

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 1373
*GODLEY HEAD BATTERY AND ASSOCIATED CAMP - 2
SUMMIT ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: L. Lochhead: supplied, undated

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.

Godley Head Battery and associated camp is of high historical and social significance as one of largest and most intact examples of the extensive network of defences (42 sites) established around the coastline of New Zealand during World War II. The Battery and its associated camp were constructed between 1939 and 1946 as part of a network of Port Hills defensive works designated as Fort Lyttelton, and designed to defend the port.

Godley Head was reserved for military purposes as early as 1852, but no use of it was made during the Russian Scare or World War I. A lighthouse and keepers' cottage were constructed in 1865, but demolished in 1942 to allow development of the Godley Head defences. A replacement lighthouse was constructed on the cliff face below the Godley Battery. This was automated in 1976 and ceased operation following serious damage in the Canterbury Earthquake sequence in 2011. Foundations of twentieth century lighthouse keepers' houses remain near the battery camp.

The Godley Head Battery's primary purpose was counter-bombardment, with a secondary role supporting the examination battery at Battery Point. Counter-bombardment involves the use of long-range gunnery to counter enemy vessels attempting to bombard the coast. Development of the Godley Head site commenced in September 1939 with two sixty pounder field guns known as the Taylor Battery (after nearby Taylor's Mistake). From these small-scale beginnings the site expanded exponentially during the course of the war to cover virtually every aspect of coastal defences and serve as a regimental headquarters. At its peak some 410 service personnel were stationed there - including a large contingent of

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC's), who carried out many duties. In 1941 the temporary field gun battery was replaced on the same site by two emplacements with six inch guns. This new Taylor Battery was in turn decommissioned when the first two gun emplacements of the more sophisticated Godley Battery were completed in 1942. These were equipped with six-inch guns with a 14 mile range. A third and final emplacement was commenced at the Godley Battery in 1943, but not completed until 1946.

With the waning of the Japanese threat, Godley Head was put into a 'care and maintenance' regime in November 1943 and site development largely ceased. The Battery remained in this holding pattern until it was mothballed in 1946. Four years later however it reopened for Compulsory Military Training (CMT). When this ceased in 1958, the guns were scrapped and most portable buildings removed. Although the artillery fort was officially decommissioned in 1963, the site was used intermittently by regular and territorial forces until 1966 when it was leased to youth club Toc-H. Army use resumed briefly between 1977 and 1983, before it was handed over to the Department of Lands and Survey who commenced recreational development. The Department of Conservation is the present custodian. Public access to the full site was not enabled until the mid-1990s. The Godley Head Heritage Trust was formed in 2002 and plays a major part in site management. The site sustained substantial damage in the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-2011, and public access remains restricted as a consequence.

In March 2013 a hut associated with Robert Falcon Scott's 1911-13 Antarctic expedition was relocated from Kinsey Terrace, Sumner, to the parade ground at Godley Head. The hut was taken to Antarctica in 1911 by the *Terra Nova* to serve as a meteorological station, but was not used and returned with the ship to Lyttelton the following year. It was erected on the Clifton property of expedition agent Joseph Kinsey, where it remained until red-zoned following the Canterbury Earthquakes. Restoration is intended at the new site.

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.

Godley Head Battery and associated camp has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of New Zealand based military personnel during World War II, including servicewomen. It also has associations with military personnel, both during the war and also during the period of National Service. The site is popular with cyclists and walkers, and is esteemed for its history by the Godley Head Heritage Trust.

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.

Godley Head Battery and associated camp has architectural and aesthetic significance as a significant complex of military buildings and other structures designed by the Public Works Department and built over the course of World War II for the purpose of protecting Christchurch's port at Lyttelton. Equivalent complexes were built in other locations around New Zealand's coastline, including Stony Batter on Waiheke Island in Auckland, and Wright's Hill in Wellington.

Arrayed around the perimeter of the Godley headland are a variety of defensive features, utilitarian in design, most of which have been designed to be inconspicuous in the landscape. These consist primarily of three gun emplacements and ancillary structures. The ancillary structures include three battery observation posts, a searchlight emplacement, radar station, battery plotting room, miniature range (for practising range finding) and an engine room. In many cases, the relative locations of features depended on functional relationships between them.

Behind the defensive features is the site of the supporting military camp. Originally this contained officer's quarters, houses for senior ranks, barracks blocks, ablution blocks, kitchen facilities, offices, garages, stores, and messing and recreation buildings. At the outset it was intended that all buildings be built in permanent materials, but circumstances soon proscribed a conversion to cheaper and faster timber construction, and only three buildings were constructed in concrete: the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes and the Regimental Headquarters/Quarter Master's Store. These are designed in a stripped Art Deco style typical of New Zealand military buildings of the 1930s and 1940s.

