

## ***THEME III: THE BUILT CITY***

### ***Chapter 7: An over-all view of the development of Christchurch***

#### **The Canterbury Association origins of Christchurch**

The city of Christchurch today provides physical, relatively intact evidence of the practical and ideological concepts of the Canterbury Association's planned settlement. The settlement of Christchurch was planned in England by lawyer John Robert Godley and colonisation theorist Edward Gibbon Wakefield. They formed the Canterbury Association with the support of members of Parliament and the Church of England. Godley and Lord - Lyttleton, chairman of the Association, were the key members of the committee responsible for planning the settlement. Captain Joseph Thomas, an experienced surveyor was sent to select the site. Thomas with assistants William Fox, Thomas Cass, Charles Torlese and Edward Jollie surveyed the site and laid out streets. The formal, geometric lay-out was typical of contemporary approaches to urban design for new towns. Streets were laid out on a grid broken by the course of the Avon River, and diagonal roads, the first leading from the city to Ferrymead, and the second to the Papanui Bush. Land was designated for the Cathedral and other churches, a market place, civic buildings, cemetery reserves and a major area of public open space, Hagley Park. Land was set aside between the northern, eastern and southern sides of the grid and the respective Town Belts (later renamed Avenues) for later expansion of the city.

The establishment of a "chief town" was fundamental to the vision the Association had for its new settlement. The town was intended to ensure that civilisation and appropriate moral standards were transferred to the new colony. The two key institutions were the cathedral and the college. Designs for both of these were prepared by architects in England.

The capital city of 1,000 acres was to be divided into town sections. These were to be allocated to land purchasers by ballot after the settlers had arrived in Canterbury. The first land selections were held in January 1851 at the Land Office, on the site now occupied by the Our City Centre, which was originally the city's Municipal Offices. Most of the first town sections were chosen in Lyttleton, which was already an established town. By 1854 Christchurch had a population of around 900, while Lyttleton had a permanent population of around 550 (it had been higher, when settlers first disembarked from the immigrant ships). By the early 1860s Christchurch had indisputably taken over from Lyttleton as Canterbury's chief town.

At this time in Christchurch most people lived within the boundaries of Barbadoes, St Asaph, Salisbury and Antigua Streets. Sale of the town reserves (between the grid of the original city and the Town Belts) began in 1855. Larger houses were built on rural sections in the areas beyond the Town Belts. Concentration of the population in the urban centre provided the early and ongoing demand for and supply of a broad range of services and products.

### *Suburban growth*

By the late 1870s, the distribution of the population had changed significantly. Nearly as many people were residing in the early suburbs around the city (beyond its formal boundaries) and on rural sections as within the inner city. Important early suburban centers were Sydenham to the south of the city, which grew as a working class area immediately south of the railway line, Addington to the west of Sydenham, and St Albans, north of the North Town Belt. (Sydenham and St Albans eventually became the largest of the city's independent boroughs). Other early suburbs – they were initially separate villages – somewhat further out included Papanui, which developed around the small area of bush which was eventually milled out, and upper Riccarton, which grew up at the point where the main roads west and south of the city diverged. East of the city, Richmond and Linwood became early centres of population. Ferry Road was the main route south-east of the city. It led to the wharves on the lower Heathcote which were crucial in Christchurch's early transport history. Woolston developed along this route, as a residential, commercial and industrial area. Sumner and New Brighton were originally, like Papanui and Upper Riccarton, independent villages.

Building of residences on the Port Hills, at Cashmere, began in the very last years of the 19th century. Even after there were numbers of houses on the hills, areas which later supported southern residential suburbs – Opawa, St Martins, Beckenham, Thorrrington and Lower Cashmere – remained rural in character. They became built up through the first four decades of the 20th century. Through the same decades, the city's residential areas expanded. The 'new' suburbs of these years also included Spreydon. Large parts of St Albans and, to its east, Shirley and Dallington, were also built up through these years.

### *The inner city*

As this residential expansion occurred around the edges of the city, commercial development slowly transformed the inner city. In the inner city, the earliest shops were built along High Street and Cashel Street, and on Colombo Street between Hereford Street and Cashel Street. This area has remained the main shopping area in the inner city ever since. It is at the heart of a broader commercial core to the east and south of Cathedral Square. Market Square, now Victoria Square, was another early focus for trade and commercial activities. The area between Cathedral Square and Victoria Square developed as a secondary shopping area in the inner city.

Although there have always been some shops of one sort or another on the perimeter of Cathedral Square, shopping has never been the primary activity in the Square. It has served a variety of different functions through the years. It has been a centre of cinema-going, and a number of commercial enterprises, including newspaper publishers, banks, insurance firms and stock and station agencies, have occupied buildings around the Square.

Houses which were initially built in the centre of the city were replaced by commercial buildings as the city developed. But a residential area to the west of Cathedral Square, centred on Cramner Square, has remained largely residential and retained some of its historic fabric. Latimer Square, east of Cathedral Square, was also formerly residential, but it became more markedly commercial than Cranmer Square although some buildings on Latimer

Square are being converted to residential use. Cranmer Square is also close to a 'precinct' of educational and cultural buildings which has kept this function since the city's early days. The buildings of the Arts Centre (built originally for Canterbury University College), the Canterbury Museum and Christ's College are key elements of this precinct, which also extends north of these particular groups of buildings.

## Industry

In 1850s and 1860s, industry became established in the central city south of Cashel Street towards the South Town Belt and also in Woolston. In the 1860s there was considerable expansion of small scale workshops producing such items as boots, wheels, barrels, harnesses, rope, foodstuffs and beverages (including beer) and a wide range of other goods to supply the local population. Industrial development further expanded with the advent of the railways in the 1860s and again in the 1870s when there was a marked increase in demand for agricultural machinery and growth of industries that processed the increasing production of wool and wheat from Canterbury farms.

The range of industrial activities within the town centre, as the 19th century progressed, included foundries, manufacturing engineers, printers, flour mills, breweries as well as numerous smaller industries. The area north of Salisbury Street never supported as much industry as the area south of Tuam Street; what industry there was on the north side of the central city has mostly relocated elsewhere and the area is now predominantly residential. The area south of Tuam Street has lost most of its major factories but retains a mixed commercial and light industrial character.

Industries also became established south of the railway corridor, in Sydenham and Addington, reinforcing their working class character. Other industries, notably, for obvious reasons, freezing works, were located further out from the city. In the 20th century, new industries tended to develop along the railway corridor, extending the industrial zones of the city to the west. Woolston remained a significant industrial area and eventually much of Sydenham north of Brougham Street changed in character from residential to light industrial.

## Determinants of growth

In the second half of the 20th century, how Christchurch developed was increasingly determined not by unrestrained economic and social forces but by planning. 1948 was a key year with the publication of the final report of the Christchurch Metropolitan Planning Committee. Planning was undertaken by both the territorial local authorities (which drew up plans under the Town and Country Planning Act) and regional planning bodies – the Christchurch Regional Planning Authority was established in 1954. Particularly significant was the zoning of different parts of the city for different land uses or activities and the designating of a 'green belt' intended to restrain sprawl of the city into surrounding rural land. Transportation planning also influenced how the city changed and grew. The passing of the Resource Management Act significantly changed the planning environment in the 1990s and the city's development took new directions.

## ***Chapter 7: The Development of Christchurch***

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

#### **General discussion**

More than other New Zealand cities, Christchurch's development was affected, both initially and for many decades after it was founded, by the ideals and practical plans of the founding body. In Christchurch's case, this was the Canterbury Association. Subsequently, the inner city and the suburban areas had different development histories. In the second half of the 20th century, planning by different bodies and under different pieces of legislation affected the city's growth and development.

#### **Relevant listings**

There are no specific listings relevant to this topic which are not covered in following chapters.

#### **Further possible listings**

Possible future listings are also covered in the following chapters. But the criterion of the extent to which a building or place reveals past development or growth patterns and aspects of past planning initiatives should be introduced to assessment of buildings or places being considered for listing on other grounds.

#### **Bibliographic note**

There is information about the general development of the city in many titles, especially those listed under I. The founding of the city, II. General histories and III. Histories of specific areas. The proceedings of the Canterbury Regional Jubilee Symposium, 19 November 2004, contain much information on planning for the metropolitan area.

#### **Further research**

Relevant topics for further research on the general question of Christchurch's development are identified in the following chapters. The history of planning in Christchurch would have been an area for research prior to the November 2004 Symposium.

## ***Chapter 8: Building a city of substance***

### *The early wooden city*

As land was taken up in Christchurch through the early months of 1851, a straggling village of small wooden buildings developed. (A very few buildings were of cob.) The first buildings were cottages, houses, shops and hotels. There was, initially, little to distinguish buildings of different use. There were no marked concentrations of buildings of particular uses in particular areas. Many buildings were of mixed, residential and commercial, use. Gradually, shops and hotels, initially domestic in scale and appearance, became somewhat larger and concentrated in the few blocks that became the central city. Only churches (uniformly Gothic until the 1870s) were significantly larger than other buildings. Most of the earliest buildings were severely plain, and almost all were 'Gothic' in form (with gable ends, steep-pitched roofs and dormer windows).

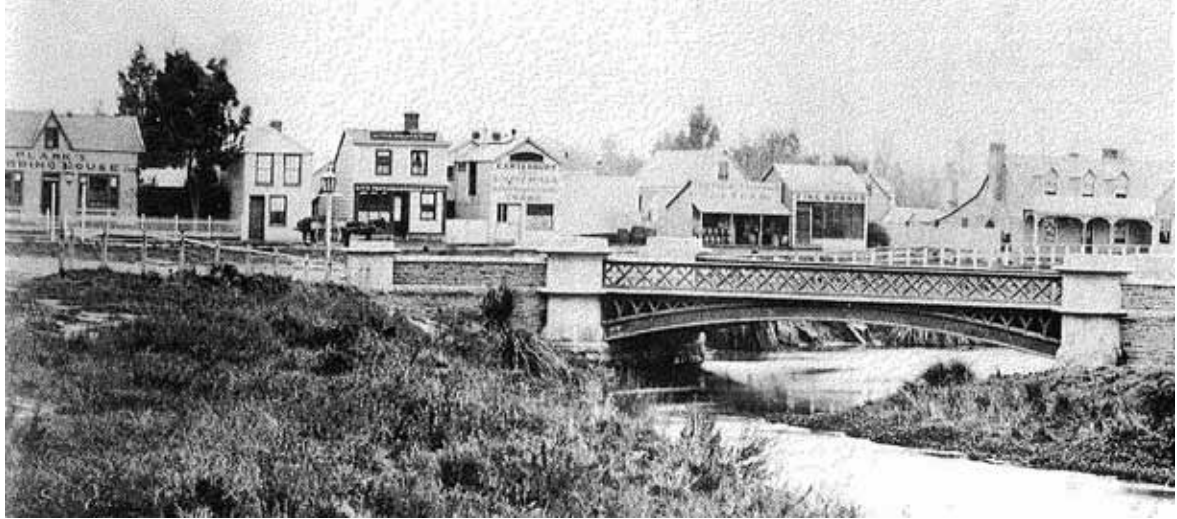


**Figure 35. Detail from Dr Barker's 1860 panorama of Christchurch. View towards the south-west, with Gloucester Street in the foreground and W. D. Wood's 1856 Antigua Street windmill in the distance. Note the sod wall in the foreground, wooden fences and well-built brick chimneys. These signs of progress contrast with surviving tussock, even on the streets. CM374**

By the time Christchurch was founded the attenuated Georgian influences apparent in the early architecture of northern settlements had almost entirely disappeared. But some Christchurch buildings from early on were decorated or embellished. Bargeboards became decorated in a simplified 'carpenter Gothic' fashion; a significant group of buildings was Elizabethan or Tudor in decoration, with exposed framing and slightly overhanging upper floors. The fondness for Early English and Gothic in these buildings which transcended the severe simplicity of the purely functional, original buildings perhaps expressed the wish of the Canterbury Association settlers to reproduce English society in the Antipodes.

A cluster of public buildings developed rather quickly on Market Square, but the city's first public building, the Land Office, was on the corner of Worcester Street and Oxford Terrace, a site occupied ever since by a public building, The Land Office illustrated perfectly the domestic character of the great majority of early Christchurch buildings.

The 1850s also saw the first, wooden, buildings of the Provincial Government erected on a slightly elevated site on the west bank of the Avon River. These survive. So, remarkably, does a simple wooden commercial building of c. 1860 on Hereford Street (now known as Shands Emporium).



**Figure 36. The second Victoria Street bridge, 1865. Now preserved as the Hamish Hay Bridge in Victoria Square. Dr A. C. Barker photograph, CM 41**

Wood remained a common material for some public and commercial buildings through the rest of the 19th century. By about 1870 it had become common for wooden shops and commercial premises in the inner city to have ‘false’ Italianate facades with the wood fashioned to mimic stone. Among the substantial timber buildings which were built in the 1860s for administrative and commercial purposes were additions to the Provincial Government Buildings, the Christchurch Club, built in 1860-62 and, somewhat later, the Canterbury Club, completed in 1874.

From the 1860s to about 1890

The early wooden buildings of Christchurch were regarded by those who built them as temporary expedients. The founders of Christchurch envisaged a city of substantial buildings in permanent materials to house such transplanted institutions as churches, political bodies, schools, libraries, universities and courts and also the commercial firms which it was hoped would soon flourish. Both brick and stone were soon available. Brickworks were established along the foot of the Port Hills where there were deposits of suitable clay and quarries were opened up on the same hills.



**Figure 37. Christchurch in transition from wood to masonry, looking south from cathedral.**

In making the transition (over several decades) from wood to brick and stone, Christchurch generally remained faithful to Gothic forms. (Even the railway station, when a new masonry building was erected in 1877, had, this being Christchurch, to be Gothic in style.) The first substantial stone buildings which began to rise in the wooden town in the 1860s were all public buildings (though they were preceded by a few small stone commercial premises). A second town hall was built of stone in 1862-63; a stone building at Christ's College in 1863; and the first stone churches in 1864-65. In 1865 the triumph of the Gothic revival in Christchurch, the stone Provincial Council Chamber, designed by the city's leading early Gothic revival architect, Benjamin Mountfort, was completed. It has been described by architectural historian John Stacpoole as "the finest High Victorian interior in New Zealand". Mountfort also designed (in stone) the Canterbury Museum, and the Clock Tower building, the Great Hall and other buildings of Canterbury College. An earlier stone educational building, the Big School at Christ's College, built in 1863, was designed by the Province's first superintendent, James Edward FitzGerald.

