

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 677  
*DWELLING AND SETTING -  
6 GODLEY QUAY, LYTTELTON***



**PHOTOGRAPH : BRENDAN SMYTH, 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.*

6 Godley Quay has high historical and social significance as one of Lyttelton's (and Canterbury's) oldest surviving dwellings, and for its association with prominent early merchants and/or ship owners Henry LeCren, John Thomas Peacock, Joseph Dransfield, Beverley Buchanan, David Davis, the Cameron family, and shipwright Malcolm Miller. It is also significant for its association with one of early Canterbury's most notable business failures, the bankruptcy of J. T. Peacock & Co. in 1867. The property has been widely known as *Captain Simeon's House*, but there is no evidence to date that Simeon ever had any connection with it.

The house at 6 Godley Quay is located on Town Section 278 in what was known as Dampier's Bay. This section was originally selected by John Christie Aitkin in July 1851, but

an agreement to purchase it from him by the holder of the adjacent TS 280, Edward Merson Templar, was made later the same year. In October 1851 Templar offered TS 278 on long term lease. The contract to purchase must have fallen through however, for TS 278 was back on the market in August 1852. In June 1853 Aitkin auctioned the vacant section. Templar was the successful bidder, but only in the capacity of agent, acting for the Sydney-based merchants George Griffiths and William Fanning (Griffiths and Fanning). Griffiths and Fanning also acquired the adjacent TS 280 from Templar at the same time. At some point over the next few years, the pair sold both sections to merchant Henry John LeCren – undetermined as the transaction was not officially recorded. LeCren built the present house as a family home at some point between 1853 and August 1857, when a LeCren child was born in Dampier's Bay.

Henry John LeCren was an agent for the Canterbury Association before coming to Canterbury in 1850, where he established the mercantile firm of Longden and LeCren with his cousin Joseph Longden. He married in 1853. The LeCren family departed for greener pastures in the new settlement of Timaru in 1859, where Henry became prominent in business and the formation of that town. Their 'quite new' home in Lyttelton was subsequently offered for let by leading Canterbury merchant, shipowner and politician John Thomas Peacock, although he did not actually own the property until October 1860. At the time of his purchase, the property was occupied by merchant Joseph Dransfield. Peacock himself lived in a cottage high on the Bridle Path (now the site of 2 Cunningham Terrace) where he could see the shipping movements below at his own (Peacock's) wharf.

Peacock did well for himself in the young settlement, and by 1862 was in a position to sell the assets and goodwill of his shipping business (by then called J. T. Peacock and Co.) to Beverley Buchanan and Charles Turner, and retire. In 1863 he also sold his Bridle Path and Godley Quay properties (amongst others) to Buchanan, and moved over the hill to Christchurch, building a large new house, *Hawkesbury*, on Papanui Rd.

Beverley (actual name Beavan) Buchanan (1827-70) had been an employee of the Peacocks' in Sydney, and visited Lyttelton on company business in 1855 and 1857 before finally settling in the port town in 1859. That year he became a member of the new Lyttelton Chamber of Commerce. Buchanan subsequently sat on committees for the regatta, the Canterbury Loan Building and Investment Society, and the rebuilding of the Wesleyan Chapel (1861). In 1866 he was elected to the Provincial Council for Lyttelton. The merchant was known for kindness to the poor, and served as secretary to the Lyttelton Benevolent Society.

The late 1860s were a period of economic depression in New Zealand. In April 1867 Beverley Buchanan mortgaged twenty, mainly Lyttelton, town and rural sections to Peacock for £3,500 to invest in his and Turner's company. This included the Godley Quay property. Despite this cash injection, J. T. Peacock and Co. declared bankruptcy in June 1867, and all Buchanan and Turner's assets were assigned to their creditors. The partners owed the massive sum of £226,025, but fortunately their assets amounted to £215,039, and both men were soon back in business again – although not together.

As a consequence of the bankruptcy, John Peacock found himself back in possession of his old company, and of those of Buchanan's properties for which he held mortgages. In November 1867 many of these properties, including TS 278 and 280, were put on the market. The Godley Quay property, which was then in the occupation of David Davis, was not however sold at this time. Davis was a Jewish merchant who established himself in Lyttelton in the early 1860s and built a large warehouse on Norwich quay in 1866. He was bankrupt in 1869.

After confirming the title of the property with Griffiths and Fanning in 1870, Peacock sold 6 Godley Quay to steam lighterman William de Lacy Cameron in 1875. The Cameron family owned the property for forty years until 1914. Cameron was the popular captain of the ss *Akaroa*, a coastal trader that serviced the Peninsula's bays through the 1870s and 1880s. His sons Peter and John Cameron were also mariners and owned the ss *Mullogh*, which plied the coastal trade between 1860 and 1916.

