

# ***THEME I : LAND AND PEOPLE***

## ***Chapter 1: The site of Christchurch***

### *Before human beings arrived*

Christchurch is built on land of very recent formation. Most of it sits on the seaward edge of a plain which slopes gradually from its inland edge, against the foothills of the Southern Alps, to the coast. The plain was formed by the outwash from glaciers which were eroding the Southern Alps. One of Canterbury's major glacier-fed rivers, the Waimakariri, flows a short distance north of the city. At different times the site of Christchurch has been both far inland (when sea levels were lower during glacial episodes of the Pleistocene) and below sea level. The sea last covered the site of Christchurch perhaps 7,000 years ago. Since then sea levels have fallen slightly and gravel and other sediments have accumulated against the northern side of the volcanic hills of what is now Banks Peninsula (but was at different times in the past both entirely landlocked and an island).

The city is built on what was a mosaic of lobes of shingles deposited by the Waimakariri River, swamplands and waterways located south and east of these shingle lobes, and belts of sandhills running parallel to the coast. Two small spring-fed rivers (the Heathcote and Avon) drained the Christchurch swamplands into an estuary. North and south of the city, the Styx flows into the Brooklands lagoon and the Halswell into Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere.

The site of Christchurch has three dominant landscape elements deriving from its geological evolution: the flatness of the plain; the moderating of the sense of expanse by the volcanic Port Hills to the south; and the distant relief to the west of the outlying ('foothill') ranges of the Southern Alps, which are snow-covered in winter.

The natural vegetation of the site was another mosaic – of swampland plants (flax and rushes), drier grasslands with shrubby vegetation (kanuka, matagouri, ribbonwood and cabbage trees) and patches of true forest, dominated by kahikatea.

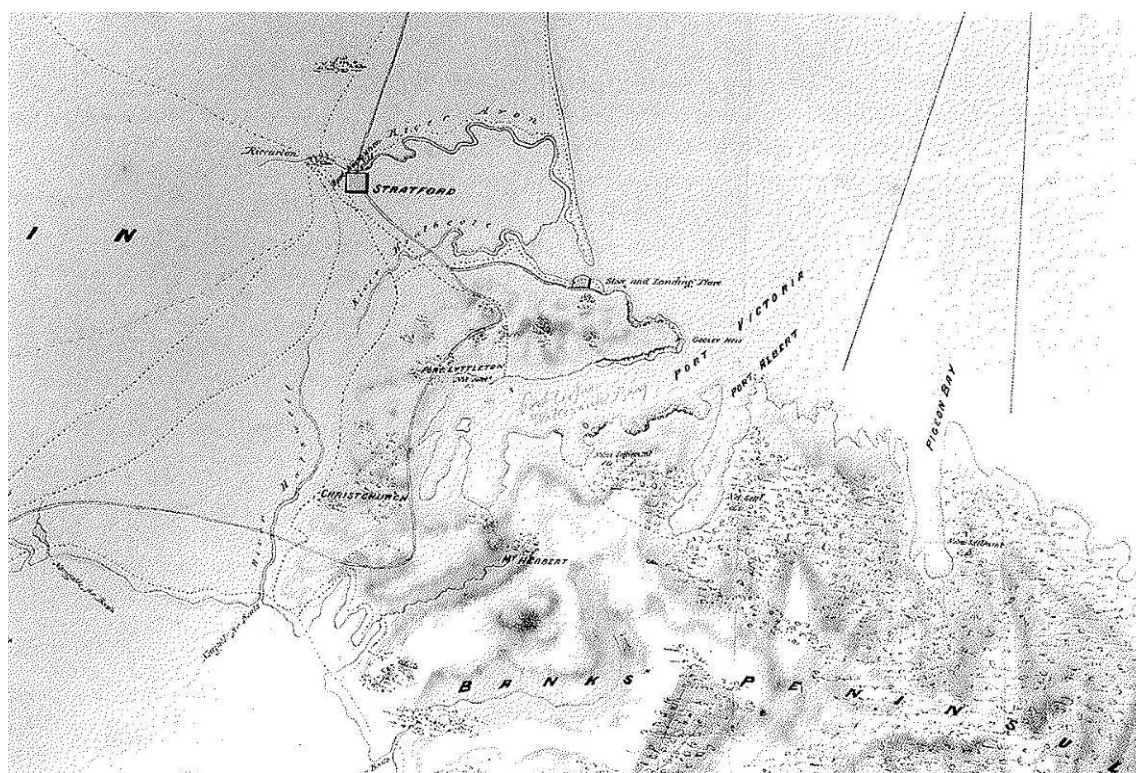
Before the arrival of human beings, the Port Hills were almost entirely forested, with now extinct species – moa, the giant rail, the adzebill and Haast's eagle – all present.

### *The city's site in Maori times*

The swamplands and varied seashore (estuary, open beach and rocky foreshore) were productive eco-systems for the first Maori inhabitants of Christchurch. Early archaeological sites close to the sea suggest periodic, temporary exploitation of the area's resources. Closer to historic times there were permanent or semi-permanent settlements on the margins of the Estuary (notably at the mouth of the Otakaro/Avon) and built, like the city of Christchurch itself, on the first areas of higher, drier ground up the Avon and Heathcote Rivers (Refer Map 2).