The stone Methodist church in Durham Street, built in 1864, was the first church in Canterbury to be erected in permanent materials. It was designed by Melbourne architects Crouch and Wilson, and supervised by local architect Samuel Farr. The first stone church for



the Anglican Church in Christchurch was St John the Baptist in Hereford Street, built in 1864-65, and designed by Maxwell Bury. Foundations for the stone Anglican Cathedral were laid in 1864-65, although the building was not completed until much later.



**Figure 38.** Shops in Victoria Street, between Kilmore and Peterborough Street, in the 1870s. The enterprising Mr Woodard ('Boots made to order... pegged, sewed and riveted') would not have been out of place in the American Wild West, but the whole scene is also reminiscent of an English provincial town of the mid-Victorian era. *CM 4333*

The city's early wooden bridges also began to be replaced in the 1860s with more permanent structures. The first Victoria Street Bridge was built in timber in 1852. It was replaced with one of New Zealand's earliest iron and stone bridges in 1864.





**Figure 39. Fisher Building, Hereford Street. c. 1890's.** *Alexander Turnbull Library, ref. 77802 1/2*

Public buildings of grey stone in a Gothic style continued to be built into the 20th century. They became the 'signature' buildings of the city. This was especially true of the cluster at the western end of Worcester Street and along Rolleston Avenue, where the former university buildings (now the Arts Centre), the Museum and Christ's College form a group without peer elsewhere in New Zealand. The last grey stone, Gothic revival buildings were put up in the 20th century. The Teachers' Training College on Peterborough Street dates from 1924; the Sign of the Takahe on the Port Hills was not completed until 1949.

Masonry commercial buildings of the later years of the 19th century were typically (but not exclusively) built not of stone but of brick, often surfaced with a cement render. These commercial buildings (generally of two or three storeys) were in a great variety of styles. Between the 1860s and the 1880s, Christchurch acquired a number of commercial buildings in a Venetian Gothic style, some from the hand of the leading commercial architect of the period, W.B. Armson (1834-83). They may be another manifestation of the particular predilection for Gothic in Christchurch.

The use of Venetian Gothic elements was fashionable in English architecture at the time, and was used on a wide range of commercial, institutional and civic buildings in London. In designing primarily in Gothic, Christchurch architects of the 1860s and 1870s were following English precedents, illustrated and described in such architectural periodicals as *The Builder*. Use of the Gothic style in Christchurch demonstrates a clear understanding by members of the architectural profession of contemporary architectural trends in Britain.

Boom years from the late 1850s to mid 1860s saw the establishment of banks in Christchurch. The Bank of New South Wales opened in 1861, the Bank of New Zealand in 1862, the Bank of Australasia in 1864. The banks built some of the earliest and grandest early masonry commercial buildings in the city. Classical and Italianate styles were used for these bank buildings. In 1866 the BNZ moved to a building on the corner of Colombo and Hereford Streets, on the southern side of the Square which had been designed by a Melbourne architect, Leonard Terry, in a Greek Revival style.

The great majority of the new larger commercial buildings of the 1870s and 1880s, and beyond, (including several by Armson) were Italianate, a style common in other New Zealand cities. The architect most faithful to Italian Renaissance models was probably J.C. Maddison (1850-1923) but many of the city's imposing Italianate buildings came also from the hands of other architects like T.S. Lambert (1840-1915).

### *1890-1914 The Edwardian city*

Through much of the second half of the 19th century in central Christchurch, older, smaller wooden buildings co-existed with large, newer masonry structures. Through the prosperous years from the late 1890s to 1914 most (though not quite all) of the remaining older wooden buildings were replaced by large, handsome commercial buildings in permanent materials and a 'marvellous miscellany' of styles (Refer Map 11 and 12).

The Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament (built 1901-04) on Barbadoes Street, designed by Francis William Petre, was one of the most substantial and significant additions to the cityscape in the early 20th century and a telling symbol of the architectural maturity of the city.

By the beginning of World War I, Christchurch had evolved from its pioneering beginnings to a substantial regional centre. Streets in the central city were lined with two and three storeyed public and commercial buildings in stone and brick, plastered and plain. Confident, ornate masonry structures in a great variety of styles formed continuous lines along streets like Colombo, Lichfield, Cashel, High, Worcester, Gloucester and Armagh. They also enclosed Cathedral Square. Among the architects who introduced new architectural styles into the architectural vocabulary of Christchurch were J.J. Collins (1855-1933) and R.D. Harman (1859-1927), who succeeded to the practice of Armson. S. Hurst Seager (1854-1933) began to make his architectural impression on the city in 1884 with the Queen Anne City Council Chambers. Seager was significant as one of the earliest architects to explore and debate the development of a New Zealand tradition of architecture.

The Luttrell Brothers brought from Tasmania not just new construction techniques but also skill at adapting elements of the Chicago style for large office blocks to the more modest requirements of Christchurch. The seven-storeyed New Zealand Express Company Building, designed by the Luttrells, was described as a 'sky scraper' by the Canterbury Times in 1906. The Luttrell Brothers were influential for introducing modern American commercial building trends to Christchurch where architecture had previously been based almost entirely on English traditions. Other buildings designed by the Luttrell Brothers included the Lyttleton Times Office on the Square, the King Edward Barracks, the Royal Exchange Building, and the Theatre Royal in Gloucester Street.

The New Zealand International Exhibition held in Christchurch in 1906-07 had a significant if temporary effect on the fabric of the city. Joseph Maddison designed the exhibition buildings in a French Renaissance-influenced style, with towers and domes facing the river Avon and Park Terrace. Several new hotels, also designed by Maddison, were built to accommodate visitors to the Exhibition.

Despite the variety of styles, the central city never, before or since, looked so coherent architecturally as it did by 1914. The Square epitomised this sadly lost quality of streetscape

and architectural coherence. Something of it survives, however, in the south-eastern quadrant of the inner city, especially along parts of High, Lichfield and Manchester Streets. Cashel Street, from High Street to Oxford Terrace, also has a large enough number of historic commercial buildings standing for something of the sense of ‘the city that was’ to remain.

### *Between the wars*

Between the two world wars, steel and reinforced concrete came into more general use and American influences became more pronounced. But generally the relatively few inter-war buildings were ‘inserted’ among the existing buildings without significantly modifying the over-all late Victorian/Edwardian character of the mature inner city. Art Deco was poorly represented in Christchurch, except for cinemas. Bauhaus modernism arrived with a flourish with the Millers department store building (now the City Council offices). The Georgian revival made a more minor impression on Christchurch’s commercial architecture than on its domestic architecture. Cecil Wood, adept at several styles, produced some creative commercial buildings that combined features of Modernism with stripped classicism. The three major Wood-designed buildings in this class are the Hereford Street Post Office, the Public Trust building on Oxford Terrace, and the State Insurance building on Worcester Street. All survive. Between the wars Christchurch also acquired, in New Regent Street, a notable example of Spanish Mission architecture.

### *Christchurch’s architectural tradition*

From the mid 19th century to the present, a significant number of nationally significant buildings were erected in Christchurch. The architects responsible for these buildings are prominent in the general history of New Zealand architecture. The architects who worked most of their lives in the city, or who built notable buildings in it, included, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Benjamin Mountfort, William Armson, Francis Petre and Samuel Hurst Seager.

The strength of Christchurch’s architectural traditions was continued by such 20th century architects as Cecil Wood, Pascoe and Hall, Peter Beaven, Warren and Mahoney and Don Donnithorne. Christchurch architecture was distinctive in combining respect for the ‘traditions’ established in the 19th century with Modern and even Post-modern innovation (Refer Map 13).

## ***Chapter 8: Building a city of substance***

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

#### **General discussion**

Christchurch's building history (excluding, for this chapter, housing) follows a general, New Zealand-wide pattern, of the steady addition of masonry buildings inserted into an original wooden town, until by the outbreak of World War I the central city was dominated by 'permanent' masonry commercial buildings, mostly of three to five stories, plus substantial masonry churches and public buildings. Relatively fewer buildings were erected between 1914 and 1945, three decades dominated by war and depression. In those decades the city acquired some notable individual buildings, but the late Victorian/Edwardian streetscapes remained largely unmodified. This remained true until a burst of development between about 1964 and 1974 described in the following chapter. However, the inner city still retains a number of relatively intact historic streetscapes, and the early urban pattern, including numerous small lanes.

Christchurch buildings are also, by style, typical of buildings in other New Zealand cities, but the strength of the Gothic tradition in the 19th century and a sense of continuity evident in the design of many 20th century buildings have made Christchurch architecture distinct within the broader national history of architecture.

#### **Relevant listings**

The attention given in the past to built/architectural heritage in the listing process is reflected in the fact that there is reasonably comprehensive coverage of all the main building types and periods in the current listings. The listings include the obvious remaining examples of early wooden commercial buildings, a large number of inner city commercial buildings (including theatres) of the later 19th and early 20th centuries, the major surviving public buildings and masonry hotels of the same period, and a large number (almost all) of the churches built up to about 1914 and a few (but not all) of the inter-war churches. Similarly some but not all of the inner city commercial buildings of the inter-war years are listed. (There is a general tendency in all categories for the listings to become more complete the further back in time one goes.)

A large number of individual buildings and structures in central Christchurch are currently scheduled in the District Plan, based on an evaluation against identified criteria.

There are also Special Amenity Areas identified within the central city which include SAM #22 Gloucester/Montreal, SAM #24 Avon Loop, SAM #31 Park Terrace/Rolleston Ave, SAM #32 Cramner Square, and SAM #33, Latimer Square. All of these are in the Living 4C zone, and although they focus on different urban areas, including the squares, and each contains a number of scheduled buildings they all have a primarily historic residential character and focus. The 1931 New Regent Street is scheduled as a whole in the district plan.

## Further possible listings

The inner city should probably be examined closely for any further remaining examples of wooden buildings from the earliest years of Christchurch that have not yet been identified or listed.

Commercial buildings of the 19th and early 20th centuries are well represented in the present listings. But the listings need to be examined first to establish if any significant individual buildings have not yet been listed and then to establish if any relatively minor buildings which are crucial parts of groups or precincts have been overlooked.

Surviving, intact groups of historic buildings, and the network of lanes in parts of the central city, are a primary asset of the city, giving it a unique heritage character. Undertaking further research and analysis on specific precincts to identify heritage character and investigation of appropriate mechanisms for protection should be considered.

Although the present listings do reflect the building activity in Christchurch in the years between the wars, there are some **inter-war, inner city commercial buildings** and some **inter-war churches and public buildings** which should be considered for listing.

Where groups of buildings on key historic sites are currently listed a careful review of these areas should be undertaken to check that no other significant structures have been overlooked. Christ's College and Canterbury College (now the Arts Centre) are examples.

Significant historic structures associated with currently individually listed places should be reviewed. For example the listing of **Wood Bros Flour Mill** appears to apply only to the main building although there are a number of other surviving store buildings which form part of a whole complex, and help provide an understanding of the way this important industrial site functioned. Very few major industrial sites remain this intact in Christchurch (or possibly elsewhere).

Generally the current pattern of individual scheduling in the central city does not adequately identify surviving historic commercial streetscape character or key groups of historic commercial and retail buildings which remain intact, and represent themes in the city's development such as commerce and shopping. The survival of this urban fabric, together with numerous small lanes, is a primary asset of the city. In addition to Christchurch's significant individual buildings, key areas retaining largely intact groups of historic commercial and retail buildings contribute to the uniqueness of the city.

## Bibliographic note

Part IV of the annotated bibliography, on the city's architectural history, lists most of the titles which deal with the city's built history. Two useful starting points for information on the city's architectural history in general and on certain specific buildings are the two recent general titles, Rice, *Christchurch Changing* and Cookson and Dunstall, *Southern Capital. New Zealand Architecture* by Peter Shaw also sets architectural developments in Christchurch within a national context.

References to specific buildings are scattered in titles throughout the bibliography. Some of the old guide books listed also contain useful information on buildings.

## **Further research**

Further research and analysis should be undertaken to identify in greater detail the historic pattern of development in precincts within the central city, and to provide a greater understanding of social, architectural and historic significance, and to analyse in detail the urban and streetscape character which defines these precincts. Based on a more detailed understanding of historic development, potential mechanisms for protection could be investigated. In Auckland city a range of approaches are in place or are being developed including registration of historic areas under the Historic Places Act, for example the whole of the Britomart precinct, or district plan mechanisms including scheduling of conservation areas, or the more recent use of heritage and character overlay zones.

Key areas to investigate, to which such new mechanisms for protection in addition to individual listing could be applied, include the earliest retail and commercial precinct to the south and south east of the square generally between Gloucester Street and Tuam street and Oxford Street to Madras Street, including High Street and Colombo Street.

The existing SAMs could be strengthened by further research and analysis to summarise the historic significance of these areas in more detail, and to analyse the urban form and streetscape character in more depth. Increased awareness would add to the appreciation and support for retention of the distinctive urban character associated with each of these areas.

There remain serious gaps in information about many of the city's 19th and early 20th commercial buildings, especially those designed by the 'second tier' of primarily local architects.

There is no over-all account of the city's architectural history.

A database of architects who practised in, or designed buildings for, Christchurch would be an extremely useful aid to evaluating buildings for listing.

## *Chapter 9 The modern city*

### *The central city*

Although some new buildings were erected in the 1920s, 1930s and 1950s, central Christchurch remained largely unchanged between 1914 and 1960. (These were, of course, years of depression, war and post-war recovery.) Beginning in the 1960s, through until the stock market crash of 1987, several large, modern high-rise office blocks and hotels were built, usually on sites that had been occupied by a number of older commercial buildings. Zoning and other provisions of the various plans which came to have a marked influence on the development of the city from the 1950s on had a significant impact on the sizes and locations of these new, larger buildings, though the process of replacing the city's older commercial building stock by new, larger office and other buildings was driven primarily by economic factors.

The first of these modern high-rise buildings, the Government Life building (opened in 1964) on the Square, belatedly introduced the glass curtain wall to Christchurch. On an opposite corner of the Square, the new Bank of New Zealand building (opened in 1967) required the controversial demolition of the old Bank of New Zealand building. The impact of the arrival of the large office block in Christchurch was felt most strongly on the Square. Although some distinguished older buildings survived on the perimeter of the Square, the new buildings dominated the townscape and, again controversially, dwarfed the spire of the Cathedral.



