

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 454
*DWELLING AND SETTING – 41 RANFURLY STREET,
CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 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 dwelling at 41 Ranfurly Street and its setting has historical and social significance for its association with the Soanes family and as one of a number of villas built in the ‘villa’ suburbs of St Albans, Merivale and Opawa between c.1890 and 1914. The villa was built in 1899 for Philip Soanes (1867-1956), by Soanes and his brother, and fellow builder and bricklayer, Henry Soanes. Henry, who was known as Harry, purchased the neighbouring property and built a brick villa at 45 Ranfurly Street at the same time. The Soanes family had immigrated to Christchurch from Oxford, England in 1863, settling in St Albans. The two brothers followed their father, a master bricklayer, into the building trade. Philip Soanes was also a pipe layer.

Philip Soanes remained at the house until 1908 when he sold the property to George Hickmott, a brewer. Hickmott was a founder of the Union Brewery, which he sold to New Zealand Breweries in 1924, becoming a director of that company. George and his wife Martha's son Rupert (1894-1916) was a Canterbury and New Zealand representative cricket player before he was killed in action during World War I. Hickmott senior died in 1928, but his family retained ownership of the property until 1941. The villa then passed to Isabel Eleanor Regnault, nee Hickmott. In 1944 it was bought by Patrick Molloy and remained in the Molloy family until it was purchased by the current owners in 2002. Wilson & Hill Architects designed a substantial addition to the rear of the villa in 2003. The villa sustained damaged during the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes and its future remains unresolved.

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 dwelling has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of a Christchurch builder and bricklayer whose home was also an advertisement for his trade skills.

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 dwelling has architectural and aesthetic significance as a late Victorian bay villa with a typical plan form and notable architectural detailing. The house has a hipped roof with bracketed eaves. The faceted front bay has a plaster frieze above the three sash windows with a hexagonal turret roof above. A front veranda, with decorative ironwork, terminates at the bay. The veranda is further ornamented by a tessellated encaustic tile floor and geometrically detailed stained glass fan- and side-lights that frame the front entrance.

The interior of the dwelling has notable features including attached columns with a pointed arch in the hallway and a ceiling rose and plaster cornice in the sitting room. The 2003 addition to the rear, which added a large kitchen/dining/living area, is distinct from the original dwelling and has its own hipped roof.

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 dwelling has high craftsmanship significance due to the quality of construction of this turn of the 20th century double-width brick dwelling with external and internal plaster detail. The original decorative cast-iron veranda frieze and brackets also remain intact. The plasterwork detailing is particularly notable for its quality and decorative detail, especially the ornate ceiling roses and plastered cornices. The dwelling also has technological significance for the potential it has to reveal information about masonry construction methods, materials, fixtures and fittings of the period.

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 dwelling and its setting has contextual significance as one of two brick villas that were built by the Soanes brothers in 1899. The two houses sit side by side, on their original sections, with the rear of both sections backing onto Abberley Park. The houses were built at a time when villa 'suburbs' were developing in various parts of the city, St Albans being one of them.

The setting consists of a rectangular section fronting on to Ranfurly Street and backing onto Abberley Park. The house sits towards the front of the property with a new hip-roofed garage immediately adjacent to the street boundary. The rear of the section has a lawn with large trees set against the backdrop of Abberley Park. The building has landmark significance within this residential neighbourhood due to its materials, quality of construction and relatively ornate detailing. The landmark significance of the villa is enhanced by its proximity to another former Soanes villa. The villa also provides some historic and stylistic context for the 1910s development of the eastern portion of Ranfurly Street, between Springfield and Caledonian Roads.

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 dwelling and its setting has 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, possibly including that which occurred before 1900.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The dwelling and its setting has overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The villa has historical and social significance as it was built by the owner of the property, local builder and bricklayer Philip Soanes, with assistance from his brother Harry. The dwelling has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of a Christchurch builder and bricklayer whose home was also an advertisement for his trade skills. The dwelling has architectural and aesthetic significance as a late Victorian brick bay villa with a typical plan form and notable architectural detailing. The dwelling has high craftsmanship significance due to the quality of construction of this turn of the 20th century double brick dwelling with external and internal plaster detail and has technological significance for the potential it has to reveal information about masonry construction methods, materials, fixtures and fittings of the period. The former Soanes villa at 41 Ranfurly Street and its setting has contextual significance in relation to the neighbouring dwelling at 45 Ranfurly Street and for its notable contribution to

the streetscape. The dwelling and its setting has archaeological in view of the date at which development first occurred on this property.

REFERENCES:

Christchurch City Council Heritage files *41 Ranfurly Street*
Historic place # 1890 – Heritage NZ List: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1890>
'Obituary. Mr G Hickmott' *The Press* 22 September 1928, p. 15.

REPORT DATED: 3 MARCH, 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.

PLEASE USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CCC HERITAGE FILES.