The Christchurch area had generous resources for Maori. They included eel and other fresh water species in the rivers and wetlands, flounder and other fish and shellfish in the Estuary, and birds in the patches of forests on the plains and more extensive forests on the flanks of the Port Hills. Exploitation of these resources by Maori did not significantly modify the site, except through the destruction by human-lit fires of forest on the northern flanks of the Port Hills and possibly also on the flat. These Maori fires reduced the forest cover of the Port Hills by between 30 and 50 per cent. Significant areas of the short tussock, which is now the dominant vegetation on the hills, developed in Maori times. By the time Europeans arrived the extent of forest cover on the Hills was between 15 and 20 percent to the east and between 50 and 75 per cent to the west. Almost all the remaining forest disappeared in early European times. About 8.5 hectares of true old-growth forest remain on the hills. This drastic reduction of forest cover, and the introduction of predators, after the arrival of Europeans led to the rapid local extinction of such species as kiwi, kakapo, tui, kaka and native bats.

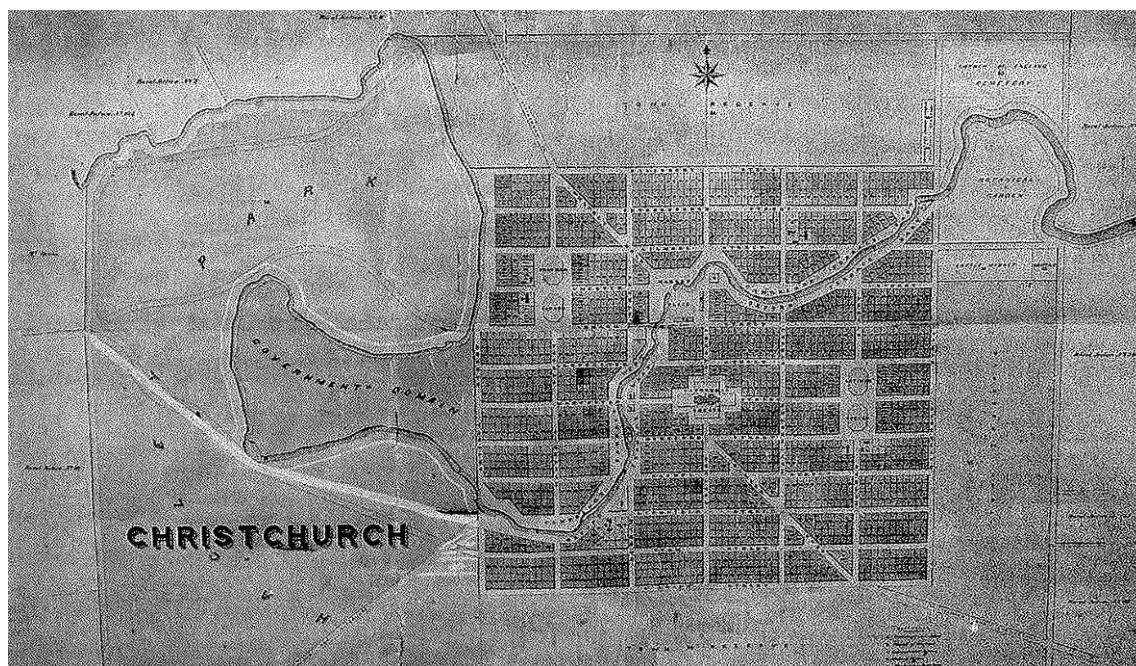
### *Thomas's choice of a site for Christchurch*



**Figure 1. Detail of Captain Thomas's 1849 map, showing Lyttelton Harbour as Port Victoria, Christchurch at the head of the harbour and Stratford near the Deans' farm at Riccarton. CM 11024**

The site of Christchurch was probably traversed or visited in the 1830s or even earlier by whalers using the bays and harbours of Banks Peninsula. A first attempt to settle on the plains was made in 1840 by a party which landed at the whaling station at Oashore. They established a farm at Putaringamotu (later Riccarton), on drier ground to the west of the site later chosen for the capital of the proposed Canterbury Settlement. This pioneering party soon abandoned their venture. The Deans brothers established their farm at the same location in 1843 and were the only permanent residents on the site of Christchurch until 1850. Their farming operations had little impact on the site beyond the immediate vicinity of their farm.