**Figure 40. Downtown Christchurch looking west from the Cathedral Tower, SRA 2004**



Another cluster of high-rise buildings rose south of the Square, clustered around the intersection of High and Cashel Streets (which became the south-eastern angle of the pedestrian City Mall). On the south side of Cashel Street, on opposite sides of High Street, were high-rise buildings designed by the two architects who dominated Christchurch architecture in the second half of the 20th century, Miles Warren and Peter Beaven. Both were built for financial institutions. Tall buildings were also put up for the next generation of inner city hotels – the Ramada Inn on Victoria Square in 1974, Noahs Hotel on Oxford Terrace in 1975 and the Park Royal Hotel on Victoria Square in 1988.

The two highest buildings were erected on Armagh Street, in accordance with a plan to ‘frame’ the inner city with high-rise buildings concentrated along Armagh Street.

Most of the new high buildings were commercial office buildings or hotels. When supply of office space exceeded demand, several new tall office buildings were converted to hotels. Two new high buildings on Hereford Street, the Police Station and Postal Centre, were public buildings. On the north-west side of Victoria Square, the city’s courts were re-housed in a high building.

Rebuilding in the central city over the quarter century from the early 1960s to the late 1980s was not confined to high-rises. The central city also acquired a number of smaller new buildings, up to six or seven storeys. These were not concentrated in any one part of the central city, but spread rather uniformly through it. Some of the better of these smaller buildings, both public and commercial, were designed by the firm Warren and Mahoney. Most notable of all, architecturally, was the city’s new Town Hall, completed in 1972, designed by Warren and Mahoney, which consciously related back to the city’s earlier architectural traditions. So did the same firm’s new Public Library, opened in 1982.

By style, the high-rise buildings generally eschewed the ‘glass skin’ (although there are such buildings in Christchurch; the first of the new larger buildings, the Government Life building on the Square had a glass curtain wall clearly influenced by such American precedents as Lever House in New York and subsequently two smaller true ‘glass skin’ buildings – again with American precedents – were erected on corner sites, at Cashel/Durham Streets and Armagh Street/Oxford Terrace). Many modern Christchurch commercial buildings have a distinctive relationship between window and wall surfaces that perhaps also marks a continuation of Christchurch’s earlier architectural traditions.

The substantial rebuilding in central Christchurch through the quarter century was driven by a commercial demand for higher quality office space (in the case of the office buildings) and the growth of the tourist industry (in the case of the hotels). After the stock market collapse of 1987, Christchurch was over-supplied with office space. One of the largest and most recently built of the office towers only became fully occupied in 2004. As the tourist industry continued to grow, some of the buildings put up as office blocks were converted for use as hotels.

### *Historic preservation*

As development of the city proceeded and increasing numbers of older commercial buildings were demolished to provide clear sites for the new buildings, a heritage preservation

movement began to have an impact on how the city was perceived and, to a lesser extent, on the city's form and appearance.

One of the earliest examples in New Zealand of buildings being retained because they were perceived to be of historic importance were the steps taken in the 1920s to protect the stone Council Chamber of the Provincial Government Buildings. But this was an isolated case of concern for a particular building of exceptional importance and a wish to preserve old buildings in general did not begin to have a significant effect on the built fabric of the city until the late 1960s and 1970s. The demolition of the Bank of New Zealand in 1963 was one key point in the growing realisation that the city had an architectural heritage which deserved protection. What to do with the old buildings on the university's town site was also an issue which, in the 1970s, affected how the city regarded all its surviving older buildings.

Criticism of the large new buildings on the perimeter of Cathedral Square – the Government Life building, the Bank of New Zealand building, Carruca House, the AMP building and the Housing Corporation building – was particularly strong. There were a few significant 'saves' – the former Public Library building, the Theatre Royal, the Nurses' Memorial Chapel, the Coachman Inn, the Excelsior Hotel and the original Star and Lyttelton Times buildings – but rather more significant losses. One ambiguous 'success' for the preservation movement was the retention of the facades of the old Clarendon Hotel at the base of the new Clarendon Towers. The leading groups in the preservation movement in Christchurch were the Christchurch Civic Trust (founded in 1965) and the Canterbury Regional (later Branch) Committee of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Some local neighbourhood groups included preserving the existing character of inner-city residential areas among their goals.

The other significant event in the emergence of an awareness of the city's heritage was the founding of the Ferrymead Heritage Park. The first steps towards establishing 'Ferrymead' as it became generally known were taken in 1963. Established on a site of historical significance, the Park is now home to a number of organisations concerned with different aspects of the past. There are a number of relocated historic buildings there and working examples of several vehicles of vintage transport.

### *In the suburbs*

From the 1960s on, many of the activities which had been largely confined to the inner city, or at least concentrated there rather than in suburban centres, moved out into the suburbs. This shift was associated with the construction and then expansion of suburban malls (as described in chapter 14). Numbers of new churches were built in new suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s. As inner city congregations declined, some redundant churches were demolished, others found reprieve through being taken over by alternative (Pacific Island and evangelical) congregations.

Most professional and commercial services remained in the inner city, though these too to some extent shifted to suburban locations. The construction of the State Insurance building in Riccarton, close to the Riccarton (now Westfield) mall, was the most conspicuous evidence that some providers of professional and financial services followed the shopkeepers out into the suburbs. Banks began to open branches in the suburbs in the 1960s, but the main inner city banks remained important until the late 1980s. Their relative decline in importance

through the 1990s was due as much to the increasing use of electronic banking as to increasing use by customers of suburban branch banks.

Among the most notable public buildings of the late 20th and early 21st centuries were libraries. The central library itself was extended in these years, but the most conspicuous sign of changes in the city's library system were the new libraries at New Brighton and on Colombo Street in Beckenham (on the site, interestingly, of the old Heathcote County offices, which were demolished). The city also acquired in the early 21st century a conspicuous, and controversial, new art gallery on a central city site.

## ***Chapter 9: The modern city***

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

#### **General discussion**

In the early 1960s, central Christchurch still looked much as it had in 1914. A first commercial building boom began in the 1960s and continued into the early 1970s, when the recession following the first oil shock cut it short. During this boom, Christchurch acquired its first modern, high-rise commercial buildings (and lost, in the process, a number of significant older buildings). Considerable new construction resumed in the 1980s, but ceased abruptly with the 1987 stock market crash. Several proposed projects never came to fruition, but a large enough number did to further change the character of the inner city.

Over the period spanned by the two ‘booms’, the city acquired a number of important new public buildings, including the Town Hall, the new Public Library and the new court buildings. Through the same period a heritage conservation movement began to have some effect on the built fabric of the city. By the end of the 20th century, the physical changes in the inner city had been matched by changes in its economic and social roles. Perhaps as many tourists as locals kept shops in the inner city going (see chapter 14) and accommodating visitors (see chapter 15) became, relative to the provision of professional and financial services, much more important in sustaining the inner city economically.

#### **Relevant listings**

The influence age has apparently had on the present listings is reflected in the fact that there are almost no buildings – including commercial buildings, public buildings and churches – from later than about 1950 listed.

#### **Further possible listings**

The best or most significant examples of *post-war inner city commercial buildings* should be listed. So should significant post-war churches (see later), most of them in the outer suburbs which developed after the war, and post-war public buildings.

In general the lack of post war listings is the most pressing and least researched omission. All buildings recognised by awards of the New Zealand Institute of Architects up to the late 1970s should be considered for listing as these were considered among the best in the country at the time. Awards since that time have become more numerous with an emphasis on regional merit but would be a good reference point.

#### **Bibliographic note**

The note under Part III, chapter 8 (the immediately preceding chapter) also applies here. One particular title, the history of the firm of Warren and Mahoney, is relevant to inner city

commercial building in the second half of the 20th century. So are parts of the exhibition catalogue relating to the work of Peter Beaven and the book *Round the Square*.

## **Further research**

There are many topics relating to the post-war architecture of Christchurch (e.g. the post-war churches and post-1960 commercial architecture) which still need extensive research. The preliminary step would be to check what art history theses on relevant buildings or architects have been done at Canterbury University and to scan the Art History Department's vertical file on Christchurch buildings.

Further research and identification of significant examples of modern architecture (of which relatively few examples are listed) should be undertaken. It would be useful to identify buildings which have been awarded local or national awards by the New Zealand Institute of Architects. Reference could also usefully be made to a self-guided walk *Modern Architecture in Christchurch City Within Walking Distance of the Cathedral*. (Published around 1960, this walk included 44 modern buildings designed by 14 architectural practices including: Collins and Son, Peter Beaven, Don Donnithorne, Hollis and Leonard, John Hall, Griffiths, Moffat and Partners, Lawry and Sellars, Manson, Steward and Stanton, Margaret Munro, Minson and Henning-Hanson, Paul Pascoe, Tengrove and Marshall, Warren and Mahoney, and Hall and McKenzie.)

An oral history project on Christchurch architecture in the second half of the 20th century should be given priority (with interviews of, at least, Sir Miles Warren, Peter Beaven, Don Donnithorne, Gavin Willis and William Tengrove).

## Chapter 10: Public open spaces and gardens

### *Transforming an open, barren site*

The site on which Christchurch was placed was quite unlike that of any of New Zealand's other early settlements. To start with it was flat and exposed and without any natural features that defined or enclosed different areas. The only prominent geographical features – the Port Hills, relatively close to hand but not immediately present, and the mountains far distant – intensified rather than mitigated the dominating sense of open exposure. In addition, Christchurch also lacked, except for the small patches of forest at Riccarton and Papanui, the native bush or scrub which gave the sites of the other early settlements entirely different original characters.



**Figure 41. Advertisement for Adams & Sons. 1885.** *Murphy, M. ca 1885. Gardening in New Zealand (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*

Critical to making this site habitable and pleasant in the eyes of immigrants from closely settled and partly wooded England was the planting of trees, which created a sense both of enclosure and of protection from wind and weather. Introduced trees were quickly planted throughout the city and, many proving quick growing, soon created the desired sense of enclosure and protection. The other means of mitigating the sense of exposure on the plains was the erection of fences and walls or planting of hedges around individual buildings and gardens.

Materials for fences and walls and items of garden furniture were all produced locally. Stone from the Halswell quarry was used for curbing, paving, grottos and walls. Locally produced tiles, terra cotta statuary and bricks all found uses in Christchurch gardens.

The importance of planting trees and creating gardens within enclosed spaces to rendering a bleak and frighteningly open landscape pleasant and suitable for habitation on English terms meant that nurserymen were prominent among Christchurch's early businessmen and that the professions of gardening and landscaping developed strongly in the city in the 19th century (Refer Map 14). Many of the more prominent of them were employed by or undertook work on contract for the Christchurch City Council.

One of the first popular New Zealand gardening guides, *Gardening in New Zealand*, published in the early 1880s, was written by a Christchurch garden journalist Michael Murphy. Later editions ran into the early years of the 20th century. For one of them, the noted botanist Leonard Cockayne wrote a chapter about cultivating New Zealand plants. Later a Superintendent of the Botanic Gardens, Morris Barnett, wrote significant papers about city parks in New Zealand and tree planting in Canterbury.

Three national politicians from Christchurch – Henry Sewell, Edward Stafford and William Rolleston – played important roles in the passing of the 1860 Public Domain Act and had an interest in tree planting, including the ornamental planting of native species.

### *Christchurch's parks and gardens*



**Figure 42. Border in mid-summer, Botanic Gardens. c. 1962, *A Garden Century*. Christchurch City Council, 1863-1963, p182**

The history of parks and gardens in Christchurch is dominated by Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens in the central city, by the central city's other four open spaces – Cathedral, Cranmer, Latimer and Victoria Squares – and by the central city riverbanks. But the city is



also well-endowed with suburban parks, formed as the city steadily expanded outwards, and with a number of larger open spaces on the city's periphery which are of regional significance. Cemeteries are the other main public open spaces in Christchurch

### Hagley Park

The boundaries of Hagley Park were defined when the city was first laid out prior to the arrival of the Canterbury Association settlers. It is not clear why the large public park the Association required was placed by Thomas and Jollie on the western side of the city. It may have been to create a buffer between the new town and the Deans brothers' farm already established at Riccarton.

The Park was subdivided at an early stage by two major avenues into three units and the Botanic Gardens (described on Jollie's original map of Christchurch as a government domain) were located in an area separated from the rest of the park by a loop of the Avon River. Early losses from the original area of the park were ten acres to Christ's College in 1855, a smaller area for the Museum in the late 1860s and the site for the Christchurch Hospital in 1859-60. (In 1922, the Hospital gained a further small area from land that had been leased to the Acclimatisation Society to build a new nurses' home.)

The planting of introduced species of trees which transformed Hagley Park into an essentially English landscape, of open parkland (with provision for sports grounds – see chapter 27) and woodland, began in the mid 19th century and continued into the 20th. The major water feature, Victoria Lake, was formed in 1897. Some of the finest individual trees, and groups of trees, in Hagley Park date from the 19th century. The notable Japanese flowering cherries on Harper Avenue were planted somewhat later.

One feature of the city's custodianship of Hagley Park has been the jealousy of the citizenry for it. Two major proposals for roads cutting across the park were resisted vociferously. So have been encroachments on the park, from the placing of the hospital in one corner of the park onwards. Nevertheless, many buildings have been erected within the park, generally to support sporting and recreational use of the parkland. The Horticultural Society complex in South Hagley is the most conspicuous example. Car parking has been permitted within the park, with access off Riccarton Avenue and over the Armagh Street bridge, to give visitors access to the Botanic Gardens. A network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists covers the park.

