”.

Despite initial worries, the decorative dome was removed in one piece.

It emerged virtually undamaged from the February 22 earthquake unlike the rest of the Catholic cathedral in Barbadoes St.

However, it had lost much

of its support as columns had collapsed.

It was left with timber joists for support at the top, and a thin and damaged concrete slab at the base.

There was urgency to remove the dome as engineers feared it would be damaged in aftershocks.

The dome would be inspected to assess damage and to determine if it could be kept intact or if the copper would need to be removed for storage.

“There is some risk in saving this part of the structure, but as it is highly decorative and appears to be

undamaged, we believe it is worthwhile to make every effort to remove it intact,” Opus said.

The top of the dome was cut into segments after the June 13 earthquake when it “wobbled like jelly”, and was finally removed on July 26.

Work is now moving to deconstructing the damaged rear of the cathedral and is expected to take till mid-October.



Undamaged: The copper dome is lifted out of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. Photo: STACY SQUIRES