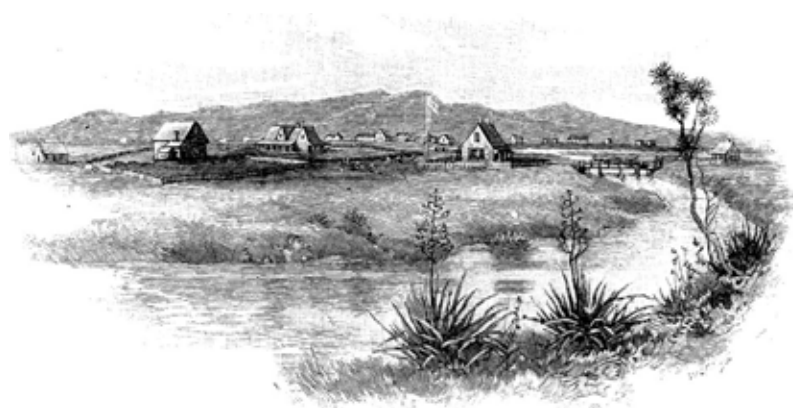
The 'Port Cooper Plains' were considered as a site for a European settlement prior to 1848-49, but remained largely empty of Europeans until they were selected in 1848 as the site of the Canterbury Settlement. When the plains were considered as a site by those planning the Nelson and Otago settlements, the problem of access between the plains and 'Port Cooper' (Lyttelton Harbour), the scarcity of timber and the extent of swampland were considered serious obstacles to settlement (Refer Map 3 and 3A). In 1848, the Canterbury Association sent out Captain Thomas, accompanied by surveyors, to select and prepare a site for settlement. Thomas originally placed the principal town of the proposed settlement at the head of Lyttelton Harbour, but when he realised there was insufficient flat land there to meet the Canterbury Association's requirements, he relocated Christchurch to where he had previously placed a town called 'Stratford' at a point on the Avon where those coming up the river first encountered slightly higher, drier ground. This left Christchurch with the problem of access to its port which was not adequately solved until the rail tunnel was completed in 1867. It also left the original settlers of Christchurch with the two other problems which had dissuaded those looking for a site for the Nelson and Otago settlements from choosing the Port Cooper Plains – the lack of timber and extent of swampland.



**Figure 2. Edward Jollie's 1850 plan of central Christchurch, showing the Town Reserves, Hagley Park and the Government Domain (now the Botanic Gardens). CM 4296**

Thomas's plan for Christchurch (laid out by the surveyor Edward Jollie by March 1850) was the 'standard' rectangular grid of colonial settlement (adopted for ease of survey and to facilitate land sales). Thomas did not allow Jollie to include crescents to provide variety, but the Avon River ran eccentrically across the site. Two diagonal streets (High Street/Ferry Road leading to Ferrymead, Heathcote and Sumner and Victoria Street/Papanui Road leading to the Papanui Bush) also broke the regularity of the grid (Refer Map 4 and 5). At the very centre of the city was a 'Square' (actually cross-shaped) intended as a grand centre for the city and the site of the proposed cathedral and grammar school. East and north-west of the Square were two more 'squares' (actually oblongs) which were placed more or less regularly in relation to the diagonal line of the Avon running in a north-easterly direction across the city to the west and north of the central square.

The grid was laid out originally between Salisbury Street to the north and St Asaph Street to the south and between Barbadoes Street to the east and Rolleston Avenue/Park Terrace to the west. Between Salisbury, Barbadoes and St Asaph Streets and (respectively) the North, East and South Town Belts was land with-held from immediate sale which was, however, sold off by the Provincial Government in the 1850s. The streets of the original grid were mostly projected out to the Town Belts, but the street system is less systematic between Salisbury Street and Bealey Avenue, Barbadoes Street and Fitzgerald Avenue and St Asaph Street and Moorhouse Avenue.



CHRISTCHURCH IN 1852.

**Figure 3. Early wooden Christchurch, the scallered village.** *Canterbury Museum, neg.3119*

The names chosen for the streets of the inner city almost all commemorate the English colonial origins of the settlement, but further out there are some streets with descriptive names which recall original features of the site which have long since disappeared.

West of the grid a large area was reserved as Hagley Park and Government Domain. Parts of this large area were subsequently allocated for the use of the Hospital, Museum, Botanic Gardens and Christ's College, but the presence of a large area of public open space close to the city centre has had a profound effect on the character of Christchurch and the lives of its citizens (Refer Map 6 and 7)

Although the ideals of the Canterbury Association harked back to an earlier, even mediaeval, England there is little about the layout of the city which reflects these ideals. Christchurch is from this point of view unmistakably a mid-19th century colonial town with a layout much more similar to that of towns laid out during the westward expansion of the United States, which owed their form in turn to Roman precedents.

Even allowing for the irregularity of the Avon River and the terraces on each of its banks and for the two major diagonal streets, Christchurch is the clearest example in New Zealand of a town laid out in a 'classical', grid plan (Refer Map 8). The other notable example of the use of such a plan was the plan drawn for the town of Britannia at Petone by the New Zealand Company surveyors, but the plan was not executed. The exigencies of their sites meant that Wellington, Auckland and Dunedin all developed more haphazardly. Although comparable plans to that of Christchurch were prepared for Auckland and Dunedin and parts of Wellington. It was only on Christchurch's flat, expansive site that a regular grid was a feasible plan.

### *Making the site suitable for a city*

The site on which Thomas placed Christchurch was conveniently level but was low-lying, poorly drained and subject to a major hazard – flooding from the Waimakariri River – which was only recognised some years after Christchurch had already developed into a substantial town.

Some attempts to improve drainage of the site were made by the Provincial Government and by the City Council in the 1860s and early 1870s, but drainage of the site was only properly taken in hand after the Drainage Board had been set up in 1875-76 (Refer map 9 and 9A) .

The threat posed by the Waimakariri was brought home to the city by the flood of 1868 when water from the Waimakariri entered the headwaters of the Avon and flowed through the central city. Works were put in hand along the southern bank of the Waimakariri after the 1868 flood. Prior to that flood there were two branches to the lower Waimakariri, with the north branch flowing round the north side of Kaiapoi Island. Improvement of these flood protection works which began in the 19th century continued well into the second half of the 20th. The river was eventually confined (notably by Wright's Cut of the 1940s) to a single, more-or-less straight course to the sea. The last break-out of the Waimakariri River in the vicinity of Christchurch occurred in 1957. The last major flood protection scheme was completed in 1989.