After 1958 all but one of the timber buildings were relocated off-site, leaving only the concrete buildings and the former Medical Inspection Building - which today houses a resident caretaker. All four buildings have had their asbestos roofs replaced to original profile, been repainted in original colours, and generally retain a high level of authenticity. The Godley Head Heritage Trust has added a pair of doors to the rear of the former Regimental HQ too facilitate the operation of a planned museum, and built a replica radar hut nearby.

The cliffs on the site perimeter suffered major collapse in the Canterbury earthquake sequence of 2010-2011. A second searchlight emplacement and the emplacement access tunnel were destroyed, and the lighthouse was left suspended on the edge of a precipice. The light has been recovered to be re-erected in a safer location for display purposes.

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 Godley Head Battery and associated camp has high technological and craftsmanship significance as a demonstration of contemporary theory and practice about the construction of coastal defensive works during World War II.

From 1934 the (British) War Office guided the New Zealand government's defence planning. This included advising on the latest advances in design and armament of coastal defensive works. Two trends in British battery design in particular influenced the construction of their New Zealand equivalents. One was the separation of equipment and functions into different buildings or chambers to minimise potential damage from bombardment. This was made possible by the increased reliability and performance of communications equipment. The second was the provision of more substantial overhead cover as a response to the capacity of modern gunnery to drop shells at near-vertical angles. The key components of each of New Zealand's new forts were similar, but varied in layout according to site and topography.

As the war progressed, technological innovation and shortages of materials led to design adaptations. When it was decided to add a third battery at Godley Head, a shortage of steel reinforcing posed problems for the construction of the magazine. The necessary protection from bombardment was instead achieved by tunnelling to a depth of twelve metres.

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 Godley Head Battery and associated camp has high contextual significance on its site and within a larger Port Hills context. The item is contiguous with the immediate parcel boundary - an extensive area of the pastoral Godley Head largely circumscribed by sea cliffs and a landward boundary stretching from coast to coast east of Taylor's Mistake. A small strip of coastal land on the north coast (including the Boulder Bay baches) is located outside the parcel. The site also has landmark significance in its cliff-top location, although it is most clearly visible from the sea. The wider context of the Battery includes the former military designation of Fort Lyttelton, an area of comprehensive defensive installations stretching east

from a line between St Andrew's Hill and Lyttelton, which was designed to protect the port. The Fort Lyttelton area includes sites such as the heritage-listed Battery Point Battery and the un-listed Mt Pleasant Heavy Anti-aircraft Artillery (HAA) Battery. The wider context of the Godley Head Battery also includes other defensive works in the Port Hills area - such as the World War II-era heritage-listed former command centre in Cashmere and the un-listed Cass Bay Magazine - and works dating from earlier conflicts such as the heritage-listed sites of Fort Jervois on Ripapa Island and the Naval Point gun emplacement in Lyttelton.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

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

The Godley Head Battery and associated camp is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. This is primarily in relation to the Godley Head Lighthouse, which was located on the site of the Battery from 1865 to 1939. The site also has scientific significance as the site of a reference station set up in 1949 to observe the upper atmosphere and take soundings. One of a dozen similar stations established across the world, and the only one in the South Pacific, the Godley Head station carried out its original tasks until 1980. Today it is operated by NIWA and records positional measurements of the earth's movements.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The Godley Head Battery and associated camp is of high overall heritage significance to the Christchurch District including Banks Peninsula. The battery is of high historical and social significance as one of largest and most intact examples of the extensive network of defences established around the coastline of New Zealand during World War II. The battery and its associated camp were constructed between 1939 and 1946 as part of a network of Port Hills defensive works (designated as Fort Lyttelton) intended to defend the port. The battery has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of New Zealand based military personnel during World War II, and subsequently. The battery has architectural and aesthetic significance as a closely contemporary intact group of purpose built military buildings and other structures designed and built by the Public Works Department over the course of World War II. The buildings' design reflect the particular requirements of their defence purpose, and the need to be inconspicuous in the landscape. The former battery has high technological and craftsmanship significance as a product of contemporary thought on the type of construction and materials suitable necessary of coastal defensive works. The Battery has high contextual significance on its Godley Head site and within the wider context of an extensive network of Port Hills and Lyttelton Harbour defensive works. The battery is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. This is primarily in relation to the Godley Head Lighthouse, which was located on the site of the battery from 1865 to 1939. The site also has scientific significance as the site of a reference station set up in 1949 to observe the upper atmosphere and take soundings.

REFERENCES:

Draft Statement of Significance, compiled by L. Lochhead

CCC Heritage File (unlisted): Godley Head Battery

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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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