### *The Botanic Gardens*

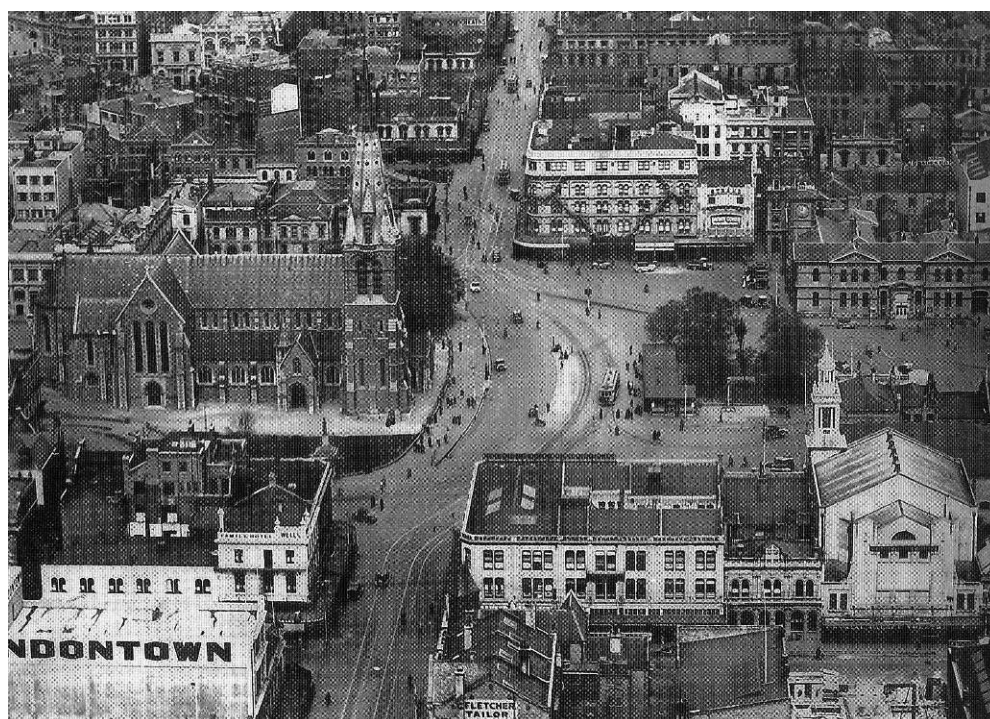
The area within the loop of the Avon River that makes up the Botanic Gardens has been even more comprehensively and carefully planted to replicate essentially English garden- and land-scapes. The foundation of the gardens is generally dated from the planting on 9 July 1863 of an oak to commemorate a royal wedding. Commemorative trees are among the host of fine specimen trees in the Gardens. (A leaflet lists 56 planted in the period 1863-1990.) From 1864 on, the area was steadily planted and landscaped. Several of the major surviving plantings, including, for example, the line of Wellingtonias by the United Tennis Club courts, across the river from the Gardens proper, were in place by the 1870s and there are many trees now more than a hundred years old.

The native vegetation of the Botanic Gardens (and of the whole of Hagley Park) was entirely eliminated by the 19th century plantings. But a New Zealand natives section was established in that century, and shifted in the early 20th century to its present location. In 1938 the Cockayne Memorial Garden was added to this section to commemorate a botanist who had a profound influence on the character of Christchurch. The area was enlarged in 1960-61.

Of the conservatories in the Gardens today, the oldest is the Cuninghame House, a notable structure built in 1923. Three further conservatories were added in the 1950s and 1960s.

The woodland area between the Botanic Gardens and Riccarton Avenue has become in effect part of the Gardens, though separated by the river from them. The first extensive daffodil plantings in this area were made between 1933 and 1945.

### *Cathedral Square*



**Figure 43. Cathedral Square, 1928, viewed from the north. Crystal Palace cinema lower right, Londontown drapery store lower left. The Rink Stable site (lower right) has been cleared for construction of Hay's department store. Note the Godley statue beside the Cathedral. RNZAF Museum Wg F22**

Despite its occupying a central position in the city, the role Cathedral Square has been expected to play in the city's life has never been quite clear or satisfactorily defined. Its 'cross' shape and the central placement of the cathedral has not made resolving this 'problem' any easier. (The central plot was, in the original plan for the city, to have been occupied by the grammar school; Christ's College eventually exchanged its interest in this land for the site in the Domain. The rest of this area – after school, museum and hospital had been placed on it – became the Botanic Gardens).

Historically the Square has never functioned as a major commercial or retail area, though there have always been some shops on its edges. Some major concerns have been located at

different times in buildings around its edge. The moving of the post office from Market Square to the new building on Cathedral Square in 1879 was an important step in Cathedral Square becoming more important in city life. Other businesses and concerns which became established on Cathedral Square ranged from the Press and Lyttelton Times newspapers, to the Housing Corporation, Dalgety's (a major firm serving farmers), the Tramway Board (later Transport Board), the Bank of New Zealand, and the Government Life Insurance office.

While movies were a dominant form of popular entertainment, the Square had a specific role as the place where cinemas were concentrated. Some hotels have always been on the Square, in greater numbers in recent years with the conversion of some modern office blocks to tourist hotels.



**Figure 44. South west corner of Cathedral Square c1920 looking towards the central post office.**  
*Alexander Turnbull Library, G 48529 1/2*

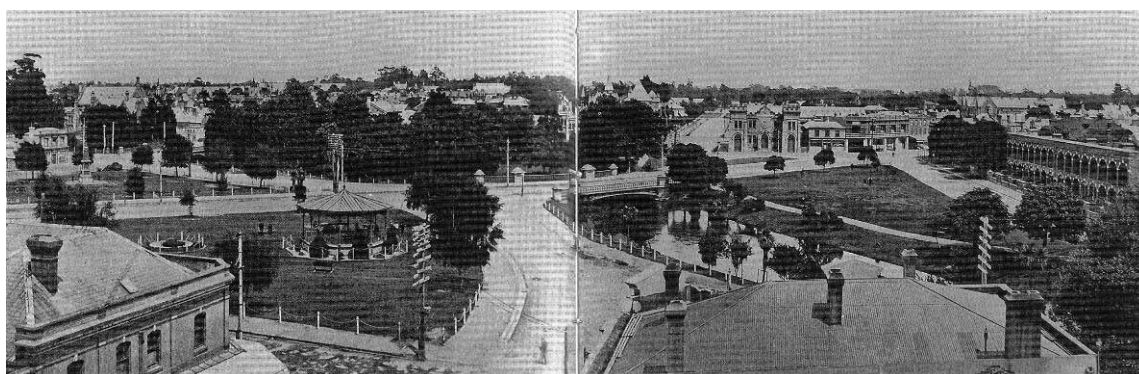
One major role of the Square in the past was as a transport hub. The first tram lines laid in 1879-80 ran from Cathedral Square to the railway stations on Moorhouse Avenue and in Papanui. The early tramway companies had offices and yards on or near Cathedral Square. Almost all the city's tram lines and, after trams were superseded in the early 1950s, its bus routes converged on or passed through the Square. This was the source of one of the major past controversies concerning the appearance and use of the Square. The building of a tram shelter in its centre in 1907 inaugurated a 20-year saga, including legal action, which saw the shelter eventually removed, but not before the Godley statue had been moved, in 1917, then moved back to its original position, after the tram shelter had gone, to make way for the war memorial.

In 1961 Cathedral Square was described as little more than an oval traffic rotary. The Square's role as a transport hub diminished when the Square was remodelled in 1973-74 (largely following a plan prepared by a city architect G.A.J. Hart, in 1952). This was preceded by the closing of roadways in front of the Cathedral in 1965 and in front of the post office in 1972. The 1973-74 remodelling saw traffic excluded from parts of the Square and a large area paved as pedestrian space. The area was planned not as planted parkland in which people could relax but for such activities as concerts, public speaking and market stalls. Several of these activities subsequently became usual in the Square, including the public speeches by 'the Wizard'. Level changes were used to define different areas of use. This remodelling of the Square in the early 1970s made it more a central square or plaza in the tradition of European cities than it had ever been in the past.

Some public occasions have always brought crowds to the Square, notably, on a regular basis, dawn Anzac Day services after the war memorial was dedicated in 1937. Public rallies for various 'causes' have been held intermittently in the Square from at least the 1880s, when crowds gathered to support the building of the railway to the West Coast. For some years, The Press posted election results on a large board on the front of its building, which drew large election-night crowds.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the Square underwent further significant changes. Notably it finally lost its role as a transport hub (with the building of the Bus Exchange on Lichfield Street). This was associated with repaving, some reorganisation of different areas of the Square and with further restrictions on traffic movements. These changes have generally reinforced the role of the Square as a central public space in the European tradition. Through these changes, the place of the Square in the city's life and the extent to which the changes were thought sensible or desirable remained a major topic of debate in the city.

### *Victoria Square*



**Figure 45. Victoria Square, June 1909. The Salvation Army Citadel (with crenellations) is upper right and the roof of the Oxford Hotel in the right foreground. CM 161**

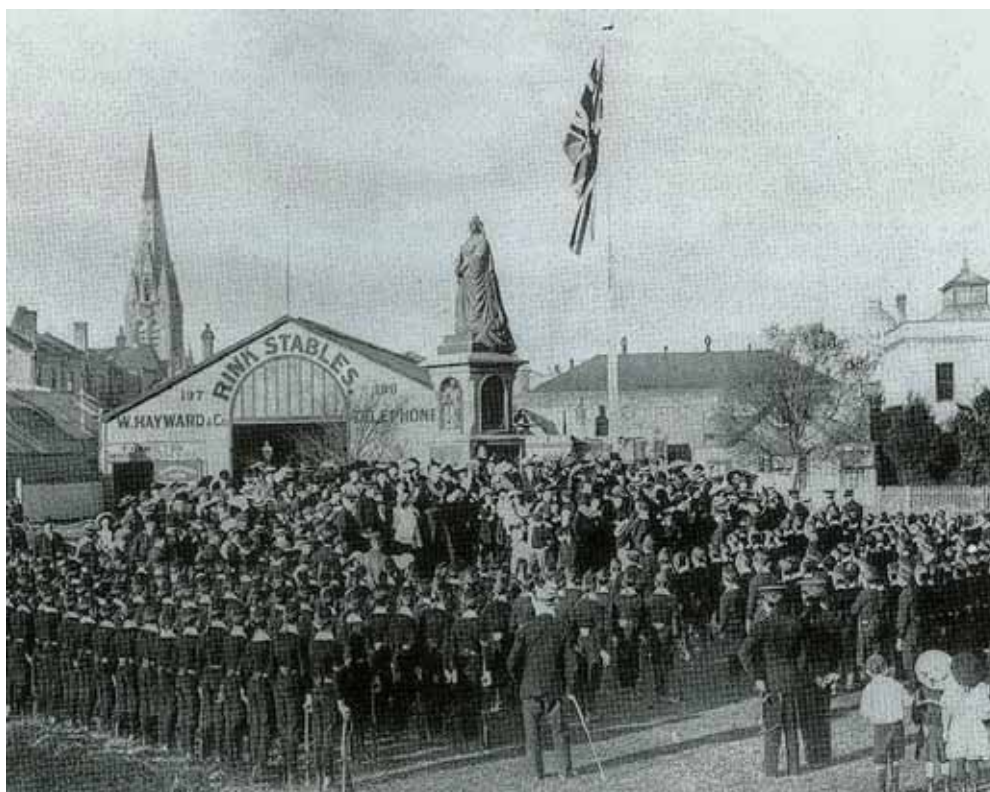
Through the second half of the 19th century, Victoria Square was the city's Market Square. It served both as place for trading and as a centre for several municipal and civic activities. Mostly rag-tag structures cluttered the area until the very end of the 19th century, when they were cleared away and the space transformed into parkland. It gained statues (Queen Victoria and Captain Cook) and a fountain, but lost its band rotunda. In the early 1970s it gained the new Town Hall on its north side, across the river from the Square itself. In the same decade a modern hotel (which was subsequently significantly altered) was built on its

eastern side. But a 1987-88 plan to build a tourist tower in the Square's south-east corner did not proceed after opposition to encroachment on the open space. Older buildings on its southern side were demolished in the 1990s, but the site was not built on until work began in 2004 on high-rise apartment blocks. The surviving old buildings on the eastern side running north from the corner of Armagh Street are important to the character of Victoria Square, but were offered for sale in 2004 with the site identified as one with great potential for development.



**Figure 46. Victoria Square original market hall, then post office one of the city's important early public buildings. Alexander Turnbull Library, ref. 111246 1/2**





**Figure 47. Cadets, all from public schools, have gathered in Victoria Square on Empire Day 1907 to salute the flag. Canterbury Public Library 641 (Weekly Press)**

The Square remained bisected by Victoria Street until the 1980s. In 1983, the City Council decided the stretch of street from Armagh to Kilmore Streets should be closed. A major hotel was subsequently built to close off the north-west corner of the Square. Oxford Terrace was also closed and the surface of the Square reshaped and replanted. The ‘make-over’ of Victoria Square was one of the city’s most successful enhancements of a public open space. But it gave the area a very different character from its successive characters in the past – market place and location of public buildings until the turn-of-the-century improvement which gave it an appearance and functions closer to those of the late 20th century ‘remake’. But the closing of the roads that made a whole of the Square’s previously divided areas of grass altered its character markedly. It is probably used less now than ever in its past for public gatherings of different kinds but considerably more as a space for ‘passive’ recreation, for workers to have their lunch in or visitors to rest from sightseeing.

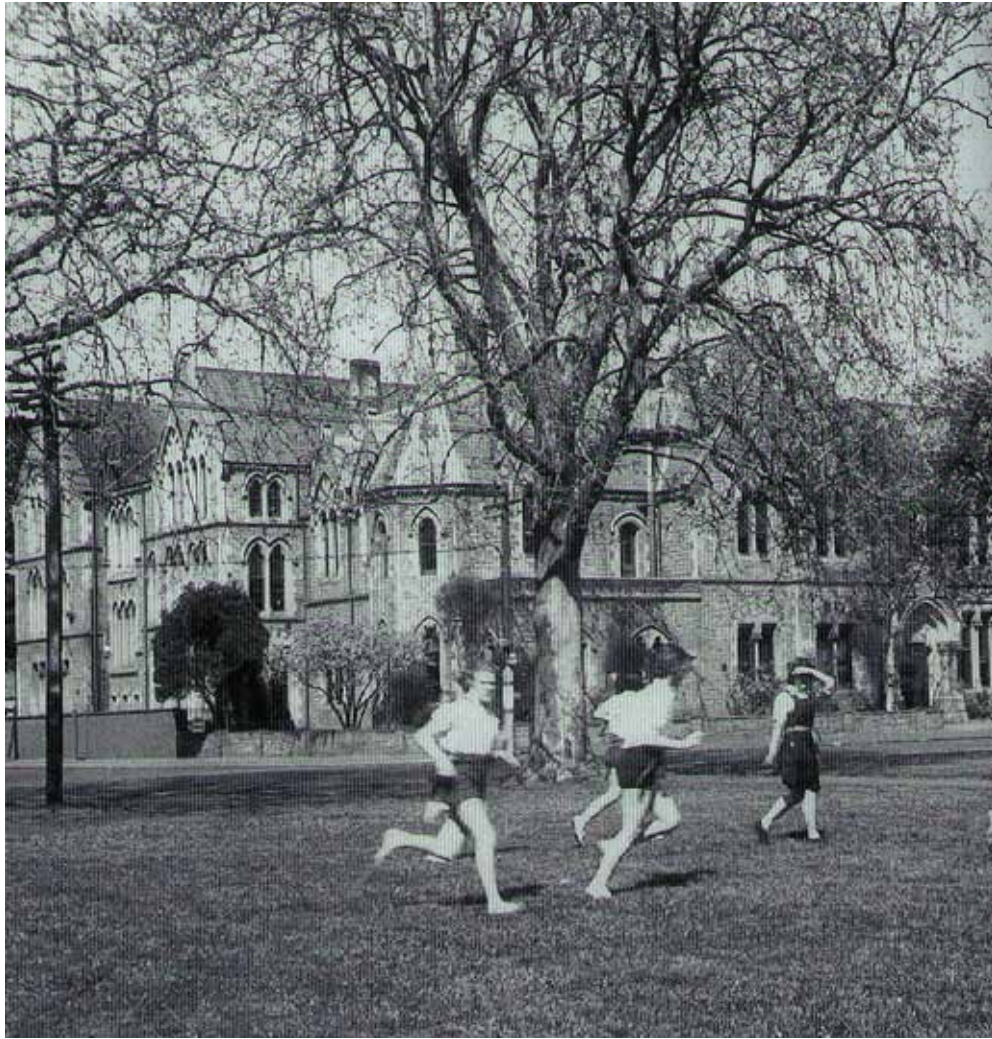


**Figure 48. Cranmer Square during WWII showing women soldiers on parade.** *Ref. John Wilson, Private Coll.*

These two rectangular open spaces in the inner city were included in the original plan of the city. They served the early city as sports grounds, but with the development of alternative grounds (especially Lancaster Park) this use largely ended and the squares were landscaped, with central open spaces and trees around the perimeter. Worcester Street was extended across Latimer Square, but later plans to improve the city's road system by encroaching on the squares (both of which are on the lines of one-way streets) did not proceed.