On the coast, Sumner suffered from local flooding problems, aggravated by spring tides. After serious encroachment by the sea, a protective wall was built right around the Sumner beach, from Cave Rock to Scarborough. This was supplemented by major stormwater drainage work undertaken by the Drainage Board. The South Brighton Spit, built up after World War II, is considered to be at risk from extraordinary sea events, including tsunamis.

Though it is far from major active faults (the Alpine fault is well to the west and the Hope and other North Canterbury faults well to the north), Christchurch is considered to be at relatively high risk from earthquakes. They have occasionally caused minor damage in the city. Making the city safer against earthquake risk led to significant modification of older buildings in the 1970s.

The site chosen for Christchurch has a reasonably benign climate but is subject to winds. The hot, dry nor'-wester can blow with ferocious strength, as it did in August 1975. In February 1973, a record temperature of 41.6 degrees centigrade was reached during a nor'-wester. Strong cold southerlies occasionally bring snow to the city – there were significant falls in 1918, 1945 and 1992. The prevailing easterlies sometimes cover the city with cloud and drizzle. Rainfall is relatively low, but can fall with sufficient intensity to cause local flooding. The easterly wind especially, but also the windiness of the site in general, has affected patterns of development in Christchurch, strengthening a fundamental tendency to protect dwellings with plantings and with relatively high fences. The horizontal nature of the site, coupled with the prevalence of winds seems to have strengthened the wish to create a sense of protection and enclosure afforded by fenced gardens. The easterly, coupled with the relatively inhospitable beach from the South Brighton Spit to the mouth of the Waimakariri, also explains why, in contrast especially with Auckland and Wellington, Christchurch in a sense turned its back on the sea.

### *Residual landforms and vegetation*

In the course of draining the city, forming roads and building, the site of Christchurch has seen significant surface modification. Traces of old irregularities in the ground surface do, however, remain, as creases running across North Hagley Park, as sandhills in Linwood and, in the heart of the city, as the depression in the St Michael's Church grounds which is all that remains of an old watercourse that caused endless trouble in the city's early days.

Of the vegetation typical of the city's original swamps only very small areas survive. The largest such area, Travis Swamp (purchased by the City Council in the 1990s to avoid subdivision), is highly modified but being restored to something closer to its original condition. There are other small remaining or restored wetlands at Bexley, by Humphreys Drive, at the Brooklands lagoon and in the Cockayne Reserve. On the northern slopes of the Port Hills only tiny, vulnerable fragments of native bush remain, but there are somewhat larger areas on the western flanks of the Hills. The tussock which replaced the original forest in Maori or pre-Maori times is still well represented on the Port Hills. An area of dry plains grassland is being preserved at McLean's Island.



**Figure 4. Dean's Farm, Pencil sketch by H.J Gridland. Canterbury Museum, Neg. 3886A**

The most remarkable survival of original vegetation is Riccarton Bush, a remnant (less than half) of the patch of swamp forest beside which the Deans, the first permanent settlers on the site of Christchurch, established their farm in 1843. Since the remnant was given to the city by the Deans family, it has been administered by a Trust. Though the bush is highly modified, management plans now call for it to be restored to closer to its original condition. The bush is an 'island' in an urban landscape now heavily dominated by introduced species such as oaks, limes, willows, poplars, Tasmanian blue gum, pines (radiata and maritime), macrocarpa and the like. The planting of these trees gave parts of Christchurch a quasi-English character.

In the late 20th century, a new focus on retaining what was left of the City's natural heritage and on replanting with native rather than exotic species became evident in the city's management of many public open spaces. This practice was not entirely new in the late 20th century. Native plants were recommended by Sewell for the Canterbury Botanical Garden in 1864. There were a number of specialist nurseries in Christchurch growing native plants through the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th and there has been a native plant section of the Botanic Gardens for more than one hundred years. The scenery preservation movement of the early 20th century, which had some impact in Christchurch,

tended not to discriminate between natives and exotics, but in the 1970s the Beautiful New Zealand programme used only natives.

The new focus on restoring native vegetation in parts of Christchurch was evident in plantings along the river banks, of the Avon in particular, and in the purchase by the City Council of Travis Swamp (which had been zoned for housing since the 1970s). The switch to greater use of natives in planting public open spaces was resisted by some who felt the city's true identity was reflected in its plantings of English and other introduced species of trees. The City Council also purchased relatively large areas of tussock land and regenerating native bush on the Port Hills, to provide recreation areas and a natural landscape backdrop for the city. These purchases were also intended to limit the expansion of housing further up the Port Hills.

## *Chapter 1: Land*

### *Comment and recommendations*

#### **General discussion**

The site of Christchurch has been very significantly modified from its ‘natural’ state especially since the arrival of Europeans. The major modifications have been the almost total elimination of wetlands and the almost complete displacement of native by exotic vegetation. (By contrast, native vegetation (bush) remained a more conspicuous element in Dunedin and Wellington and to some extent Auckland landscapes.) Nevertheless, the main elements of the wider landscape – the Port Hills and the more distant foothill ranges of the Southern Alps – remain and descriptions of the way views of the hills and the ranges visually modify the flatness of the site from the earliest days of European settlement remain true today, even allowing that the site is no longer bare, treeless and exposed.

