

DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 133  
***THE BRICKS SITE, CAIRN AND SETTING – 311, 315  
OXFORD TERRACE, 310, 320 CAMBRIDGE TERRACE,  
CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M. VAIR-PIOVA 09/12/2014

### **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 Bricks* has high historical and social significance for its proximity to the site of Tautahi's Pa (Otautahi), a seasonal Ngai Tahu kainga, and as a site which played a key role in the survey and establishment of Christchurch by the Canterbury Association.

Tautahi Pa, on the opposite bank of the Avon/Ōtākaro River from *The Bricks*, was a kainga established by Ngai Tahu chief Tautahi in the eighteenth century, and the place from which the Maori name for Christchurch, Otautahi, is derived. The kainga served as a camping place for Tautahi and his people on their frequent forays from Koukourarata (Port Levy) for the gathering of mahinga kai. Tautahi died during one of these visits and is buried in the proximity of the St Luke's Church site at the corner of Kilmore and Manchester Streets.

In the mid nineteenth century, the location became important to European settlers as a convenient landing site. The first to utilise it were brothers John and William Deans of Riccarton, who in the early 1840s were the first Europeans to settle permanently on the Canterbury Plains. *The Bricks* reputedly derives its name from a cargo of the building

material landed at the site. At the end of the 1840s the pivotal nature of the location was recognised by the Canterbury Association, who positioned the new town of Christchurch in relation to what was regarded as the practical upper limit of navigation on the Avon. The Association's surveyors established a camp on the site in 1849, which contained the first European dwellings constructed within the Four Avenues, and from which they carried out the survey of the city. During the early 1850s a wharf was built and *The Bricks* effectively served as Christchurch's trade entrance. Consequently the site became the focus of early settlement. This role was quickly usurped by landings on the larger Heathcote River however, and had ceased altogether by the end of the 1860s. Subsequent owners of the site tried to encourage a market for pleasure cruises on large steamers, but with little success. From the 1880s, boatsheds at *The Bricks* were used for the renting of small pleasure boats. After a twilight period when Christchurch Drainage Board equipment was stored there, the location was cleared and a memorial cairn erected in 1926. The site remains as open riverbank.

### **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 Bricks* has cultural and spiritual significance for Maori for its proximity to Tautahi's Pa and for its connection with a significant tupuna, Tautahi. For Europeans the site has cultural significance as the site of the genesis of Christchurch. The memorial cairn however only recognises the site's association with the Deans family.

### **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 Bricks* has aesthetic significance for the design of the memorial cairn unveiled in 1926, which is a modest example of interwar commemorative design by leading interwar Christchurch architect Cecil Wood. Wood had a diverse oeuvre, designing commercial, residential and ecclesiastical buildings, but is most well-known for his domestic work, particularly his neo-Georgian houses.

### **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 Bricks* Cairn has some technological and craftsmanship value. It is constructed of cement and brick, mounted on a bluestone base. The cairn contains bricks removed from one of Christchurch's earliest surviving homes, the nearby Englefield Lodge (1856).

### **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 Bricks* has high contextual significance within the wider context of eastern central Christchurch. The site and setting are contiguous and consist of a small parcel of land on a bend in the Avon River bordered by Oxford Terrace and Barbadoes Street. The parcel boundary more or less equates to the original reserve created by the Canterbury Association. The 1926 memorial cairn is located at the centre of the reserve surrounded by lawn and mature trees.

The wider context of *The Bricks* includes the site of Tautahi's Pa (which is commemorated in the Cambridge Green reserve across the Avon), the residential properties across Oxford Terrace, which are the sites of the early houses and businesses which once clustered around the landing site, and the River Avon itself, which provided the transport artery which once supplied *The Bricks*. *Englefield Lodge*, from which the cairn bricks were sourced, remains in a derelict state nearby at the corner of Fitzgerald Avenue and Avonside Drive.

### **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 Bricks* 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 those which occurred before 1900. The site is in proximity to Tautahi's Pa, inhabited from the eighteenth century, and was used by the Deans brothers from the mid 1840s. The first European structures in the vicinity were erected in 1849.

### **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

*The Bricks* has high overall heritage significance to the Christchurch district including Banks Peninsula. The site has high historical and social significance for Ngai Tahu for its association with prominent tupuna Tautahi, and the kainga Otautahi that he established. The site is significant for Europeans as a landing place for the earliest settlement on the Canterbury Plains at Riccarton, as the place which decided Christchurch's location and from which the town was surveyed, as the location of the earliest European habitation on the site of Christchurch, and as Christchurch's main goods entrance and the initial focus of settlement during the first years of the city's development. The site has cultural and spiritual significance for Ngai Tahu for its connection with Tautahi and his kainga, and for Cantabrians as a site which commemorates the genesis of Christchurch. The Bricks Cairn has aesthetic significance as a modest example of interwar commemorative design by leading interwar Christchurch architect Cecil Wood. The site has high contextual significance in relation to its immediate setting, which equates to the original Canterbury Association reserve, and more widely to the site of Otautahi across the river, to the residential sections surrounding *The Bricks*, and to the Avon itself, which determined the site's location. The site has archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide information on pre-1900 human activity on the site, including that relating to both its Maori and Pakeha history.

### **REFERENCES:**

CCC Heritage File *The Bricks: Oxford Terrace/Barbadoes Street*

W. Hoddinott (Sept 2009) *Conservation Plan: Tautahi Pa/The Bricks. Otautahi/Christchurch*  
Opus International Consultants Ltd

Ti Kōuka Whenua *Christchurch City Libraries*

**REPORT DATED:** 10/02/2015

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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