



**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 157
*CRANMER SQUARE AND SETTING, 1P CRANMER SQUARE,
CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 11/12/2014

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.

Cranmer Square has high historical significance as a public square with a long association with sport and education in the central city. It was a feature of the original town plan for Christchurch, surveyed by Edward Jollie in 1849-50. The Square was named for Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was burned at the stake for his Protestant beliefs on 20 March 1556 as one of the so-called Marian Martyrs. Latimer Square was named for another of the Marian Martyrs, Hugh Latimer, and originally Cathedral Square was to have been named for another, Nicholas Ridley, both of whom were executed in October 1555.

Cranmer Square was one of the city's earliest sports grounds, hosting regular cricket, hockey and football (soccer) matches from the 1860s. It also became an extension of the grounds for the Christchurch Normal School (1874-76, demolished) and Christchurch Girls' High School (1876-78, demolished), which stood on the north and south sides of the square respectively. Other education providers in close proximity to the square include(d) Cathedral Grammar School (est. 1881), St Margaret's College (est. 1910, relocated to Merivale c.1950), and the Christchurch Teachers' College (1927-30, closed and redeveloped in the 1990s). The square has also played a role in the civic life of the city. In September 1928, for example, a civic reception was held in Cranmer Square for Charles Kingsford-Smith after he completed the

first successful trans-Tasman flight. More recently, since the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes, Cranmer Square has been used as the venue for RSA commemorations because the Citizens' War Memorial in Cathedral Square has been off-limits due to the condition of Christ Church Cathedral. On the eastern perimeter of the square are a series of chain markers used by early surveyors to check their chain measures.

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.

Cranmer Square has high cultural significance as a tangible reminder of the original layout of the city in accordance with the plan by Edward Jollie. It also has cultural significance for way in which its name signifies the relationship between the founders of Christchurch and the Church of England (Anglican Church). The square's cultural significance is enhanced by its historic use as a parade ground and a place of assembly and commemoration.

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.

Cranmer Square has high architectural and aesthetic significance as an important functional and ornamental feature of Jollie's plan for Christchurch, which overlaid the flat plain of the new settlement with a typical colonial grid leavened by four public squares (Cathedral, Victoria, Latimer and Armagh) and the sinuous form of the River Avon. Mature perimeter trees, lamp stands and a double 'Union Jack' pattern of paths give the square a sense of formality and symmetry. The paths have been developed over time, beginning with a central path in line with Chester Street in 1869 and concluding with diagonal paths in the northern half of the square in 1993.

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 elaborate cast-iron light standards in Cranmer Square have some craftsmanship and technological significance for their local production and decorative features. The lamps were cast by John Anderson's Canterbury Foundry and were likely installed in 1896 (Beaumont, p. 85). They were converted from gas to electricity in 1915, which was not long after the Lake Coleridge Hydroelectricity Station had started supplying the city with power (1914).

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.

Cranmer Square has high contextual significance as a defining feature of the central city and for its relationship to the buildings that surround it. Located on Cranmer Square itself are

plantings dating from the 1870s, lamp standards from c.1896, and three surveyor's chain standard marks adjacent to the footpath on Cranmer Square East installed in 1920. Surrounding the square are buildings and building sites dating from the early 1860s through until the present day. The square has a large number of notable trees that date to the 19th century and is most closely related to Latimer Square in its historic plan and purpose. Cranmer Square also has a significant relationship to Cathedral and Victoria Squares as key open space features that date to the founding of the colonial settlement of Christchurch.

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.

Cranmer Square is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

Cranmer Square has high overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula, especially for its rarity value as a 19th century public park exhibiting a very high level of authenticity (Beaumont, p. 108). It has high historical and social significance as an open space city feature that dates to the founding of Christchurch. Cranmer Square has high cultural significance for its name that embodies the Protestant Church of England (Anglican) values of the city's founders. It has high architectural and aesthetic significance as one of the city's defining open space features and technological significance for the late Victorian lamp stands. Cranmer Square has high contextual significance in relation to the features of the square itself, especially its mature trees, and its relation to other central-city squares. Cranmer Square is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

REFERENCES:

'The Squares of Christchurch' Christchurch City Libraries

<http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/heritage/earlychristchurch/squaresofchristchurch.asp>

CCC Central City Heritage Guide

<http://www.christchurch.org.nz/publications/CCCHeritageGuide.pdf>

Louise Beaumont 'Historical Investigation - Cranmer Square, Christchurch' (for CCC, August 2013)

REPORT DATED: 18 NOVEMBER 2014

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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