

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE  
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 591  
*DWELLING AND SETTING, FERRYMEAD HOUSE – 285  
BRIDLE PATH ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH***



**PHOTOGRAPH : CCC HERITAGE FILES, PRE FEBRUARY 2011**

**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.*

285 Bridle Path Road, also known as Ferrymead House, has high historical and social significance for its associations with early settler James Townsend, for the period of time it served as a hotel, post office and store at what was the Ferrymead Railway Wharf and for the 80 years it was owned by the Bunting family. Townsend purchased the property in 1851 initially calling it Greenlands - the dwelling was built the same year. Townsend later renamed the property Ferrymead, after the adjacent Heathcote ferry. On the route to Christchurch, the Townsend family home was an early social centre. For a short period in the 1860s the property was leased and served as a hotel, post office and store at what was then the Ferrymead Railway Wharf.

A ferry service had opened in May 1851 and the quay opened in the Woolston Loop later that year. Coupled with the various wharves on the Heathcote, the area became Christchurch's

trade entrance. Construction of a railway was undertaken in 1861 and by 1863 it was sufficiently advanced that a temporary rail link between Ferrymead and Christchurch. Goods could then be delivered by boat to the new Railway Wharf at Ferrymead, and taken directly by train to Christchurch. The Ferrymead terminus was rendered redundant after only four years when the Heathcote (Moorhouse) Rail Tunnel opened in late 1867, although the remains of the railway embankment and wharf can still be seen. With the advent of the railway, river traffic dried up and the Heathcote wharves became largely superfluous, although some survived into the 1890s as depots for local industry.

In 1886 Ferrymead House was purchased by the Bunting family, who developed a large commercial tomato growing business on the property. The family retained ownership until 1893 when it was sold on. The current owner purchased the property in 1972. The house remains, although modified during the 1920s, one of Christchurch's earliest dwellings, and the only remaining building of the Ferrymead Wharf village.

### **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.*

Ferrymead House and its setting is of cultural and spiritual significance for its value as a reminder of the role of the area as a significant colonial transport hub. For early European colonists, the location was important as the transport hub of their new settlement, as discussed above and *Ferrymead House* has cultural significance as a reminder of the former role of Ferrymead as a significant colonial transport hub.

The setting and wider area has high cultural and spiritual significance to Māori. Ngā-pākihi-whakatekateka o-Waitaha, the wetlands of the estuary of the Ōtākaro (Avon) and Ōpāwaho (Heathcote) Rivers provided Māori with a valuable source of kai. The mudflats at Ferrymead were named Ohika paruparu or 'women gathering shellfish often sank to their thighs in mud'.

### **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 at 285 Bridle Path Road is of architectural and aesthetic significance as the only surviving building, though altered over time, of the important early structures from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in the area. The original building is difficult to read due to the considerable alterations in the 1920s, but elements do remain within the building externally and internally. The original design was characterised by paired gables on the first floor. The 1920s alterations, undertaken when the Bunting family owned the property, involved the insertion of a mansard roof, which obscures the original gable forms, along with new windows and a porch. Alterations around and over the original form has resulted in a dwelling with a very distinctive form and one which tells of its changes of use over time.

### **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.*

285 Bridle Path Road has some technological and craftsmanship value for its ability to demonstrate construction techniques and materials from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early twentieth centuries.

## **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.*

285 Bridle Path Road and its setting has high contextual significance due to its location within a wider historical landscape and with the immediate land parcel, a plot of just over 1.1ha, that includes outbuildings, large glass houses and mature plantings. Located at a former transport hub for Christchurch, Ferrymead House has contextual significance for its relationship to the adjacent Heathcote River and remnants of the former Ferrymead railway embankment, wharf, and ferry crossing. Further afield, the house also has a contextual relationship with the Moorhouse Rail Tunnel, and the present rail corridor to Christchurch, the Bridle Path and Ferry Road; and the former sites of the Bricks and Steamer wharves and Christchurch Quay on the Heathcote River.

## **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 setting at 285 Bridle Path Road have archaeological significance as an early 1850s dwelling, and the only extant part of the once extensive former Ferrymead Railway Wharf complex, and for the potential they have to provide archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site including that which occurred before 1900.

## **ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

285 Bridle Path Road and its setting has overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The dwelling also known as Ferrymead House, has high historical and social significance for its associations with early settler James Townsend, for the period of time it served as a hotel, post office and store at what was the Ferrymead Railway Wharf and for the 80 years it was owned by the Bunting family. Ferrymead House has cultural and significance as a reminder of the former role of Ferrymead as a colonial transport hub. The setting and wider area has high cultural and spiritual significance to as the wetlands of the estuary of the Ōtākaro (Avon) and Ōpāwaho (Heathcote) Rivers provided Māori with a valuable source of kai. The dwelling at 285 Bridle Path Road has architectural and aesthetic significance as the only surviving building, though altered over time, of the important early structures from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in the immediate area. The dwelling has some technological and craftsmanship value for its ability to demonstrate construction techniques and materials from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Ferrymead House has high contextual significance for its relationship to the adjacent Heathcote River and remnants of the former Ferrymead railway embankment, wharf, and ferry crossing. The dwelling and setting at 285 Bridle Path Road have archaeological significance for the potential they have

to provide archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site including that which occurred before 1900.

**REFERENCES:**

Christchurch City Council, *Heritage File, Ferrymead House – 285 Bridle Path Road*  
Christchurch City Council, *Christchurch City Plan – Listed Heritage Item and Setting. Heritage Assessment – Statement of Significance. Ferrymead House – 285 Bridle Path Road - 2010*

**REPORT DATED: 11.3.2015**

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.