Both squares, particularly Latimer Square, have been used for open-air meetings and political rallies and both still provide areas of lawn for informal sports.





**Figure 49. School students running on Cranmer Square by Christchurch Girls' High School.** *Alexander Turnbull Library 1567 1/4*

### *The central city riverbanks*

In the city's original plan, Oxford and Cambridge Terraces were laid out flanking the Avon River where it flowed through the inner city, leaving irregular open spaces between the roadway and the river itself. But it took some time for the city to realise the landscape potential of these riverbanks. The river itself originally served the city as a source of water and then a drain. Its banks in their natural state were thickly vegetated with flax, niggerheads and other swamp plants.

Much of this original vegetation was gradually cleared away, but the more open banks remained largely unkempt and rough for many years, although there were some early plantings by the City Council of trees like willows and oriental planes on some stretches of riverbank. In the 1890s tidying up and planting began in earnest. The Christchurch Beautifying Association (formed in 1897) and the Avon Improvement League (formed in 1903) were active in this work. Mill Island, by the Hereford Street bridge, was an early project of the Beautifying Association. The 1906-07 Exhibition prompted further riverbank improvements. By the 1930s the banks from the Carlton Mill bridge right through to beyond Madras Street were largely manicured lawn with specimen trees. A city benefactor, Thomas

Edmonds, contributed to the improvement of the riverbanks from the rotunda which bears his name east along Poplar Avenue.

In 1978 a plan to use a triangle of riverbank land between the Bridge of Remembrance and the then new Durham Street bridge for car parking was rejected and the area was planted as Friendship Corner, to highlight Christchurch's sister-city relationships. It was planted before any concern to restore the city's natural vegetation was evident and consists of mown grass and 'English' trees.

Further change in the appearance of the riverbanks did not come until the late 20th century. There was then a move to return some native vegetation to the river's edge, to improve the environment for wildlife and to recreate to some extent the appearance of early Canterbury. This was resisted by some who feared the 'traditional', 'English' look of the riverbanks would be compromised but from its inception the Beautifying Association had been concerned with protecting and planting native flora and as early as 1908 flax and cabbage trees had been planted near the Armagh Street bridge. This development had particular application in Christchurch but was part of a worldwide 'natural' park movement. It affords an interesting example of a wish to accommodate both natural and cultural aesthetic values.

### *The riverbanks outside the central city*

Most of the banks of the Avon and its tributaries above the Fendalton Road bridge are private land. Below the central city, east of Barbadoes Street, the reserves on each side of the river are less manicured, but have generally been 'beautified' to some extent, especially with tree plantings. Attention was focused on these stretches of riverbank in the 1920s and 1930s by R.B. Owen, who also had a hand in the creation of the city's prettiest small riverbank park further upstream, the Millbrook Reserve which was formed in 1924.

The lower Heathcote has been blighted by industry, but in recent years some riverbank restoration has been undertaken in these lower reaches, following the elimination of the worst pollution and the building of the Woolston Cut. Above the Woolston industrial zone, the banks of the Heathcote have been 'beautified' in a similar fashion to the banks of the Avon below the central city – with grassy banks and trees. The south bank of the Heathcote by Cashmere Road was improved in this fashion by the Beautifying Association in the early years of the 20th century.

As the city has expanded to the north, attention has begun to be given to the banks of the Styx, which was formerly essentially a rural stream.

### *Planting the avenues*

Wide town belts were laid out on the northern, eastern and southern sides of the original city in the first survey. In time, the northern and eastern belts, renamed Bealey and Fitzgerald Avenues, acquired handsome central belts of trees. The planting of the avenues began with the 1863 planting of a commemorative oak at the corner of Ferry Road and the East Belt.

For most of the 20th century, these two avenues were handsome streets. In the last quarter of the 20th century their appeal diminished as trees aged or were sacrificed to the increasing demand of cars for road space.

Moorhouse Avenue (formerly the South Belt) has always been the 'poor relation' in terms of planting and visual appeal to Fitzgerald and Bealey Avenues, which were largely residential while Moorhouse Avenue was lined from the early days by wool and grain stores and factories (and in later times by large commercial establishments and car yards). Some plane trees were planted at the very beginning of the 20th century, and more in the 1970s, but trees have never really moderated the commercial/industrial character of Moorhouse Avenue, except at its extreme western end where it runs for a short stretch along the southern edge of Hagley Park.

Rolleston Avenue, on the western side of the inner city, was also planted. In 1964, the overnight felling of an avenue of elms along Rolleston Avenue was controversial. The replanting of Rolleston Avenue was cautious, but successful in opening up views of the buildings of Christ's College and the Museum and also views into the Botanic Gardens.

### *Suburban parks*

The city's suburban park system has expanded steadily as the city has grown. These suburban parks generally combine the provision of playing fields for different sports with plantings of trees and gardens.

The older inner suburbs are generally less generously supplied with parks than more recent suburbs. Sydenham was lucky that the Agricultural and Pastoral Association had its first showgrounds there. The first show was held at the corner of Brougham and Colombo Streets in 1864. In the 1890s the Association moved to a new site on Lincoln Road and the old showgrounds, in 1893, became Sydenham Park. Nearby, in 1928-30, an old water-filled shingle pit known as Smart's Pond was filled and the area became Bradford Park.

Several earlier and later city parks were originally rubbish tips. In eastern St Albans, St Albans Park provided a generous area of open space. In 1940 advantage was taken of the opportunity to purchase part of the grounds of a large house to create Abberley Park in an area of St Albans poorly provided with open space. A similar pattern of the later provision of parks in older residential areas can be traced in other parts of the city. In Opawa, in 1943 Sir John Mackenzie bought an historic property called Risingholme and presented it to the city to use as a park. The old homestead in 1949 became one of the city's first community centres. In 1968 another notable old homestead and its grounds, Mona Vale, was added to the city's public open spaces when it was purchased by local bodies, supported by vigorous community fundraising spearheaded by the then-young Christchurch Civic Trust..

Examples of the steady provision of new parks as the city's residential area expanded are found in the north-west. Fendalton Park dates from 1944. Burnside Park began life as a county reserve when it was purchased by the Waimairi County Council in 1955. In 1956 a benefactor donated land to the county which was opened in 1960 as Jellie Park. A similar pattern was followed in other new residential suburbs, of parkland being acquired in anticipation of the 'tide' of residential development spreading further out. Reserve

contributions from developers contributed to the city's generous provision of parks in new subdivisions.

The suburban parks met the practical needs of the areas for sportsgrounds and for green space for passive recreation (many had children's playgrounds and some, in years past, band rotundas). They also served as venues for public events. In many cases, the people of particular suburbs identified as strongly with their local park as with their local shopping centre.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Christchurch councils made some strategic purchases of land for new reserves and parks which were to shape the future form of the City. These were intended to form long-term open space edges to the City's suburban growth. Examples are Nunweek Park in Bishopdale purchased by the Waimairi District Council and land in Hillmorton purchased by the City Council. Part of the land at Hillmorton became the new Showgrounds when the Agricultural and Pastoral Association decided to move from the constricted site in Addington which it had been using since the late 19th century. Parts of the rest of the Hillmorton land are being used for equestrian activities and parts planted and developed to emphasise the history of farming on the fringes of the city.

### *Suburban street plantings*

The planting of trees on suburban streets has been haphazard and sporadic in Christchurch. Before World War I some streets of the inner suburb of Merivale were planted. Streets in some later developments further east in St Albans were also planted. These streets were formed in the 'bungalow' era and they are matched by similar streets in other 'bungalow suburbs' such as Spreydon and Somerfield. In Papanui some streets were planted by the Papanui Beautifying Association as war memorials.

### *Public open space on the Port Hills*



**Figure 50.** . Touring party on the Summit Road, looking down on Redcliffs. *Alexander Turnbull Library 73988 1/2*



For much of the city's history, most of the land on the Port Hills has been privately owned and farmed. Even after some large additions in recent years to the area in public ownership, only about one-fifth of the Hills is reserved in one way or another. A string of small scenic reserves mostly on the higher points of the hills were set aside relatively early, around 1910, when H.G. Ell persuaded landowners to donate the land. Ell's dream of walking tracks, a summit road and a string of roadhouses increased the sense of the Hills being in some sense publicly owned, even though they were mostly still, legally, private land. The Summit Road, begun in 1908 and completed between Evans and Dyers Passes in 1938, became the primary means of access for the people of Christchurch to the Hills and Sunday afternoon drives on the Hills a major recreational pursuit. The Summit Road Protection Society was formed in 1948 to maintain and extend public access to the Hills.

Victoria Park, a major reserve lower down on the Port Hills, immediately above the tram terminus at The Takahe (one of Ell's roadhouses) and above the Dyers Pass Road, was set aside in 1897, to mark Queen Victoria's jubilee. It became a major place for picnics and short walks. The area of Port Hills land in public ownership was not significantly augmented until the purchase of the Mount Vernon Park by the Christchurch Civic Trust in 1984. Subsequently other large Port Hills properties have been bought by the City Council and set aside as reserves. The Summit Road Act protects the very tops of the Port Hills from intrusive development.

In the late 20th century, what had been military land at Godley Head came to be increasingly used for public recreation, with an emphasis also on preserving the historic coastal defence works on the headland.

In their 'original' state, when the Canterbury Association settlers arrived, the Port Hills were partly forested. (The forests had been more extensive before the arrival of the Maori several centuries earlier.) Protection of the surviving forest fragments, mostly on the western Port Hills (within the Ahuriri and Cass Peak reserves), and the possible restoration of forest cover combined with the retention of some open tussockland on the central and eastern flanks of the Hills, are now key management goals for the Hills, both as a visual backdrop to the city and as an important area offering recreational opportunities.

A controversial 1989 decision by the Minister of Conservation allowed the top station of the gondola to be built within the Mount Cavendish Reserve. Residential encroachment up the lower slopes of the Port Hills has also become a matter of contention at times, with opponents of it fearing the Hills' scenic role as an uncluttered visual backdrop to the city was being compromised.

### *Other peripheral and 'regional' parks*

Towards the coast are relatively large areas of publicly owned land which offer recreational opportunities to the people of Christchurch. The Rawhiti Domain in New Brighton is one of the largest suburban parks. Further north, Spencer Park is another popular place for swimming and other recreational activities. The Bottle Lake Forest (the area came into the hands of the City Council as early as 1878 and the first plantings began in 1883, originally to control erosion of the sandhills by wind) has been used partly for the disposal of sewage sludge and has been the location of a major metropolitan landfill. Recreational use, including walking, horse riding and mountain bike riding, of the Bottle Lake Forest is now very high,

spurred by the development of new suburbs, notably Parklands, on the southern side of the forest.

In a sense the Estuary is a public open space with recreational, scenic and conservation values and its management is a major concern of the City Council.

North of the Estuary one of the city's last remaining areas of low-lying land, the Travis Swamp, had been designated for housing. Most of the area was saved from being drained and filled through purchase by the City Council and the swamp, though it had already been severely modified and degraded, is now being managed for the restoration of the wetland to a condition as close as possible to its original condition. At the end of the restoration, the Travis Swamp will be the only large area which will illustrate what most of the site of Christchurch was like when European settlement began.

On the south bank of the Waimakariri River there is a large area of publicly owned land at McLeans Island which is used by various organisations including a steam railway club. McLeans Island is also the site of an effort to preserve and restore an area of largely unmodified indigenous grassland, one of the very few such areas anywhere on the Plains. An area known as The Groynes, where there are relics of very early flood protection works on the old south branch of the Waimakariri, has been developed as a major picnic and recreational area.

On the other side of the city, the abandoned Halswell Quarry, at the foot of the Port Hills, is being developed as a regional rather than local park.

One important aspect of recent trends in the acquisition and management of parks and reserves in the city has been an effort to restore significant areas to their original state, through regeneration of surviving pockets of vegetation and replanting of locally sourced species. This revitalisation of a natural heritage which was almost entirely lost as the city developed through the first 150 years of its life has arisen partly from aesthetic and nostalgic roots and from a wish to establish a distinct identity for Christchurch based on its unique original land forms and vegetation cover. It was also inspired by a wish to tell the story of the original natural environment and its impact on the city's growth and development clearly to following generations. The restoration the vegetation of such areas as the Port Hills and Travis Swamp is part of the same general movement which has seen native plants used for new plantings throughout the central city.

### *The administration of public open space*

For many years (1873 to 1946) Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens were separately administered by the Christchurch Domains Board. But major responsibility for managing the city's public open spaces has rested through the years with different divisions of the City Council. By the end of the 1920s, the city's parks and reserves department had taken over much of the work which had been done by the volunteer Christchurch Beautifying Association. This Association, founded in 1897, had undertaken key work especially on the central city riverbanks and in Victoria Square and had a significant impact on the nature and maintenance of public open space in the city.

The fact that Christchurch has a remarkable legacy of specimen, mostly exotic, trees was acknowledged in the early 1970s when both the Waimairi County and Christchurch City Councils adopted tree protection by-laws.

### *The garden city*

The title of ‘garden city’ was apparently first conferred on Christchurch by Sir John Gorst when he re-visited the country (which he had lived in for some years as a young man) at the time of the 1906-07 Christchurch Exhibition. Gorst had clearly in mind the sort of city being advocated by the British Garden City Movement. But the term as it was applied to Christchurch soon lost the architectural and town-planning overtones of the British concept and was understood to refer to the presence in Christchurch of extensive public and numerous private gardens.

