

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 268  
*ST LUKE’S CHAPEL AND SETTING – 272 HEREFORD  
STREET, CHRISTCHURCH***



**PHOTOGRAPH : M.VAIR-PIOVA, 9/12/2014**

**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.*

St Luke's Chapel has historical and social significance as a chapel that was initially constructed as a funerary chapel for the Lower Heathcote Church of England Cemetery. It then became the chapel for the Jubilee Home and finally was relocated to be the chapel for the City Mission. The chapel was designed in 1888 by R. W. England as a funerary chapel for the Lower Heathcote Church of England Cemetery in Rutherford Street, Woolston. The Heathcote parish was part of the community served by the Church of St John the Evangelist in Woolston. In 1864 the Church Property Trustees purchased land on the corner of Princess (now Rutherford) Street and Garlands Road for use as a cemetery. One of the earliest cemeteries in Christchurch the Heathcote Cemetery was consecrated by the Rt Rev Harper, first Bishop of Christchurch in 1868. By the late 1940s the chapel had fallen into disrepair, through lack of use, as the nearby Heathcote cemetery was almost full. A St John's lay reader, L.R. Burgess, who conducted regular services at the nearby Jubilee Home instigated the gifting of the building by the Church Property Trustees to the North Canterbury Hospital Board and in 1947 the chapel was relocated to the Jubilee Home. However The Jubilee Home was established in 1888 as a memorial to the 50th Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It was

established to care for the 'destitute and infirm'. The move was supervised by the architect R S D Harman and most likely undertaken by traction engine. In October 1949 the chapel was dedicated to St Luke the physician. As a non-denominational chapel the St Luke's Chapel served the religious community of the Jubilee Home until 1990. In that year the Jubilee Home was closed and following an approach from the City Missioner, the chapel was gifted by the Area Health Board to the Christchurch City Mission. In April 1991, under the supervision of architect Don Donnithorne, the chapel was moved to its new site at the City Mission in Hereford Street. In 2013 consent was obtained by Wilkie and Bruce architects to move the Chapel over the road to a site adjacent to the new City Mission building. The chapel now sits on its own plot of land on the south side of Hereford Street.

## **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.*

St Luke's Chapel has cultural and spiritual significance having served three distinct communities since its consecration in 1888. As a funerary chapel it was used for final services for many people buried in the Woolston Cemetery. At the Jubilee Home it was used for regular services as well as for the funeral services of some of the residents. It continues to fulfil a spiritual and cultural function as the City Mission Chapel.

## **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.*

St Luke's Chapel has architectural and aesthetic significance for its Gothic Revival design by well-known Christchurch architect R W England. Born in Lyttelton in 1863, Robert England went to England for his architectural training. He returned to Christchurch and established his own practice around 1886. The chapel, designed in 1888, is among his earlier works, with later works including McLeans Mansion and the third stage of Riccarton House. His brother Edward England joined the practice in 1906, two years before Robert's death in 1908. The weatherboard chapel has a steeply pitched shingled gable roof with decorative bargeboards at each end. Lancet windows line the nave with a triple lancet window at the east end. The chapel is entered through a gabled entrance porch, with the interior being dominated by four open timber trusses. The building is constructed of kauri with some rimu finishes. The glass in the side lancets is the original glass from the 1880s. The stained glass window in the triple lancet was added in the 1950s and was the work of Roy Miller of Miller Studios Dunedin. It was designed by Miller's principal designer, Frederick V Ellis head of the School of Art at Wellington Technical College. As well as the timberwork in the building itself the altar furniture is of note. Through donations from Jubilee Home residents an altar, lectern, chair and prayer desk were commissioned for the chapel in the early 1950s. Designed by architect R S D Harman, the furniture was carved by J C Vivian, who worked closely with master craftsman, Frederick Gurnsey.

## **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.*

St Luke's chapel has technological and craftsmanship significance for what it may reveal of 19<sup>th</sup> century timber construction methodologies, materials, fixtures and fittings. It has craftsmanship significance for its interior finishes such as the altar furniture designed by R S D Harman and carved by J C Vivian, who worked closely with noted master craftsman Frederick Gurnsey, the stained glass windows and decorative detail.

## **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 setting of the chapel consists of the immediate land parcel. It has contextual significance for its relationship to the adjacent City Mission building on Hereford Street. The removal of the building from the previous City Mission complex of buildings on the north side of the street has improved the visibility of the chapel, putting it on its own plot, directly facing the road, rather than it being hidden amongst a complex of buildings. The chapel sits in a lawn area with parking to the rear of the site. A small building has been constructed behind the chapel to house toilets and storage.

## **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 Chapel setting is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900, as an early central city land parcel. However any archaeological evidence found would not relate to the chapel itself, its foundations being extant in the Rutherford Street Cemetery.

## **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

St Luke's Chapel and its setting are of overall significance to Christchurch including Banks Peninsula as an extant example of a Victorian funerary chapel. The chapel has historical and social significance as a chapel that was initially a funerary chapel for the Lower Heathcote Church of England Cemetery, then chapel for the Jubilee Home and finally the chapel for the City Mission. St Luke's Chapel has cultural and spiritual significance having served three distinct communities since its consecration in 1888. It has architectural and aesthetic significance for its Gothic Revival design by well-known Christchurch architect R W England. The chapel has technological and craftsmanship significance for its 19<sup>th</sup> century timber construction, materials, fixtures and fittings and additional details such as the altar furniture designed by R S D Harman and carved by J C Vivian, who worked closely with noted master craftsman Frederick Gurnsey. It has contextual significance for its relationship to the adjacent City Mission building on Hereford Street. As the Chapel has been relocated a number of times, the Chapel setting only is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

**REFERENCES:**

Christchurch City Council, *Heritage File, 275 Hereford Street*  
Christchurch City Council, *Christchurch City Plan – Listed Heritage Item and Setting. Heritage Assessment – Statement of Significance. St Luke’s Chapel/City Mission – 275 Hereford Street – 2011*

**REPORT DATED:** 28/11/2014

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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