



**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 492  
*DWELLING AND SETTING – 389 SELWYN 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 389 Selwyn Street has historical and social significance as it reflects the development of the suburb of Addington in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The land on which the cottage stands was originally part of Rural Section 72 – some 150 acres bounded by Moorhouse Avenue, Selwyn and Jerold Streets and Lincoln Road. Rural Section 72 was sold to Henry Sewell of the Canterbury Association in 1863 and later transferred to Edward Stevens who subdivided it and sold part of the section to Andrew Neill. The colonial cottage adjacent to 389 Selwyn Street was originally on the same land parcel until the cottages were further subdivided in to two separate lots in 1913. The cottages at 389 and 391 Selwyn Street have a long and intertwined history. Both dwellings were likely built between 1874 and 1881 for Andrew Neill, a labourer, of Christchurch. Neill's name appears on the certificate of title from 1874 until the time of his death in 1905. The cottage at 389 Selwyn Street along with the neighbouring cottage were then passed to his children Eliza Down (nee Neill) and James Neill and remained in the ownership of the Neill family until 1967 - a total of 93 years.

In 1967, 389 Selwyn Street (as well as the dwelling at 391 Selwyn Street) was bought by Kenneth Wasson. Roger and Barbara Kershaw owned both cottages from 1977 to 1981, at which time the cottages were sold independently for the first time. In 1996 the properties were reunited in one family ownership when Malcolm and Judith Douglass bought the cottage at 389 Selwyn Street; their daughter Joanna owned 391 Selwyn Street. The Douglass' carried out extensive restoration work to both cottages and the properties were auctioned together as a package in 2000.

## **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 at 389 Selwyn Street has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of early Addington residents.

## **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 cottage has architectural and aesthetic significance as a representative example of a colonial dwelling in a vernacular architectural style. The dwelling is a single-storey cottage constructed on a timber frame with lapped weatherboards and an iron roof. The gabled roof aligns to the street frontage on a long narrow section. The façade is symmetrical, with a central door flanked by double hung sash windows and a straight veranda carried on simple posts. A lean-to is sited at the rear of the cottage and a new garage was erected on the property in 1996. An attic room accessed by a ladder is still extant inside the dwelling.

## **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 cottage has technological and craftsmanship significance as it reflects the vernacular materials and simple forms used in colonial cottages. Materials include timber and corrugated iron. Of particular interest is the use of volcanic rock in the piling of the cottage.

## **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 at 389 Selwyn Street has high contextual significance because of its association to the neighbouring cottage at 391 and other cottages in the Addington area. Sitting side by side, the cottages at 389 and 391 Selwyn Street have an interesting dual history. After the Neill family, there has only been a short period of time when the cottages have not been in the same family ownership. The design of both cottages was identical at the

time of construction and the similarity of their facades enhances the streetscape value and aesthetic continuity of other cottages in the immediate vicinity. The cottage at 383 Selwyn Street, which is also listed, is of a similar style, size and date of construction, as was 387 Selwyn Street before it was demolished. The cottages contribute to the small-scale residential cottage character of the neighbourhood.

The cottage also has contextual significance in relation to its position directly opposite Addington Cemetery. The cemetery was established in 1858 when the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew's purchased land for a cemetery in Selwyn Street. Addington was the first 'public' cemetery in the city, being open to all persons of any religious community and allowing the performance of any religious service.

The setting consists of a long rectangular parcel of land with mature trees including a sycamore, silver birches and a cabbage tree. The setting contributes to the street presence of both 389 and 391 Selwyn Street so they can be visually appreciated together.

### **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 at 389 Selwyn Street has archaeological significance because of the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900.

### **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

The dwelling and its setting at 389 Selwyn Street has overall significance to the Christchurch District, including Banks Peninsula. The cottage has historical and social significance as it reflects the development and social identity of the Addington suburb in the 1870s and 1880s. The dwelling at 389 Selwyn Street has cultural significance a demonstration of the way of life of early Addington residents. The cottage has architectural and aesthetic significance as a representative example of a colonial dwelling in a vernacular architectural style and technological and craftsmanship significance for its demonstration of colonial construction methods, materials and detailing. The dwelling and its setting has high contextual significance because of its association to the neighbouring cottage and other cottages in the Addington area. The dwelling and its setting has archaeological significance in view of the date at which development first occurred on this property.

### **REFERENCES:**

Christchurch City Council Heritage files *389 Selwyn Street*  
Historic place # 3700 – Heritage NZ List: <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details?id=3700>  
John Wilson et al *Contextual Historical Overview of Christchurch* (Christchurch, 2005)

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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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