It is sometimes unclear whether Christchurch’s later reputation as a ‘garden city’ derives from the fine planting and maintenance of public open spaces of the central city or from the efforts made by those Christchurch citizens who assiduously tend flower-filled front gardens.

Large sections fostered a strong tradition of home gardening in Christchurch. The Christchurch Beautifying Association and Horticultural Society and other organisations have, through the years, run competitions for the best home gardens. Christchurch’s reputation as a ‘garden city’ is based at least in part, if not primarily, on the skills and efforts of its home gardeners in the suburbs or on the civic beautification and planting schemes, most the result of co-operation between the Beautifying Association and the City Council. The Beautifying Association was also instrumental in the ornamental planting of many suburban streets in different parts of the city.

Private garden and street competitions have been a feature of Christchurch life since the 1890s. The first competitions, inspired by Leonard Cockayne, a botanist and member of the first executive committee of the Beautifying Association, were held in 1898 under the auspices of the Horticultural Society. That Society, sometimes working with other organisations such as the Sweet Pea Society, offered best-kept garden awards in annual competitions for many years. In the 1920s, the Papanui Beautifying Society ran a similar competition in that suburb.

Street competitions inaugurated in the 1950s judged both general upkeep of the whole street and the contributions of front gardens collectively to the streetscape. Many homeowners, even on streets that were not entered into the competitions, came under pressure to maintain at least a minimum standard of tidiness. The competitions may also have contributed to suburban Christchurch being characterised by low front fences or walls.

There were also competitions run for factory gardens and Christchurch gained a reputation for having many attractive factory gardens. Two firms, Edmonds on Ferry Road and Sanitarium in Papanui, had particularly renowned gardens. The surviving portion of the former Edmonds factory garden, now in public ownership, is an important reminder of this part of Christchurch’s gardening history. Many other factories, such as the Ernest Adams and SX Bread bakeries, the cable factory at Sockburn, the Ovaltine Factory in Northcote and the rubber and other factories in Woolston also had gardens, but most of these, in more cost-conscious times, no longer exist in their former glory.



Some railway stations , including Riccarton and Papanui, formerly had attractive gardens. Many large private properties of members of the Christchurch elite had magnificent gardens at different points in their life. Most of these gardens have been lost as properties have been subdivided for residential development, but a few remain, still in private hands. One significant formerly private garden which came into public ownership and has been managed as a large garden is at Mona Vale. Elsewhere, for example at Risingholme, only relics or the 'bare bones' of once fine large private gardens remain, but something of the past garden history of the city can still be 'read' there.

In a city that is relying increasingly on international tourism to underpin its economy, its reputation as a 'garden city' is an important asset. The status of the Botanic Gardens is a key element in making its 'garden city' reputation a national and international drawcard in an era of growing cultural tourism.

## ***Chapter 10: Public open spaces and gardens***

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

#### **General discussion**

Because Christchurch started out with a site – flat and devoid of bush or geographical landmarks – unlike those of any other early New Zealand city it has a distinctive history of planting and the development of its public open spaces. The important inner city spaces of Hagley Park (and the Botanic Gardens), Latimer and Cranmer Squares and the Market Place (later Victoria Square) all played different roles in the early city and had subsequently different histories of development. The planting and grooming of the banks of the Avon in the inner city were crucial to the development of Christchurch's reputation as an 'English' city, but for the full story of the development of the city's riverbanks as public open spaces which have helped define the city's character it is necessary also to look at the development of the banks of the Avon above and below the inner city and the banks of the Heathcote.

The abundance of flat land has meant that Christchurch suburbs have been generously endowed with parks and playing fields – a single open space often fulfilling both purposes. Some older suburbs – Sydenham, Addington, Merivale and inner St Albans – did not originally gain open space to the same extent as later suburbs, but the shortfalls are being made up to some extent by creating new pocket parks.

With widespread car ownership in the second half of the 20th century, larger parks on the outskirts of the city, which played regional rather than local, neighbourhood roles, became increasingly important in the city's park system. They included the Travis Swamp, McLeans Island, the Halswell Quarry, Canterbury Park in Hillmorton, the Groynes and the large new reserve areas on the Port Hills.

The Port Hills also figure prominently in the (sometimes controversial) new trend towards planting public open spaces to reflect that Christchurch is a New Zealand city and not just an English transplant. Associated with this new programme are the efforts to protect and enhance the fragmentary remnants of indigenous vegetation. The cumulative effect of these new trends may well be to give Christchurch another identity than the one it has had, of being an 'English' garden city.

#### **Relevant listings**

The three 'original' (that is, on Thomas's plan) inner city open spaces of *Cathedral*, *Latimer* and *Cranmer Squares* are listed.

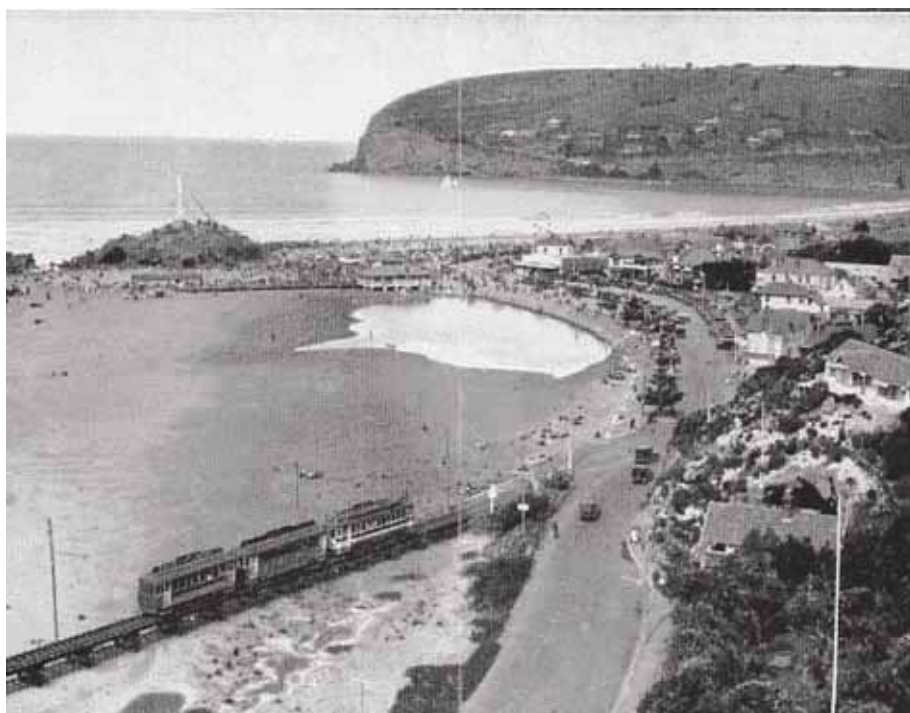
Stretches of the inner city riverbanks are already listed: Mill and Rhododendron Islands, the setting of the Edmonds band rotunda and poplar avenue, the setting of the Bridge of Remembrance and of the Provincial Government Buildings (including its grounds).

The High Street 'triangles' are all listed.

The ‘**settings**’ or **gardens of a number of larger houses** are listed. Some of these are in public ownership of one sort or another (**Risingholme, Mona Vale, Ilam Homestead, Riccarton House, Ngaio Marsh house**) but others are still in private family or institutional use (**Daresbury, Hatherly, Parkvale, 60 Glandovey Road, McLean’s Mansion, Bishopspark**).

Only two suburban parks, **Abberley Park and Elmwood Park**, are listed.

Only one former factory garden, **Edmonds Garden**, is listed.



**Figure 51. Sumner foreshore and Cave Rock. 1930s.** *City of Christchurch, 1923-1933. 144p, pg118.*

On the Port Hills only the settings of the Signs of the Kiwi and Takahe are listed. The Sumner foreshore is listed.

Two cemeteries, Barbadoes Street and Selwyn Street, are listed, but the settings or graveyards of several churches are also listed (St Paul’s, Papanui, St James, Harewood, St Luke’s and St Michael’s in the inner city, St Peter’s, Upper Riccarton)

## **Further possible listings**

There does not appear to be any consistency or ‘rhyme or reason’ about the listings of public parks and gardens and the possibility of listing more **suburban parks** should be examined and criteria for listing them (including landscape design history and history of public use) should be developed.

All the city’s **riverbanks** should be examined systematically so that any stretches of particular historic interest or aesthetic merit can be considered for listing.

Others of the city's *historic cemeteries* (Sydenham, Woolston, Linwood, the original crematorium rose garden) should be considered for listing.

The relationship between the city's register of significant trees and the listing of areas which include such trees should be clarified.

## **Bibliographic note**

Several individual titles have information about the development of open spaces and gardens in different parts of the city. They include Lamb on the Avon and the Acclimatisation Society, Ogilvie on the Port Hills, Herriott on Hagley Park, Loughton on the Summit Road Society, Strongman on the Beautifying Association, Tipples on Buxton and A Garden Century (the history of the Botanic Gardens). There is an enormous amount of information on various reports and management plans prepared by different divisions of the City Council, but these are not listed in the Bibliography.

## **Further research**

There is a need for concise histories of changes in the appearance and uses over time of all public open spaces, including the use of studies based on modern techniques for mapping and recording changes and of historical plans and maps and aerial images. Much of this information probably already exists in the archives of the relevant divisions of the City Council but there is a need for the information to be made available for listing purposes and to be set in context through a study of Christchurch's historical cultural landscapes.

Establishing a regional archive of landscape plans relevant to Christchurch public open spaces and private gardens would assist in the evaluation of the importance of specific areas. For the recent past, an oral history project to record the memories of gardeners and landscape architects who have worked in Christchurch would also assist with this task.

## *Chapter 11 Adorning the city*

### *Objects that grace the city*

Through its 150-plus years, central Christchurch has been graced by a number of commemorative and other objects – statues, war memorials, clocktowers, and fountains. These are mostly in the inner city and the majority are in park or garden settings, with only a few in more strictly urban locations, that is on streets or in paved open spaces. Some were erected at the expense of the City Council, a few after public subscriptions were raised and a number after individual benefactors made donations to the city.

### *Statues*

The city's statues commemorate people important in New Zealand's history as a British settlement colony and part of the British Empire. The first statue erected, the finest artistically, was of John Robert Godley. Its unveiling in 1867 was one of the earliest important public occasions in Christchurch. The statues of three of Canterbury's four provincial superintendents are all on or close to Rolleston Avenue. They are of different ages. In Victoria Square is a statue of Queen Victoria, first erected to mark her jubilee. The statue of James Cook, also in Victoria Square, was given to the city in 1932. The seventh statue, of Robert Falcon Scott, has dual significance as a quintessentially British hero and as a reminder in the central city of Christchurch's links to Antarctica.

One of New Zealand's most notable public sculptors, William Trethewey, lived and worked in Christchurch. Several of the city's most impressive statues and other public works of art were executed by him.

### *War memorials*

These are dealt with in a later chapter under the title 'War and the military'.

### *Clocktowers*

The oldest clocktower in Christchurch is a fine example of mid-Victorian decorative iron work. Originally imported for the Provincial Government buildings, it was rescued from storage in 1897 and erected on a stone base as a memorial to Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. It stood at the corner of Manchester and High Streets until 1930, then was moved as that corner became congested, to the corner of Victoria and Montreal Streets. It qualifies as another example of Christchurch celebrating its British colonial origins. The other inner-city clocktower has no specific commemorative significance but is a key element in one of the most important, in terms of enhancing the amenity of the city, individual benefactions to the city. These were the improvements effected to the river bank from above the Manchester Street bridge to the Madras Street bridge in the late 1920s and early 1930s at the expense of Christchurch industrialist Thomas Edmonds. One key part of these improvements, the fine classical band rotunda, was opened in 1929.

Although most of the different sorts of objects raised specifically to adorn the city are within the four avenues, the two main seaside suburbs, New Brighton and Sumner, each have clocktowers given by the same donor, R.E. Green (who also gave the FitzGerald statue to the city).

## *Fountains*



**Figure 52.** The Peacock Fountain in Botanic garden (shown here on one of its earlier sites), was dismantled, kept in storage for years then re-erected on a new site in the gardens. *Canterbury Museum ref. 3692*



**Figure 53.** Triangle Fountain, Cashel and High Street, the fountain and buildings in the rear no longer exist. *Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref.5224 1/1*

The city's three main decorative fountains – the Bowker fountain in Victoria Square, the Ferrier fountain by the Town Hall and the Peacock Fountain in the Botanic Gardens (erected in three quite different eras) – were all donated by or in the name of the civic-minded citizens whose names they bear. Not all the fountains placed in the inner city have survived, for example two on triangular plots down High Street, although a new water feature has been placed on the site of the original Stewart fountain at the Colombo Street end of High Street. It still bears the Stewart name.

## *Miscellaneous*

Various other primarily decorative objects have been placed around the city. A metal sculpture which once stood in the Square was later relocated to the Arts Centre. More recently, the Chalice has been raised in the Square. A firefighters memorial near the main fire station used damaged girders from the World Trade Centre.



## ***Chapter 11: Adorning the city***

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

#### **General discussion**

In common with other New Zealand (and worldwide) cities, Christchurch has accumulated a varied collection of different items and objects intended primarily to decorate the city. They include statues and other memorials, clocktowers and fountains and various other items of sculpture. Many of these items have historical as well as streetscape importance. All contribute to the historical and aesthetic ‘texture’ of the city.

#### **Relevant listings**

All seven of the city’s statues (Godley, Scott, Queen Victoria, Captain Cook, FitzGerald, Moorhouse and Rolleston) are listed.

The *Bowker fountain* and the *Edward VII coronation drinking fountain* in Sydenham are listed. The *floral clock* (like the Bowker fountain in Victoria Square) is listed.

The *Edmonds clocktower* is listed in conjunction with the other riverbank items donated by Thomas Edmonds – a *drinking fountain*, *kiosk* and the *rotunda*. One block down river, the small *Bricks monument* is listed. Two other *clocktowers* are listed: *Victoria Street* and *New Brighton*. The *Bandsmen’s memorial rotunda* in Hagley Park is listed. So are two detached *church belfries*, at *St Michael and All Angels* and *St Mary’s, Addington*.

The war memorials listed are the *Bridge of Remembrance*, the *citizen’s war memorial* in the Square, the *Elmwood School memorial*, the *Sumner memorial lamps* and the *entrance way to Lancaster Park* (now Jade Stadium).

