

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 469
*DWELLING AND SETTING, SPRINGBANK – 290
RIVERLAW TERRACE, CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 10/01/2015

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 known as Springbank has historical and social significance as a colonial residence built before 1875 and for its association with a number of owners who were involved in the social and political life of the city. The land was originally owned by Henry Phillips, one of the first immigrants to arrive in Lyttelton on the *Sir George Seymour*. Plots of land in the 'Village of St Martins', which were part of Henry Phillips' estate, were offered for sale in August 1863. Phillips (1805-77) also had land interests in Phillipstown, which was named for him. William Nicol Macbeth, an accountant, acquired one of the St Martins' plots and his wife gave birth to a son, one of the couple's eleven children, at Springbank in April 1875. Macbeth sold 11 acres of land and the dwelling Springbank to Isabella Eliza Ayers, wife of Aaron Ayers, in 1883. Aaron Ayers (1836-1900) had arrived in New Zealand with his wife in 1860. He was a hairdresser and tobacconist for 20 years before becoming an auctioneer and senior partner in Ayers, Beachamp and Company. Ayers was Mayor of Christchurch from 1885-87, a Linwood Borough Councillor, and an avid gardener.

The Ayers sold Springbank in 1889 to Charles Selby Howell, a saddler known for his interest and involvement in horse racing. Howell lived there for five years, later building a home in

Opawa which he named Stroud House. In 1894 Howell sold Springbank to Maria Trist, wife of John Trist, sail maker. In 1921 the Trists divided the property in half and a further subdivision of 15 sections occurred in 1936. John William Trist, a saddler, the youngest son of Charles and Maria, inherited the property and remained there until his death in 1959. Doris Eleanor Ford, nee Trist, then succeeded to the property. In 1969 the current section was created with the subdivision of the land to the south of the house. The house has changed hands a number of times since 1971 and the current owners purchased the property in 1995.

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.

Springbank has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of its past and present residents given its size, its integrity and intactness and the range of rooms it contains.

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.

Springbank has architectural and aesthetic significance as a one-and-a-half storey colonial villa. The dwelling has a concave return veranda with simple posts and decorative frieze. Some modifications have been made to the house with a boxed bay window addition to the north-west gable and a porch, reflecting the design of the veranda, added to the west facade. The interior of the house features a black timber fire-surround with mirrors and painted flowers. An early 20th century bay window addition has casement windows with leaded fanlights above. The original slate roof has been replaced with a corrugated iron roof. Conservation, maintenance and repair work has recently been undertaken.

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.

Springbank has technological and craftsmanship significance for the potential it has to reveal information about colonial timber construction, materials, fixtures and fittings. Although generally chaste in its detailing the house is notable for its matai construction and decorative fire surround inset with mirrors and painted flowers, leaded fanlights and the decorative timber frieze on the veranda.

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.

Springbank and its setting has contextual significance, as a colonial house built overlooking the Heathcote River, for its contribution to the historic character of St Martins. The property originally encompassed a large block of land between Hills Road (now Wilsons Road) and the river. For many years after its construction Springbank would have stood within a rural environment until the residential development of the suburb took place during the first four decades of the 20th century.

Today the setting consists of the immediate land parcel on which the listed building is located close to the southern boundary. The dwelling stands on an elevated site in a mature garden setting, which includes a listed southern magnolia on the north-west aspect of the garden. A concrete retaining wall with timber paling fence above defines the boundary on the Riverlaw Terrace street frontage. The house is a local landmark due to its age and colonial styling.

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.

Springbank is of archaeological significance because it has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

Springbank and its setting have overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The dwelling has historical and social significance as a colonial residence and for its association with a number of notable owners, including Aaron Ayers, a former Mayor of Christchurch. Springbank has cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of its past and present residents and architectural and aesthetic significance as a colonial villa that retains many of its original features. Springbank has technological and craftsmanship significance for the potential it has to reveal information about colonial timber construction, materials, fixtures and fittings. Springbank has contextual significance for its contribution to the historic character of St Martins and as a local landmark. The dwelling and its setting has the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

REFERENCES:

John Wilson et al *Contextual Historical Overview of Christchurch* for Christchurch City Council, 2005.

'Mr Charles Selby Howell' *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand* (Christchurch, 1903)

Historic place # 3730 – Heritage NZ List

<http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/3730>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Ayers

<http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/Publications/ChristchurchCityCouncil/ArchitecturalHeritage/ChurchoftheGoodShepherd/ChurchoftheGoodShepherd.pdf>

REPORT DATED: 9 MARCH 2015

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