The owners from 1914 were Malcolm and Eliza Miller. Malcolm Miller was the principal of shipwrights J. Miller Ltd, and a prominent Lyttelton citizen – serving as mayor in 1901. The Millers lived at *Lochranza* at 14 Godley Quay, but owned many other properties in the vicinity. They subdivided 6 Godley Quay substantially before selling the house in 1931 to Mary Kearne. The house has changed hands many times in the years since. Following his purchase of the property in 1954, Gordon McLennan constructed a corrugated iron building on the frontage for use as a fruit and vegetable shop. This is no longer extant. In 1991, then owners Barry and Wendy Fairburn established a pottery shop in the house. The property is now however in solely residential use.

### **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.*

6 Godley Quay has cultural significance for the capacity it has to illustrate the lifestyle of businessmen and professionals in early colonial Lyttelton. Godley Quay, and more generally the area formerly known as Dampier's Bay (now West Lyttelton), was considered the more affluent and desirable area of the port town from settlement through to the mid twentieth century.

### **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.*

6 Godley Quay has high architectural and aesthetic significance as a rare-surviving example of a comparatively original larger house of the 1850s. This first generation of colonial Canterbury homes reflected the limited resources and materials available at the time. They characteristically featured one and a half floors under a steeply-gabled roof with wide cross-gables and/or dormers, board and batten cladding, French doors and chaste Regency-type (if any) decoration. Early Lyttelton (and Christchurch) featured a number of homes and commercial premises that resembled 6 Godley Quay, but today only a handful (such as Ilay Cottage in Ticehurst Road and 3 Winchester Street) remain. 6 Godley is a comparatively large home for its period, as befitted the status and resources of its first owner. The house has undergone extensive restoration at various points in its history, but essentially retains its early colonial appearance.

### **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.*

6 Godley Quay is of high technological and craftsmanship significance as an example of a substantial dwelling of the mid-1850s, using materials in a manner characteristic of the early colonial period. The board and batten cladding (for example) used in the gables was common in the 1850s, but fell from favour in the 1860s. There would also be an expectation of an absence of evidence of machine work, with framing (for example) predominately morticed rather than nailed.

## **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.*

6 Godley Quay has high contextual significance on its site and within its setting and wider context. The setting of the house is its immediate parcel. 6 Godley Quay is located on a long narrow section that descends from the rear boundary to the road frontage. The elevated mid-site location of the house – which contrasts with the street-front location of the other homes in Godley Quay – points to the venerable age of the property and the fact that it once sat on a much larger site. *Dampier House/Waicliffe* at 26 Godley Quay dates from a similar period, and is similarly elevated and set back. 6 Godley Quay is a key element in the West Lyttelton area. Despite its proximity to the port, Godley Quay (and Dampier's Bay/West Lyttelton more generally) was considered one of Lyttelton's more desirable residential areas for a century from settlement. Consequently there is a concentration of larger and grander residences, dating from the 1850s through to the 1930s. Besides 6 Godley Quay, listed homes in the street include *Lochranza* (1892), *Dalcroy House* (1866) and *Dampier House/Waicliffe* (1851). Although 6 Godley Quay is now hemmed in by early twentieth dwellings, its elevated site and distinctive triple-gabled appearance combine to give the property considerable street presence and thus landmark significance 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 an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.*

6 Godley Quay and its setting are of archaeological significance because they have 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. The house is one of the oldest remaining dwellings in Lyttelton, and is comparatively unmodified.

## **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

6 Godley Quay is of high overall significance to the Christchurch District including Banks Peninsula. The dwelling has high historical and social significance as one of Lyttelton's and Canterbury's oldest homes, and for its association with Henry Le Cren, William Cameron, John Peacock and a number of other prominent early merchants and ship owners. The dwelling has cultural significance for the capacity it has to illustrate the lifestyle of businessmen and professionals in early colonial Lyttelton. The dwelling has high architectural and aesthetic significance as a rare surviving example of a comparatively intact

and original larger home of the 1850s, illustrating characteristic design features of the period. The dwelling is of high technological and craftsmanship significance for the capacity it has to demonstrate the simple 'handcrafted' manner in which early colonial buildings were constructed. The dwelling has high contextual significance as a key element of West Lyttelton, one of Lyttelton's more affluent areas through the nineteenth century. Its slightly elevated site and distinctive triple-gabled appearance combine to give the property landmark significance in the port town. It has archaeological significance for the potential it has to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site.

**REFERENCES:** CCC Heritage File: 6 Godley Quay  
CCC Heritage File: 2 Cunningham Terrace

**REPORT DATED:** 15/12/14

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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