The *Woolston borough monument* is listed.

#### **Further possible listings**

Two particular omissions which stand out are the *Sumner (Scarborough) clocktower* and the modern *water wheel on Mill Island* in the central city.

The *Ferrier Fountain* and the *Peacock Fountain* do not appear to be listed individually and could be considered.

A careful examination of the inventory prepared for the City Council will suggest further possible listings.

#### **Bibliographic note**

The inventory prepared for the City Council is a comprehensive list, but of limited use because of its lack of historical information.

Pryor's book on Trethewey is a useful source on several important items identified in this chapter. Stocker's book on Godley includes coverage of one of the city's most significant statues. Lamb, *From the Banks of the Avon*, includes information on several riverside items and Wilson on the Provincial Government Buildings includes information on the three statues of provincial superintendents and on the Victoria Street clocktower.

## **Further research**

The items on the inventory which are identified as being possibly worthy of listing will need to be researched.

## ***Chapter 12 Residences***

### *The city's domestic architecture and building stock*

Christchurch has a high level of residential building stock of good quality in design and construction. Much of it appears to be unique to the city and to represent efforts to meet the technical and aesthetic requirements of Christchurch as a particular place. But because the special characteristics of the city's domestic architecture have not been thoroughly or systematically researched such conclusions have to be tentative.

It seems clear, however, that the villa developed in Christchurch with characteristics special to the city. Christchurch seems to have escaped the 'bungled villa' phase which was an important episode in the development of Auckland's domestic architecture. The influence of English Arts and Crafts and cottage styles arrived early in Christchurch and was stronger in the city than elsewhere in New Zealand. 'Modern' architectural thinking also had an early and initially stronger impact in Christchurch than in other New Zealand cities (which is surprising considering the prominence given to Ernst Plischke of Wellington and the Auckland 'group' in the story of Modernism having an impact on New Zealand domestic architecture).

### *Living in the inner city*

In the 1850s, most of the residents of Christchurch lived within the four town belts. Beyond the belts the land was taken up in larger rural sections and a number of larger houses were built, even in the first decade, on the rural outskirts of the town. But most of the houses were in the inner city, where there was a mix of larger houses and smaller workers cottages. The early houses built close to the city centre were all subsequently replaced by commercial premises (shop and office buildings), but it remained a feature of Christchurch that people continued to live, in detached houses, large and small, relatively close to the heart of the city. (Some of the Special Amenity Areas reflect this feature of the city.) A differentiation between areas east and west of the Square emerged relatively early. The west side became the more 'fashionable' area. Many of the larger houses on the east side were eventually subdivided into rental flats. A Mrs Clifford, who divided many large older houses throughout the central city into flats between the 1930s and 1960s is still remembered in the city for her eccentricities. The demand for such flats in older houses in the inner city came partly from university students while the university remained on its original inner city site.

The inner city acquired in its early years a number of groups of small workers' cottages. Pockets of these cottages, built from the late 1850s through into the 1880s, survived, especially to the north and north-east of the downtown, into the 21st century. To the east, a few examples of "row" houses were erected, but in timber and with corrugated iron roofs rather than the brick and slate typical of the British cities from which many of Christchurch's early immigrants came. There were just two brick terraces – one in Sydenham and one on Victoria Square. One is gone and one (in Sydenham) remains.

Even within the four avenues, Christchurch residences almost all conformed to the New Zealand standard of a detached, single-family house on its own section. But in the 1920s and 1930s there were a few apartment or flat developments within the central city. Victoria

Mansions (on the corner of Victoria and Montreal Streets) and Belvedere and Darnley further east along Salisbury Street are examples. So are West Avon and St Elmo's Court, on opposite corners of the intersection of Montreal and Hereford Street and a block of the same vintage on Cashel Street.

After World War II, Christchurch's only significant 'slum clearance' project, the Airedale Place project of 1966, saw multi-unit blocks built on the north side of Salisbury Street. The project had the additional goal of providing a strong residential boundary to commercial expansion north from the central city. This did not in the event occur and most of the south side of Salisbury Street remains residential and has seen very substantial development, with large, multi-unit buildings replacing old cottages, villas and larger houses through the first years of the 21st century.

Although large areas of the inner city east, north and west of the downtown remained residential from the city's earliest days, the population of the inner city declined as commercial premises encroached on previously residential areas. But recently the construction of new apartment buildings (beginning in the 1960s) and the conversion of older commercial buildings to residential uses (beginning in the 1980s with the High Para apartments on High Street) has seen the trend of central city depopulation reversed.

Ever since the first Christchurch City Planning Scheme was adopted in 1962, there has been provision for high density residential development to the east of Park Terrace and Rolleston Avenue. While there has been surprisingly little new residential development east of Rolleston Avenue (that is south of Armagh Street) there has been significant development of higher-density housing around Cranmer Square and between Montreal and Victoria Streets and Park Terrace. Built in the 1950s, in the northern part of this area, Miles Warren's Dorset Street flats are now recognised as a landmark in Christchurch and New Zealand architecture, as well as being important for prefiguring different styles of residence in the inner city than single-household dwellings or large apartment blocks.

Many of the new apartment or town-house buildings were relatively small-scale but a few were controversially tall – notably the Gloucester Towers development on Gloucester Street west (the construction of which prompted changes to regulations that would not have allowed such a high building in such a precinct) and the tower blocks built on Park Terrace south of the Salisbury Street corner.

One aspect of recent residential development in the central city generally, involving both the conversion of former commercial buildings, factories and warehouses into flats or apartments and the construction of new multi-unit buildings, has been a reversal of the long, historic trend for residences to be squeezed further out from the inner city. This trend saw, in years past, houses converted for commercial uses.

Higher density housing is a feature mainly of the inner city. But apartment blocks have been built in Sumner and are proposed for New Brighton and single-household residences are now the exception, not the norm along Carlton Mill Road, where Millbrook (designed by Don Donnithorne) was an early, very large by Christchurch standards, apartment development. (Much later a smaller apartment block, designed by another significant architect, Peter Beaven, was built on the opposite side of the road.) North of Carlton Mill Road, in Merivale, residential densities are increasing as old houses on large sections are replaced, but the replacements have been town houses rather than larger apartment blocks. In the north-eastern

corner of Merivale, near the corner of Papanui and Office Roads is a high-density development of architectural interest, designed by Peter Beaven. Another Merivale development, also of architectural interest, by the same architect, Peter Beaven, is on Tonbridge Street, just off Carlton Mill Road.

### *19th century 'working class' suburbs*

Sydenham and St Albans were originally sold as large rural sections, but parts of them were subdivided within a decade or two of the founding of the city and sold off. Even Sydenham had, originally, a few large houses of members of the elite, but as it rapidly became industrial and working class, following the building of the railway along Sydenham's northern boundary, the better-off moved to places like Opawa, Riccarton or Fendalton. Concentrations of workers' houses developed in Sydenham and St Albans. Though Sydenham, at least north of Brougham Street, is now almost exclusively commercial and industrial, it was Christchurch's working class suburb par excellence, with street after street of old cottages and houses and slightly later small wooden villas. This was a pattern typical throughout the nation in the period 1860-1910. Sydenham also acquired the city's notable only example of brick terrace housing. (Its later conversion to commercial uses was typical of the transitions through which Sydenham has gone.) There were also concentrations of 19th century working class cottages in parts of St Albans, in Woolston (where industries offering employment had become established) and in Waltham.

The transition from residential to commercial/industrial in areas like Sydenham, Woolston and Addington (as opposed to other older working class suburbs) was the result, to a large extent, of zoning of land in the city's planning schemes (Refer Map 15).

### *19th century homes of the elite*

In the first two or three decades of the city's life, clusters of larger houses belonging to professionals, merchants and runholders developed in different parts of the city. Park Terrace assumed its place as a desirable (and expensive) place to live early on. The North Belt (later Bealey Avenue) also soon acquired a number of larger, grander homes; so did Papanui Road, from the Bealey Avenue corner out through Merivale and St Albans to beyond Normans Road. Other clusters of larger homes were found to the south and east in Beckenham and Opawa and to the north and west in Ilam and out as far as Hornby, while it was still essentially a rural area.

Many of these larger homes were built in large grounds. Most were built of wood and in generally domestic Gothic styles. Linwood House, on Linwood Avenue, was an exception, in materials, location and style. Larger houses of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, like Karewa, later Mona Vale, and Daresbury Rookery were usually in English domestic revival styles that further reinforced Christchurch's traditional architectural character.

Although there tended already to be residential segregation – with the larger homes of the richer and more influential separate, and usually some distance, from the smaller houses and cottages of workers – the segregation was not complete. On the western side of Papanui Road, for example, just north of the North Belt, a group of small houses and cottages was

built, close to an early local business which provided employment and close also to the larger houses along the North Belt and in Merivale which needed servants.

A number of these larger homes of the 19th century survived even when the areas in which they stood were no longer thought desirable. Park Terrace remains a fashionable street, but almost none of the earlier large old houses survive. Conversely, several large older houses survive on Bealey Avenue and up Papanui Road, but are no longer the single family homes of members of the city's elite. They have in some cases been subdivided into flats, in others been taken over by institutions like schools and in others again been converted for use as accommodation for travellers. Even where larger houses remain the dwellings of single families and have not been subdivided into flats, the grounds have often been subdivided for 'infill' housing.

### *The particular case of Fendalton*

In the 19th century, a number of substantial houses were built on large grounds (in the first subdivision of 1852, the sections were an acre each) in the area served by Fendalton Road, which ran in a north-westerly direction from the north-west corner of Hagley Park. Fendalton retained its role as a desirable place of residence for the better-off, even after the grounds of the larger houses were subdivided. The large Riccarton and Ilam estates were subdivided progressively from the late 1870s until the 1920s. Other large properties were not subdivided until well into the 20th century – most of the Helmore estate in 1913, Clifford Avenue in 1936, the grounds of Daresbury in 1955, and Desmond Street in the 1960s. Although the houses in Fendalton were larger and more expensive than the houses in less desirable residential areas, they showed little stylistic variation from the general domestic architecture of Christchurch. Heaton Street east of its intersection with Strowan and Glandovey Roads is, socially and economically, an extension of Fendalton.

### *Houses on the hills*

The Port Hills have been described as a southern barrier to the city's residential growth, forcing development north and west. But even before the flat ground between the central city and the hills were fully built over, houses had started to appear on the hills. The initial building was people who appreciated the advantages of north-facing slopes and of being above the level of fogs and frosts. Development was spurred by the extension of the tramline to the Sign of the Takahe in 1912. Although some larger dwellings were erected on the hills (notably Cashmere House itself) Cashmere Hills never became quite as 'exclusive' a suburb as Fendalton, but it was certainly an upper, rather than lower, middle class suburb and developed a distinct sense of community based on its early popularity with intellectuals and university people. Some commentators have detected a marked contrast between those who chose to build homes on relatively difficult hill sites and those content to remain on the flat.

As residential expansion extended to other spurs, the hills remained desirable places to live for the more affluent. Different hill suburbs were developed progressively through the 20th century. Clifton was built up in the first decade of the 20th century, Moncks Spur a little later, Scarborough in 1914, and Mount Pleasant and St Andrew's Hill by the mid 1920s. In the later 20th century, development began to move west of Cashmere Hills and areas like Westmorland were built up. Westmorland had been first designated for residential expansion

by the Paparua County Council in the late 1960s. By the beginning of the 21st century, the hills were built up more or less continuously from Scarborough to Westmorland, with a gap only for a short distance from west of the Heathcote Valley.

Architecturally, the most interesting phase of the residential development of the lower slopes of the Port Hills was one of the earliest, the building of the early ‘cottage bungalows’ (houses which combined features of simple, English-influenced vernacular cottages with features that later became associated with the New Zealand variant of the California bungalow) designed by Samuel Hurst Seager.

### *Working and middle class housing in the 20th century*

Between about 1890 and 1914, ‘villa’ suburbs were built in inner St Albans, Merivale and Opawa. Some handsome bay villas were built in that period. In these pre-war years, Christchurch saw the development, earlier than elsewhere in New Zealand, of first the transitional villa and then the ‘California’ bungalow.

After the First World War, Christchurch, like other New Zealand cities, saw a large number of ‘bungalows’ built. The Christchurch variant of the New Zealand bungalow was more affected by English Arts and Crafts detailing – shingles in the gable ends, prominent exterior brick chimneys among other features. These ‘bungalow’ suburbs formed a further irregular ‘ring’ outside the villa suburbs. Large tracts of bungalows were built in ‘outer’ St Albans, Spreydon, Beckenham, Shirley, Richmond and parts of Linwood. Many of these ‘bungalow’ suburbs were served by tram lines. The areas of ‘outer’ St Albans, for example, were served by the St Albans Park (1915) and Cranford Street (1910) tram lines, Spreydon by the Spreydon (1911) tram line, Dallington by the Dallington (1912) tram line and Richmond and Shirley by the Burwood line (1910) which was extended to North Beach in 1914. Other extensions of the tram system before and during World War I opened other areas for residential growth.

After World War II, most small and medium-sized houses were still called ‘bungalows’ though they differed markedly from the bungalows of the inter-war years. They were built of wood or brick veneer, usually with shallow-pitched, hipped roofs. Developments dominated by these later bungalows formed a further ring outside the inter-war bungalow suburbs. Examples of such suburbs are found especially round the northern and western fringes of the city – Redwood, Avonhead, ‘outer’ Bryndwr (beyond the tracts of post-war state house suburbs) and the suburbs that spread steadily out along Memorial Avenue.

Architects continued to design larger houses through the 20th century, while most middle and lower class houses were built off pattern books or to standard designs that builders were familiar with. The connections between the domestic work of architects and the designs of smaller, ‘mass-produced’ dwellings have not been properly traced, but the inter-war bungalows built in Christchurch are distinctly different from those of Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin and these differences may be related to the popularity among domestic architects of the early 20th century of the Old English and Arts and Crafts styles.



### *The pattern of residential expansion in the 20th century*

The way the ‘villa’ and ‘bungalow’ suburbs form irregular rings around the central city indicate the particular pattern of growth that was typical of Christchurch – a relatively steady expansion outwards in all directions. The city grew in a series of rings around an original nucleus. The ‘edge’ of urban expansion eventually engulfed what had been quite separate outlying villages, notably Papanui and Upper Riccarton. Expansion also eventually bound the originally detached seaside villages of Sumner and New Brighton into the greater metropolitan area.

