

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 1060
*MITRE HOTEL AND SETTING – 40 NORWICH QUAY,
LYTTELTON***



PHOTOGRAPH: FIONA WYKES 24/6/2014

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical and social values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular person, group, organisation, institution, event, phase or activity; the continuity and/or change of a phase or activity; social, historical, traditional, economic, political or other patterns.

The Mitre Tavern has historical and social significance as a hotel has been on this site since 1849, and for its association with its owners and proprietors over time. The Mitre is the third hotel of that name to stand on this site; the two previous hotels having been lost to fire, the first, dating from 1849, in August 1875, and the second in March 1926. The current building was built by Charles Percy Cameron, who was issued with a new license in September 1927 after a number of delays in finishing the new building. Members of the Cameron family had owned the hotel since 1878. The rebuilt hotel had much the same plan as its predecessor, but rather than being built out of timber, the new hotel was constructed in permanent materials at the request of the Licensing Board. The Mitre continued to operate as a hotel with accommodation on the first floor until it became a tavern in the 1960s. In the mid-1970s the Mitre was owned by New Zealand Breweries, later Lion Nathan Ltd. The hotel has been owned by the current owners since 2005. The Mitre is one of only two historic pubs left in Lyttelton following the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes, the other being the British Hotel at the corner of Oxford Street and Norwich Quay.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural and spiritual values that demonstrate or are associated with the distinctive characteristics of a way of life, philosophy, tradition, religion, or other belief, including: the symbolic or commemorative value of the place; significance to Tangata Whenua; and/or associations with an identifiable group and esteemed by this group for its cultural values.

The Mitre Hotel has cultural significance as one of only two remaining 19th century hotels in Lyttelton. Hotels played an important role in the port town of Lyttelton from the earliest colonial period as both meeting places, social venues and in providing accommodation for people arriving at the port.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural and aesthetic values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular style, period or designer, design values, form, scale, colour, texture and material of the place.

The Mitre Hotel has architectural and aesthetic significance as an interwar hotel that closely followed the appearance of the previous hotel, which had been designed by architect and engineer John Sigismund Jacobsen. The 1926 building was built of reinforced concrete with some use of brick and reflected the previous design with its recessed open balcony and principal entrance facing Norwich Quay, and its curved parapet. The 1926 building is therefore of interest as a mid-1920s hotel that follows the model provided by one erected 50 years before. The designer/builder of the new hotel is currently unknown.

During the 2010-2011 Canterbury earthquakes, the Mitre Tavern suffered moderate damage. All of the walls developed some level of cracking, while the south and west walls were pushed outwards. In order to stabilise the building, steel cables were used to tie walls to existing partitions, the west wall was connected to the joist with brackets, steel bracing was installed on the roof to secure the building's parapets, and props were placed under the balcony. Chimneys beside the east and west wall were also taken down, at least to the level of the first floor. The installation of the steel cables required that a number of holes be cut into the building's plasterwork. At present a repair strategy has yet to be decided upon.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Technological and craftsmanship values that demonstrate or are associated with: the nature and use of materials, finishes and/or technological or constructional methods which were innovative, or of notable quality for the period.

The Mitre Hotel has technological and craftsmanship significance as an example of monolithic concrete construction and detailing dating from the 1920s, when such a construction method was not widely used.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contextual values that demonstrate or are associated with: a relationship to the environment (constructed and natural), a landscape, setting, group, precinct or streetscape; a degree of consistency in terms of type, scale, form, materials, texture, colour, style and/or detail; recognised landmarks and landscape which are recognised and contribute to the unique identity of the environment.

The Mitre Hotel and its setting has contextual significance as it is a landmark within Lyttelton, being located on the corner of Canterbury Street and Norwich Quay, the town's harbourside thoroughfare. As a port town Lyttelton historically has a large number of hotels for its size. The Mitre Hotel is related to the British Hotel, both physically and historically; both are survivors of the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes that destroyed so many of the town's masonry buildings.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological or scientific values that demonstrate or are associated with: the potential to provide information through physical or scientific evidence an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.

The Mitre Hotel is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human

activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. The site held two previous hotels dating from 1849.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The Mitre Hotel and its setting has overall significance to Banks Peninsula and Christchurch. It has historical and social significance as a hotel has been on this site since 1849 and it replaced two earlier fires that were destroyed by fire. The Mitre Hotel has cultural significance for the role the hotel on this site has played in the social life of the town since 1849 and architectural significance for the way in which it echoes the form of the 1876 hotel it replaced. The Mitre Hotel has technological and craftsmanship significance as an example of monolithic concrete construction and detailing dating from the 1920s, when such a construction method was not widely used. The Mitre Hotel has contextual significance as a landmark building in the area, especially after the loss of so many masonry buildings as a result of the Canterbury earthquakes. The Mitre Hotel has archaeological significance in view of the development that has occurred on this site since the late 1840s.

REFERENCES:

Rosemary Baird, Background Information Heritage Item - The Mitre Hotel 2010.

<http://collection.canterburymuseum.com/search.do?directoryResult=true&view=detail&id=95574&db=object>

The Press 11 September 1876, p. 3.

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PLEASE NOTE THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF WRITING. DUE TO THE ONGOING NATURE OF HERITAGE RESEARCH, FUTURE REASSESSMENT OF THIS HERITAGE ITEM MAY BE NECESSARY TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ITS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.

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