The original grid lay-out and disposition of open space in the central city remain remarkably intact, despite such minor changes as the creation of pedestrian precincts and the road closures associated with the building of the Town Hall and its neighbouring hotel and the redevelopment of Victoria Square.

#### **Relevant listings**

Surviving patches of original vegetation and original landforms or surface features have been recognised in different ways by City Council agencies but not been protected by listing. (Listing is probably not the appropriate way to protect such features). The relic forests on the Port Hills, **Deans Bush** and the **Travis Swamp** (and several smaller surviving areas of wetland of which the Travis Swamp is representative) are protected through being reserved and managed according to plans that acknowledge their historical importance as the last surviving reminders of the original vegetation of the site of Christchurch.

#### **Further possible listings**

Surviving landforms and surface features (such as the **Linwood sandhills** and the **St Michael’s gully**) are recognised in some written sources but do not appear to enjoy any form of protection at present and would probably be difficult to protect through listing.

Less tangible aspects of the site – notably the importance of views and glimpses of the Port Hills and the foothill ranges from city streets and open spaces – would be almost impossible to protect by listing, but their importance needs to be recognised and acknowledged in some formal way.

Because the protection of relic landforms and surface features and of distant views of the Port Hills and mountains (which are crucial to the city’s special ‘sense of place’) cannot be addressed satisfactorily through any listing process other techniques and processes will have to be applied in these cases. The possibility, however, of listing surviving ‘original’ land surface



features (which could easily be eliminated overnight by site development works) should possibly be investigated.

The historic **Waimakariri flood protection works**, though partly outside the city's boundaries, are important to the story of the city's site and its modification.

Evidence of **early stormwater drainage works** – original ditches or modified natural waterways, culverts and subsurface drains, outlets for drains or piped natural streams – remains. But what actually does remain of historically important stormwater drainage works appears not to have been systematically investigated or protected in any way.

## **Bibliographic note**

There is information on the site of the city and its modifications dispersed through several sources. Among the most useful of these are:

*The Natural History of Canterbury*

Wilson, *Swamp to City*

Ogilvie, *Pioneers of the Plains*

Amodeo, *Forgotten Forty-niners*

Wall, *Botany of Christchurch*

The bibliography also lists the several sources which relate to the botany and management of Deans Bush.

## **Further research**

There are no serious gaps in the information available in reasonably accessible sources which pertains to the nature of the city's site and its modification.

## ***Chapter 2: The People of Christchurch***

### *Maori*

Early archaeological sites at Redcliffs and on the shores of the Estuary, particularly near the mouth of the Avon River, provide evidence that Maori frequented the Christchurch area in the earliest years of Maori occupation of New Zealand, seven or eight hundred years ago, when moa were still hunted.

The area would certainly have been known to subsequent Maori iwi – Waitaha, Ngati Mamoe and Ngai Tahu – but Christchurch gains a history (as opposed to an archaeological and traditional past) only with Ngai Tahu. Tracks crossed the country on which Christchurch was later built, which lay between Ngai Tahu's largest pa, just to the north, at Kaiapoi, and the centres of population on Horomaka (Banks Peninsula) and around Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere). The Rapaki Track follows the line of a principal Maori route from the plains to Whakaraupo (Lyttelton Harbour).

On the swampy area of plains now occupied by Christchurch, which would have been rich in food and other resources for Maori, there were pa or kainga at the Barbadoes Street bridge (the pa of Tautahi, the Ngai Tahu chief whose name is part of the now commonly accepted Maori name for Christchurch, Otautahi) and a pa called Puari on, approximately, the site now occupied by the city's Courts. There were urupa near St Luke's Church and on the site of the former Public Library.

The margin of the Estuary and the mouths of the rivers which flow into it were important food-gathering places. Early Europeans reported middens and the remains of eel weirs and other structures at the mouth of the Avon. A pa known as Te Kai o te Karoro, associated with extensive middens, was located in what is now the South Brighton Park. There are strong Maori traditions associated with the Port Hills. The Maori names of many of the hilltops and outcrops of the Port Hills are still known though not in common use. There was known to be a pa from at least Ngati Mamoe times near the top of Mount Pleasant (Tauhinu Korokio).

The site of Christchurch was largely devoid of people when European settlement began, although the Deans brothers "legitimised" their farm at Riccarton by leasing the land from Maori so ownership and use rights to the area were well established. The site was included in the Kemp Purchase of 1848. When reserves for Ngai Tahu were being set aside subsequent to this purchase a small area on the north side of the Estuary was set aside as a reserve. This reserve was obliterated when the oxidation ponds of the sewage treatment works were built. There were no other reserves made in Christchurch, those nearest to the city being at Tuahiwi (north of the Waimakariri River) and at Rapaki (on the shores of Lyttelton Harbour).

A customary right to camp in Little Hagley Park when coming to Christchurch to trade fell into disuse. When the claim to the area was revived in the second half of the 20th century, the right was exchanged for a site in Bromley on which the Nga Hau e Wha Marae was built.

