

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 539
*DWELLING AND SETTING, RISE COTTAGE
– 10 WESTENRA TERRACE, CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: BRENDAN SMYTH 8.1.2015

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 Rise Cottage has high historical and social significance as the home built for Ursula Bethell, a social worker and noted New Zealand poet, and her companion Effie Pollen, in 1924. Bethell (1874-1945) is recognised as one of New Zealand's leading early 20th century poets and many of her poems were inspired by the garden she established at her Cashmere home. Bethell named the property Rise Cottage after Rise Hall, her paternal uncle's estate in Yorkshire. The name has been retained by subsequent owners.

The development of the Cashmere Hills was spurred by the extension of the tramline to the Sign of the Takahe in 1912. In the early 20th century Cashmere Hills 'developed a distinct sense of community based on its early popularity with intellectuals and university people' (Wilson 2002). Property in Westetra Terrace was first marketed in 1913 and it appears in the street directories for the first time in 1921. Bethell wrote many poems describing the making of her garden between 1925 and 1928. These poems were published under a pseudonym by a London publisher in a volume titled *From a Garden in the Antipodes* in 1929. Bethell also wrote many poems about the Southern Alps and the Canterbury Plains that she could see as she gardened at Rise Cottage. Throughout her time there Bethell's home was visited by younger poets, including Basil Dowling, John Summers and D'Arcy Cresswell, who appreciated her encouragement of other writers, as well as her impressive library. After Pollen died suddenly in November 1934 Bethell left Rise Cottage and moved back to her former home in St Albans. The dwelling remains a private residence.

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.

Rise Cottage and its garden has cultural significance as it demonstrates the way of life of its former residents, especially that of Ursula Bethell. As many of Bethell's poems were written at the house and inspired by the garden she developed there. During her residence there, and since, the house has been frequently visited by those interested in Bethell, her poetry and her garden.

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.

Rise Cottage has some architectural and aesthetic value as a timber bungalow designed to take advantage of the view from the Port Hills and for its garden that Bethell established around the building. The two-storey weatherboard clad bungalow has undergone alterations since Bethell lived there with the addition of a room, altered fenestration and, more recently, internal changes to the kitchen, bathroom, and laundry area of the house. The designer of the Bethell/Pollen bungalow is currently unknown.

The dwelling sustained damage in the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes. Remedial works involved the removal of brick chimneys, brick fireplace surrounds, chimney breasts and the replacement of lath and plaster ceilings with Gib board in parts. A timber fire surround replaced the 1920s brick surround with the new surround being close in scale to the original. Some decorative trim in both the living area and more formal lounge needed to be replaced and was matched to the original.

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.

Rise Cottage has some technological and craftsmanship value as an example of a 1920s bungalow. Alterations have occurred to the property since 1934 and damage caused by the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes has also compromised some of its original features, materials and finishings, including the original brick fire surrounds and hearth tiles.

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.

Rise Cottage and its setting have contextual significance for the relationship between the dwelling, its garden setting and the view it offers north over the city and beyond. The dwelling is not visible from the roadway, as it is screened by a large hedge and two-car garage. The setting consists of the listed bungalow surrounded by the garden that Bethell originally established at the property.

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.

Rise Cottage and its setting have archaeological significance because of their potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to human activity on the site, possibly including that which occurred prior to 1900. Before 1913 Westenra Terrace was part of John Cracroft Wilson's Cashmere Estate.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The dwelling known as Rise Cottage and its setting have overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. Rise Cottage has high historical and social significance as the former home of well-known New Zealand poet Ursula Bethell. Rise Cottage has cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of its former residents, most especially Ursula Bethell and Effie Pollen and contextual significance for the relationship between the dwelling, its garden setting and the northern vista it affords. Rise Cottage and its setting have archaeological significance because of their potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to human activity on the site, possibly including that which occurred prior to 1900.

REFERENCES:

Christchurch City Council Heritage files *10 Westenra Terrace, Rise Cottage*

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<http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1921>
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http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/authors/bethell/letters_intro.asp

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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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