The ‘edge’ of suburban expansion was never smooth because houses were often built in ‘blocks’ creating salients in different particular directions. Sewer extensions sometimes determined at which point on the ‘front’ of urban expansion development would surge ahead, although at times house construction actually forged ahead of the sewers. Parts of St Albans were developed later than would have been expected in a uniform outward expansion because the Anglican Church was slow to develop endowment land it held in the area. The area north-west of Clyde Road, which had been formed as early as 1873, remained rural until after World War II.

As Christchurch expanded in the second half of the 20th century, the new suburbs to the north and west tended to be middle and upper middle class (with larger homes on sections up to, at the upper end of the scale, half an acre) and the areas to the east, through Bromley and Aranui, to become lower and working class (with smaller houses on sections down to as small as one-eighth of an acre). Aranui grew between 1945 and 1951 from 404 to 1,141 residents. The eastern expansion eventually tied New Brighton to the city with continuous urban development. South of New Brighton, houses spread down the Spit in the years after 1945 (Refer Map 16). North Beach, which had first developed as a community of baches, used by city-dwellers at week-ends, became a more conventional residential suburb from the 1950s on. The patterns of development on the flat throughout the 20th century were determined primarily by the changes in dominant modes of transport – by foot, bicycle and tram and the private car. (Railway in Christchurch was never a significant determinant of patterns of residential growth.)

Growth in the late 20th century (that is from the 1980s on) was on the hills, including upper Mount Pleasant in the east and Westmorland in the west, and the area above the Takahe in the centre. But growth continued to be concentrated on the north-western and north-eastern flanks of the city. The names of new suburbs such as Westlake, Broomfield, Hyde Park, Casebrook and Parklands began to appear on the destination boards of the buses of an ever-expanding if under-used bus system.

### *The quarter-acre section*

Despite its intermittent history of housing being provided in blocks of flats, both low-rise, from the 1930s on, and, more recently, high-rise, Christchurch’s history of domestic architecture is one of the single-family, detached house on (again until relatively recently) large sections. The dominant Christchurch pattern of single-storey houses on relatively large sections (more similar to Auckland than Wellington or Dunedin) was determined also by the availability of large areas of flat land that were relatively easy to subdivide and service.

This abundance of flat land means that Christchurch has had, historically, much lower densities than other New Zealand cities – in 1926 its population density was about one-half that of Auckland and one-third that of Wellington. Despite the increasing number of flats and apartments in the inner city and the replacement of bungalows and villas in such disparate suburbs as Merivale and Spreydon (or the ‘in-fill’ building of townhouses on the back sections of older dwellings) population densities in the city, over-all, remain low by national standards.

‘In-fill’ housing has been particularly marked in Christchurch because the original sections were large. In the villa and inter-war bungalow suburbs, the large sections were so large that ‘infill’ housing was relatively easy – either by subdivision and the building of new houses or units in front of or behind the original house, or by the demolition or removal of the original house and placement of several units on an area of land that originally had a single house on it. This has been particularly prevalent, in recent years, in areas like Merivale where land is of a higher value because the suburb is considered a desirable place to live. Zoning, which specified different residential densities for different areas, also had a strong influence on where infill housing, or the replacement of single dwellings by ‘sausage’ flats and then townhouses, became prevalent. The ‘Residential 2’ zone under previous town plans, which allowed multiple dwellings on a single site, contributed to the erosion of the older streetscape character of older residential areas. Later, even after the previous zonings had been abandoned, Merivale became one of the most severe examples of recent infill development eroding the formerly cohesive character of a residential area.

The first Metropolitan Planning Scheme had indicated a plan for housing intensification in the central city and inner suburbs as early as 1936. This was further reflected in the first Christchurch Planning Scheme proposed in 1959, which included medium density housing in Merivale and Linwood (east of Fitzgerald Avenue) and higher density areas east of Park Terrace and Rolleston Avenue. This planning approach, of concentrating medium and high density residential development around the city’s core or at selected suburban nodes, was maintained through the first and second reviews of the Christchurch City Planning Schemes (proposed in 1968 and 1979) and resulted in substantial redevelopment of the inner city and of the suburbs immediately outside the central core.

The patterns of suburban growth taking the course of largely single-storey, single-family homes on relatively large sections, with some streets at least planted with trees, is an American rather than English pattern, reinforcing the argument that Christchurch, except for a few distinctive features of the inner city, is far from being ‘the most English city outside England’.

### *The green belt*

The outward growth of Christchurch was at the expense of farmland on the fringe of the city. There were still farms along Memorial Avenue and Blenheim Road when those roads were first widened and improved in the 1950s. Concern about the swallowing up of good farmland led to efforts being made to maintain a ‘green belt’ around the city. Initially the urban fence was placed far enough out to allow for further expansion. In 1959 only two-thirds of the 50 square miles within the urban fence were developed. The first Metropolitan Planning

Scheme for Christchurch, in 1936, included a plan for future urban expansion with the outer limits being shown much as they still were in the 1990s.

The green belt remained a feature of town planning in Christchurch until the entire basis of town planning was altered by the Resource Management Act. In 1993 there were still provisions, in the City Plan, which reflected a belief that the ideal was consolidation and increasing densities in already built-up areas rather than expansion into farmland around the city's edges. But the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement eventually replaced the previous regional planning schemes, which had attempted to control the growth of metropolitan Christchurch through the establishment and maintenance of a "green belt"

In the early 1970s, in an attempt to force residential development onto poorer, lighter soils, the third Labour Government made plans to develop a 'new town' at Rolleston which was to be connected to Christchurch by a commuter rail link. The plan was scrapped by the incoming National Government, after National won the 1975 general election. Subsequently, in the later 20th century, Rolleston did develop significantly, serving Christchurch as a 'dormitory' new town for commuters, becoming economically and socially an outlier of Christchurch although it lies wholly in Selwyn County.

By the early 21st century, housing developments, usually of an 'up market' character, though the houses were on smaller sections than had been usual in the past even in middle and lower class suburbs, were closing the gaps between the outer edge of the city and Belfast to the north and Halswell to the south-west, extending over land that had been beyond the urban fence and part of the city's green belt.

### *State housing*

In the course of its steady residential expansion, Christchurch acquired examples of different kinds of public housing. In the early years of the 20th century a number of 'settlements' of workers' dwellings were built in Christchurch under the Workers' Dwellings Acts. These settlements were Walker (on Mandeville Street in Lower Riccarton), Camelot (on Seddon and Longfellow Streets in Sydenham), Chancellor (on the boundary between St Albans and Shirley) and Hulbert (in Linwood). The scheme was a hesitant start at public housing in New Zealand. Christchurch was typical in that only a few score houses were built.

The only other major building programme by a government department in the first third of the 20th century were the houses put up in groups by the Railways Department to rent to members of the Railways' staff. None appear to have been built in Christchurch itself.

The building of houses by the State resumed on a much larger scale after the election of the First Labour Government in 1935. After the war, the state house construction programme resumed and large tracts of state houses were built in Riccarton, Ilam/Bryndwr, Hoon Hay, Hornby, Mairehau, Aranui, Shirley, Avonside and other areas. In these various state house developments Christchurch acquired examples of most of the designs to which state housing was built – detached family homes, both single and two storey, and blocks of flats.

While the state house building programme was in full swing, much of the major suburban expansion of Christchurch in the 1950s and 1960s was undertaken by the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works, which planned the roading layout and subdivision design forming

the basis of these large areas of Christchurch. Local shopping centres were built in some of the larger of the state house developments. Rowley Avenue in Hoon Hay and Hampshire Street in Aranui are examples. The most important of these was probably the Bishopdale shopping centre, which formed a transition between the former suburban shopping centres, most of them lining a main road, and the later malls, but there were other examples in almost all the new suburbs of the 1950s and 1960s. (These shopping centres are also discussed in the chapter on shopping; their significance here is as part of the pattern of the city's residential expansion.)

It was not until later in the 1960s that private subdividers and developers started to play a significant role in the residential expansion of the city. Areas such as Mount Pleasant, Westmorland, Avonhead, Burnside and Parklands were all built as private subdivisions, and set the pattern for subsequent residential expansion of the city. By this time malls were becoming the chief suburban shopping places and small shopping centres were no longer built as parts of suburban housing developments.

### *Council housing*

The City Council has played an active part in meeting the housing needs of people in the community who have difficulty meeting their own needs. In 1922, the Council began making advances to workers to help them purchase sections or houses. Pensioner flats, rented to elderly people, have been built in small clusters in different parts of the city. The first were built in Sydenham, on Barnett Avenue, in 1939. These were the first local body pensioner units built in New Zealand. There are similar units, built to the same design but disposed differently on their site, at Church Corner.

The only example of 'slum clearance' and 'urban renewal' – the Airedale Place scheme opened in 1966 – has already been mentioned under the heading 'Living in the central city'. The council has also built rental housing along Brougham Street, which was upgraded to a major cross-town route, on Antigua, Cecil, Jordan and Harman Streets, beginning in 1977. One goal of building housing on the south side of Brougham Street was to stem the southward spread of industry. Some of these developments also had urban renewal aspects. They eventually extended almost right along the south side of Brougham Street from Waltham Road in the east through to Selwyn Street in the west. Unlike most of the city's state housing, these council housing schemes have mostly been blocks of flats, several of architectural interest.

### *Special amenity areas*

The fact that the city's steady residential expansion through 150 years has given it coherent areas of housing of different ages and characters has been recognised in the designation of special amenity areas. The main purpose of designating such areas was to maintain the existing residential character and amenity of the areas rather than to protect intact areas which were of importance because of their place in the city's social or architectural history. But 'design coherence' was a criterion applied in the selection of some groups of residences for designation as special amenity areas.

## ***Chapter 12: Residences***

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

#### **General discussion**

Christchurch's domestic architecture is overwhelmingly dominated by individual, single-family dwellings on their own sections. This is a New Zealand-wide situation but Christchurch's housing stocks differs from that of some other New Zealand towns and cities because the ready availability of flat land and because the city had an architectural tradition that was distinct from the traditions of Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin. The houses of Christchurch range from tiny cottages on small sections to large mansions with extensive grounds. The general spread of housing and the distribution of larger houses were determined by transport modes at different periods and by social and then planning factors. There are large tracts of medium-sized houses on quarter-acre sections. These range from villas of various sorts built from the late 19th into the early 20th centuries, through bungalows that were an amalgam of influences from England and California in the inter-war years, to state housing in the immediate pre-war and post-war years and on into the speculative building from the late 1950s of, especially for a time, the brick veneer 'bungalow'.

All styles of domestic architecture ever used in Christchurch are still represented in the existing housing stock, but the extent to which Christchurch's domestic architecture differs from those of Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin has not been systematically investigated.

The street pattern in most areas until well into the 20th century followed the pattern set by the original survey of inner Christchurch of wide straight streets intersecting mostly at right angles. (Though in some areas, such as parts of Sydenham, St Albans and Merivale there were areas of narrow streets laid out irregularly, and in most others there was no regularity of block size, as there was in the original city in the area within Salisbury, Barbadoes and St Asaph Streets and Rolleston Avenue.) In post-war years the street patterns of subdivisions showed greater variety, notably with the introduction of gentle curves and cul-de-sacs.

Though the detached house was overwhelmingly dominant, Christchurch did gain a few examples of 'row' housing and the 1920s and the 1930s saw the start of building blocks of flats.

The notable features of housing development in the last two decades have been the building of multi-unit blocks (low, medium and high rise) in the inner city, 'infill' housing in inner suburbs and, especially following the changes to the planning regime introduced by the Resource Management Act, a further episode of peripheral expansion (breaching the former 'green belt') of single-family, single-storey houses on extensive tracts, but with individually smaller sections than in most residential areas of the past.

## Relevant listings

By a rough count there are more than 230 *residential buildings* (including blocks of flats) on the existing list. (Six of the listings are blocks of flats and four of these date from the inter-war years.)

The present listings appear to be weighted heavily in favour of larger, older houses of architectural interest or associated with prominent personalities in the city's history. But some important smaller dwellings are included in the listings.

Age appears to have been an important consideration in adding a house to the list and to be a criterion applied consistently and reasonably uniformly. Age appears to have been regarded as increasing the value of any individual dwelling listed. By contrast association with a person of historic significance appears to have been applied quite randomly as a criterion.

Assessing the current listings is complicated by the fact that a large number of houses (especially in groups or concentrations) are already *identified* by inclusion in a special amenity area, but this is not comparable with listing.

## Further possible listings

There appears to be a need for clarification of the criteria applied when assessing dwellings for listing – age, type, architectural style, architect, association with an important individual, uniqueness, international significance.

The value apparently given in the past to the age of houses when assessing them for listing means one of the major gaps is that there are very few *modern houses* (for example houses by Paul Pascoe, Don Donnithorne and Sir Miles Warren among others) listed. This omission should be made good after the research requirement (see below) has been met.

The task of assessing whether more houses or other dwellings should be added to the lists should be undertaken in conjunction with further studies of the heritage values of houses (and ancillary buildings and general streetscapes) included in the special amenity and neighbourhood improvement areas (Refer Map 18), especially those with a coherent architectural character. Special amenity areas for which this should be made a high priority include #30 (Inner East), #8 and #8b (Fendalton & Heathfield), #39 (Mays, Chapter, Weston and Knowles Streets), #11 (Heaton and Circuit Streets), #17 & #17a (Hackthorne and Dyers Pass Roads and Macmillan Avenue), #27 (Otley and Ely Streets), #20 (Rastrick and Tonbridge Streets), #21 (Gilbey and Englefield Streets), #9 (River Road), #35 (The Spur). Special amenity areas which should be given a medium priority include #18 (The Esplanade), #10 & #10a (Slater, Poulton and Dudley Streets), #4 (Aynsley Terrace), #7 (Totara, Hinau and Puriri Streets), #1 (Heathcote Valley), #2 (Beckenham Loop) and #6 (Tika and Piko Streets and Shand Crescent).

## **Bibliographic note**

Most of the titles which cover houses are included in Section IV, Architecture, of the annotated bibliography. Individual houses are included in books in Section III, Defined areas of the city, specific suburbs etc. There is material on the social aspects of housing and of residential growth in several titles, including Rice, *Christchurch Changing* and Eldred-Grigg's *New History. New Zealand Architecture* by Peter Shaw also sets domestic architectural developments in Christchurch within a national context.

## **Further research**

A typological study of housing design through all the different periods of residential development (including into modern times) would pave the way for an informed evaluation of the present lists and of the value of the special amenity areas as a tool for identifying important parts of the city's historic housing stock. Such a study is necessary to be able to establish satisfactorily that all housing types and styles are adequately represented in the listings. A neighbourhood focus when specific house types or areas are being researched with a view to possible listing could be helpful

A particular area needing research is houses built since the end of World War II.