### *Early European settlers*

The first Europeans to see and travel across the site of Christchurch came after sealers, flax traders and whalers began frequenting the bays of Banks Peninsula. The first small settlements were tiny groups at shore-whaling stations, followed by the French and few German settlers at Akaroa in 1840 then a few predominantly British farming settlers elsewhere on the Peninsula. Apart from the Deans brothers and their predecessors at Putaringamotu (Riccarton), there were no permanent European settlers living on the site of Christchurch until the Canterbury Association settlers arrived at the end of 1850. Several early European travellers and explorers called at Riccarton between 1843 and 1850. One of the Deans' dwellings of the 1840s remains on the edge of the Riccarton Bush (a short distance from its original site), along with the substantial house which the Deans built later (in several stages, beginning in the 1850s). Farm buildings from the later 19th century still stand on the grounds of Christchurch Boys' High School.

The first significant influx of European settlers were the more than 3,000 individuals who came to New Zealand under the auspices of the Canterbury Association. The early development of Christchurch was profoundly influenced by the ideological belief in the role of the city held by those who founded and supported the Association. A large, vigorous urban centre was thought necessary to serve as a civilising centre for the surrounding farming community.

### *The Canterbury Association settlement*

The settlement of Canterbury was one of a number of private company immigration schemes in New Zealand. Others include the New Zealand Company settlement of Wellington in 1840 inspired by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the famous theorist of colonisation who, with John Robert Godley, was principally responsible for the Canterbury settlement. Wanganui, Nelson and New Plymouth were also established by the New Zealand Company in the early 1840s. Dunedin was established as a Scottish Free Church settlement in 1848, the year in which the Canterbury Association was founded and began planning the Canterbury Settlement. The planned settlements at both Christchurch and Dunedin were based on New Zealand Company models. Of all the New Zealand settlements which Wakefield had a hand in founding, Christchurch came closest to his ideal of transporting a cross section of English society to a new land.

After the Canterbury Association was formed in 1848 by Godley and Wakefield, it gained support from clergy of the Church of England, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other members of the English elite.

Godley arrived in Lyttelton as leader of the new settlement in April 1850. He spent two years in New Zealand, acting as a de facto governor of Canterbury in that period. The first four ships carrying immigrants arrived in December 1850. Within a year, a further 15 ships had arrived, bringing the population of the settlement to more than 3,000. The last of the Canterbury Association immigrants arrived in 1853.

Though extensive pastoralism developed on the Canterbury Plains and in the high country soon after organised European settlement began, most of the Canterbury Association settlers set up homes in or about Lyttelton and Christchurch. Lyttelton was slightly older than

Christchurch, but was eclipsed by Christchurch before the end of the 1850s. The Canterbury Association settlers came predominantly from southern England, with smaller numbers of Scots, Irish, Welsh and English from other parts of England. Most of the immigrants assisted to come to New Zealand by the Canterbury Provincial Government in the 1850s and 1860s were also drawn from England.

In the 1860s, Christchurch's southern rival, Dunedin, grew rapidly in population and became more diverse ethnically as a result of the Otago goldrushes. Although the West Coast was originally part of Canterbury, the West Coast goldrushes did not have the same impact on Christchurch. Hokitika had closer links with Melbourne than with Christchurch.

### *Later 19th century immigrants*

In the 1870s, Canterbury gained a significant influx of the Government-assisted immigrants of the Vogel era. In 1874, however, Christchurch was the smallest of the original 'four main centres', with only 14,270 inhabitants, compared to Dunedin's 29,832, Wellington's 15,941 and Auckland's 27,840. These Vogel-era immigrants were still overwhelmingly British, and still predominantly English, though there were also sizable numbers of Scots. Christchurch had fewer Irish than Auckland, but enough came that one of the few episodes of civil disorder in Christchurch erupted in 1879 between Roman Catholic and Protestant Irish.

The Welsh and Scots among the British immigrants thought themselves distinct enough from the English majority to establish societies in which their distinct identities were celebrated. These societies continued to be active right through the 20th century and the Caledonian is one of the strongest and most active of Christchurch's 'ethnic' societies in the early 21st century.



**Figure 5** Young Chinese in Victory procession, Christchurch, 16 August 1945, *Press* 17Aug 1945 p6.

By 1900, the population of Christchurch was still overwhelmingly British. The tiny non-British minorities included a few Chinese who had come to Christchurch from the West Coast and Otago goldfields. There had been enough Jews arriving in the 19th century (from Britain and from Continental Europe) for a congregation to be formed in the 1860s. There were small Maori populations near Christchurch in Tuahiwi, Rapaki, Little River and Taumutu, but their presence in the city was negligible. When Maori performers were needed for the 1906-07 Exhibition in Christchurch they were 'imported' from the North Island. The 1926 census recorded only 144 Maori living in Christchurch. That same census recorded

only 235 Chinese, 50 Indians and 13 non-Maori Polynesians. Between 1918 and 1926, 35,000 new settlers made their homes in Auckland compared to 9,000 who came to Christchurch.

Canterbury remained the most Anglo-Saxon-Celtic of all New Zealand regions. Christchurch always had larger numbers of people of different nationalities and ethnicities than rural Canterbury, but until the late 20th century had smaller and fewer non-European immigrant communities than North Island New Zealand cities. There are no groups in Christchurch's history comparable to say the Scandinavians of the Wairarapa and Southern Hawkes Bay, the 'Dalmatians' of Northland, or, somewhat later, the European refugees who made such a difference to Wellington in the years before, during and immediately after World War II or the Pacific Islanders and then Asians who in the later 20th century, profoundly altered the character of Auckland.

### *Greater ethnic diversity*

Christchurch's population remained predominantly British in origin through the first half of the 20th century. Only after World War II did this begin to change, though not to the extent the situation changed elsewhere in New Zealand. A few of the 'displaced persons' who arrived in New Zealand after the War from such countries as Latvia and Greece settled in Christchurch. In the 1950s, a Dutch community established itself with the large Dutch immigration of that and the following decade. A small number of Hungarians arrived after the 1956 uprising in that country. A Russian Orthodox church opened on Brougham Street in 1963. A Greek Orthodox Church was also established in the city. After the 1973 coup in Chile a small Latin American community became established in Christchurch.

One of the most striking features of Christchurch's post-war population growth was the increase in the number of Maori living in the city. In 1926 only 144 Maori were living in Christchurch. Their post-war increase in numbers was partly a result of more Ngai Tahu choosing to live in Christchurch than in the 'traditional' Maori communities elsewhere in Canterbury. It was also a result of some of the young Maori brought to Christchurch from the North Island for trade and other training schemes deciding to stay and settle in the city. Rehua Marae (where a meeting house was opened in 1960) developed out of a Methodist trade training hostel. Other Maori came south to work in industries traditionally staffed by Maori, especially freezing works. Groups with iwi identifications other than Ngai Tahu became established in Christchurch. In 1996, 7 per cent of the city's population was Maori, compared to 14 per cent for the country as a whole.

By the 1960s there were also enough Pacific Islanders living in Christchurch to form Pacific Island congregations. These churches continued to flourish through the remainder of the 20th century.

But by the 1970s, Christchurch was lagging far behind Auckland in attracting immigrants from countries other than Britain. In 1976, 24 per cent of the population of Auckland was foreign-born, but only 13 per cent of the population of Christchurch were not New Zealand born.

In the 1990s, people of various Asian nationalities became a more obvious presence in Christchurch, adding new strands to the previous history of Chinese in the city. By 1996

people of Asian birth made up 4 per cent of the city's population (almost as many as the combined number of those born in Canada, the United States, Europe and South Africa). The 'Asian presence' was noticeable in the inner city partly because of the number of young people coming to the city to study. Avonhead was where the greatest concentration of Asians settled. In the 1990s too a small Somali community became established after numbers were admitted, nationally, as refugees. Small numbers of Iraqis and Iranians also arrived. By this time there was already a mosque on Deans Avenue serving the city's Muslims.

## ***Chapter 2: People***

### ***Comment and recommendations***

#### **General discussion**

##### **Archaeology**

Recorded and known archaeological sites in Christchurch include sites of both Maori and European origin. An archaeological site is defined by the Historic Places Act 1993 as

“any place in New Zealand that

(a) either –

(i) was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900; or

(ii) is the site of the wreck of any vessel where that wreck occurred before 1900; and

(b) is or may be able through investigation by archaeological methods to provide evidence relating to the history of New Zealand.”

Sites of Maori origin include both large permanent settlement sites, probably used over successive years or decade, and smaller functional sites, often to take advantage of a local resource, such as fish, eels, flax or good gardening soils.

Sites of European origin include a wide range of buildings and structures, originating from activities associated with domestic life, industry, obtaining and utilising resources and industrial activities. Sites may include large industrial sites or a small rubbish pit at the rear of a worker’s cottage.

All archaeological sites, irrespective of origin, size, or location have the potential to yield significant and unique information about the various human populations of Christchurch.

Archaeological sites of Maori origin are clearly of significance to iwi, as well as the archaeologist. However, this report is focusing only on the archaeological features and values of such sites. This is not to undermine the importance of sites of cultural value, merely to place them in their appropriate context – cultural values are for iwi to determine.

The report does not contain a specific heading or section on “Archaeology”. This is deliberate – the archaeological resource has been placed in the wider context of human activity of all types and ages, and therefore the headings and section of the report will implicitly include archaeological features.

##### **Ethnicity of Christchurch’s population**

Christchurch’s population has, for the full span of the city’s history, been markedly more British, and more English, than the populations of North Island cities. Its population has been closer, in composition, to the populations of smaller towns and rural areas. Nevertheless, there have been persistent, small, ethnic ‘minorities’ living in Christchurch. These have included, from the 19th century, small numbers of Indians and Chinese and equally small numbers of non-British Europeans. There are references to many of these non-British

communities scattered through the literature on the city. Systematic study of the ethnic composition of Christchurch's population (based on census data) remains to be done.

## **Relevant listings**

### **Archaeological**

The *caves at Redcliffs* appear to be the only Maori archaeological sites listed.

### **Later Maori**

*Rehua Marae* appears to be the only place relevant to later Maori history of Christchurch listed.

### **Places associated with specific ethnic groups**

Association with ethnic groups, whether the non-English British groups (Scottish, Welsh and Irish), non-British European groups or non-European groups does not appear to have been a criterion in the selection of places for listing, with the sole exception of the *Caledonian Hall* on Kilmore Street.

## **Further possible listings**

### **Recommendations for identifying further potential archaeological sites**

The presence of *archaeological sites or features* can often only be confirmed by exposing the archaeological material below the ground surface. Potential sites need to be identified, in order to identify, manage and, where appropriate, protect the resource or mitigate adverse effects on it.

Strategies for identifying further potential sites will include:

- Analysis of currently recorded archaeological sites and archaeological datasets  
While there are a number of archaeological sites recorded within Christchurch city, the context of the datasets needs to be determined. For example, the sites included in the New Zealand Archaeological Association database do not constitute a full or comprehensive record of all sites within Christchurch. There has been no strategic or comprehensive survey of the entire city area; the sites included in the database have often been recorded opportunistically. Further, as this database is primarily for information purposes, many of the sites may no longer exist.

Some of the places identified in the district plan schedule at the time of writing are also legally archaeological sites, as they predate 1900, but this legal and contextual aspect of their history has not been identified.

- Analysis of historical survey maps  
Early surveyors often noted sites or occupation areas of early Maori and European populations. These sites are often noted on survey plans, or in the associated surveyors' fieldbooks.



- Analysis of historical photographs and paintings

Early photographs may contain evidence of sites, structures or features that no longer exist, but which may leave archaeological remains.

- Analysis of key historical texts and reports

Such books and reports may identify known or possible sites, or indicate types of local activities that may leave archaeologically locatable remains. This technique was utilised in a study of the Heathcote Valley, where analysis of the key historical text resulted in recorded of a large number of extant and previously unknown archaeological sites (see O’Keeffe (2001) reference)

- Analysis of known landscape features and names

Street names or suburb names, or formal or familiar locality names can often indicate previous land use or activities (for example, Mill Road)

- Predictive modelling

The development of the city and its infrastructure will determine what type of archaeological sites and features may potentially still remain. Analysis of the areas of development of infrastructure will develop a predictive model of where certain types of sites may be located. For example, early worker’s cottages will have had rubbish pits and privies located in their back gardens. Privies were also used as domestic rubbish pit when they had fulfilled their original function. Domestic rubbish can provide primary and compelling data about the day-to-day lives of the people who lived on the site, plus changes in fortunes over time can be seen in changes of the type of rubbish seen in the lower and upper parts of a rubbish pit. Therefore the zones of early workers’ cottages should be identified as an area of rich archaeological potential.

Further zones of predictive modelling will include:

- Areas of older housing, where shallower and less invasive piles and foundations may have had a minimal impact on potential archaeological features below.
- Identification of pre-1900 buildings, which are archaeological sites in their own right, and may have archaeological remains of associated buildings in their grounds, such as privies, washhouses, etc.
- Identification of known or potential areas of pre-European Maori occupation, as such sites will be a great significance, due to the relative rarity of such sites, especially within the Christchurch urban area.

The archaeological sites currently in the New Zealand Archaeological Association database should be added to the City Council’s listings.

## Other Maori sites

A method of dealing (for purposes of protection and public education) with known traditional sites such as the pa *Otautahi* and *Puari* which are unlikely to have any archaeological remains needs to be developed.

## Early European land use

*Boundaries* (including ditches and banks to keep out animals) of gardens, farms and nurseries, parks may survive all across city.

## Recommendations concerning places connected with other ethnic groups

There is a clear need to introduce the criterion of association with different ethnic groups into procedures for assessing buildings and sites for listing. This applies to buildings and sites associated with

- the ‘sub-groups’ of 19th and 20th century British immigrants
- the small 19th and early 20th century Chinese and Indian communities
- the post-World War II migration of Maori into Christchurch
- the post-World War II non-British migrant groups, from the European displaced persons through to the Somali refugees

The **Salvation Army property at Poulson Street**, Addington needs to be examined for anything that remains from the years it was the site of the city’s immigration barracks. Some of the buildings at **Wigram** used for the reception of post-World War II migrants may remain. (If Banks Peninsula amalgamates with Christchurch City there will be a need to relate sites connected with the arrival and reception of immigrants in the present city with such places as Camp Bay, Quail Island etc.)

## Bibliographic note

The only substantial publication on any Christchurch archaeological site is Trotter’s booklet on the Redcliffs caves.

O’Keeffe’s report on the Heathcote Valley includes data on a range of archaeological sites in that area.

The books by Harry Evison provide information about the nature of Maori occupation of the area that became Christchurch. There is also a useful City Council leaflet covering the Maori heritage trail.

No comprehensive study of different ethnic groups in Christchurch has been made, but there is some information in some of the general histories, notably Eldred-Grigg’s *New History*.

## Further research

Field research needs to be done to identify archaeological sites, including historical archaeology and landscape archaeology. This is detailed under **III**, above.

Further research of the broader cultural landscape associated with the Deans Estate should be undertaken to identify all surviving associated structures, significant planting, modifications to landscape and fence lines that relate to the farm. A series of individual places related to the city's first farm are included in the schedule, (Deans Cottage and Riccarton House, the Riccarton Bush, and farm buildings now forming part of Christchurch Boys High School) but given the significance of this estate, investigation of the cultural landscape of the farm estate as a whole is warranted. This study could be expanded to identify further early farms now within suburban areas.

Many aspects of the history of immigration into Christchurch and of the community lives of the smaller ethnic groups have yet to be studied. The basic census data about the composition of the city's population needs to be compiled as a preliminary step to being able to identify sites and buildings associated with each group. An oral history project to get information from the (most now elderly) people who arrived in the immediate post-World War II years and from more recent refugee and immigrant group arrivals would be a useful supplement to the relatively scant written records available about these groups. Specific questions would need to be asked about places and buildings important in the lives of members of each of the groups.