

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 350
*REDCLIFFS TRAM/BUS SHELTER, WALL AND SETTING –
145F, 167 MAIN ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 2015

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical and social values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular person, group, organisation, institution, event, phase or activity; the continuity and/or change of a phase or activity; social, historical, traditional, economic, political or other patterns.

The Redcliffs Tram/Bus Shelter and Stone Wall have historical and social significance because of their relationship to transportation history in Christchurch. The Tram Shelter was built in 1934 and was known as the 'Pratt Street Tram Shelter', in order to differentiate it from the Moncks Bay Shelter further to the east. Pratt Street first appears in street directories in 1910 and was named after Frederick Pratt, a member of the Sumner Borough Council and later Mayor of Sumner. Pratt Street was re-named Wakatu Avenue on 1 September 1948 when 120 streets were re-named.

The construction of the Tram Shelter was jointly funded by the Sumner Borough Council, Christchurch Tramway Board and the Main Highways Department at a total cost of £50. The tram service operated between Christchurch and Sumner from 1887, with an electric tram service opening in 1905 and the final tram running in Christchurch in 1954. Construction of the lengthy beachfront stone wall, a portion of which runs behind the Tram Shelter, was

carried out in stages. Work began in 1926 and was completed in 1942. It was built to mitigate the threat of flooding due to rising water levels in the estuary. The section of the wall to the west of the shelter originally incorporated a short flight of steps down to Sumner Beach where at high tide, a swimming hole formed that was used by locals for many years. The Tram shelter is today used as a bus stop and therefore continues its use in the transportation history of Christchurch.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural and spiritual values that demonstrate or are associated with the distinctive characteristics of a way of life, philosophy, tradition, religion, or other belief, including: the symbolic or commemorative value of the place; significance to Tangata Whenua; and/or associations with an identifiable group and esteemed by this group for its cultural values.

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of work and social life engendered by the city's tram network, specifically the tramway on the Christchurch to Sumner line. The tramway has been called the first 'revolution' in transport in Christchurch and it had a major impact on the growth of the city, particularly after the introduction of electric trams in 1905. As the public transport network was extended it meant people could live at greater distances from their places of work and the introduction of trams therefore spurred the peripheral residential growth of Christchurch (Wilson et al, 2005).

The Sumner area was recognised early on as one of Canterbury's health spots along with New Brighton and became a popular resort for city residents. The extension of the city tramway in 1888 saw a surge in Sumner's popularity, as recreation users and day trippers from Christchurch enjoyed Sumner as a beach resort. Sumner's popularity surged again when the tram line was electrified in 1907.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural and aesthetic values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular style, period or designer, design values, form, scale, colour, texture and material of the place.

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have architectural and aesthetic significance as the Tram Shelter was constructed by the stonemason William Vaughn in 1934 assisted by several men who were on the 'Unemployed List'. The 'Unemployed List' was part of a Government relief scheme set up during the Depression of the 1930s.

The Tram Shelter is a single storey structure with a hipped roof and long open walls that face both the street front and the beachfront. Two unglazed window openings are positioned at either end of the Shelter, which is identical in design from both sides. The Shelter has built-in seating, a central supporting column, and bracketed eaves. The specifications for positioning the shelter wall were set by the Christchurch Tramway Board, "such that a three-car train can stand at rest in its new position without interfering with the view at Simpson's corner" (CCC Heritage Files). Construction of the section of stone wall to the rear of the shelter was completed in 1942, eight years after the shelter was built and both items are in keeping with Arts and Crafts principles because of their use of locally sourced materials and their relationship to its natural environment setting.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Technological and craftsmanship values that demonstrate or are associated with: the nature and use of materials, finishes and/or technological or constructional methods which were innovative, or of notable quality for the period.

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have technological and craftsmanship significance due to their method of construction and the materials used. The Tram Shelter is made of local stone, timber, cedar shingles, and a cast iron fluted column. The Stone Wall is made of local stone and the method of construction includes reinforced concrete. All materials and workmanship had to be approved by the Borough Engineer.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contextual values that demonstrate or are associated with: a relationship to the environment (constructed and natural), a landscape, setting, group, precinct or streetscape; a degree of consistency in terms of type, scale, form, materials, texture, colour, style and/or detail; recognised landmarks and landscape which are recognised and contribute to the unique identity of the environment.

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter, Stone Wall and setting have high contextual significance as the form and materials of both the shelter and wall use local stone and are in keeping with their seaside location. The Tram Shelter and Stone Wall provide a continuous link along the Monck's Bay waterfront giving it landmark significance and streetscape value. The setting includes the immediate area around the Shelter and Stone Wall including the pedestrian path, small area of foreshore, and surrounding *Phoenix canariensis* (Phoenix palms) that were planted at a later date. The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall also relate to the Scarborough Clock Tower, which was also built in 1934 by the Sumner Borough Council using unemployed men on the Government relief scheme.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological or scientific values that demonstrate or are associated with: the potential to provide information through physical or scientific evidence an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter, Stone Wall and setting have archaeological significance because they have potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. The Sumner area was a mahinga kai area for early Maori and there are several significant archaeological locations in the nearby area including Moa Bone Point Cave and Moncks Cave in Redcliffs.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The Redcliffs Tram Shelter, Stone Wall and setting have overall heritage significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have historical and social significance because of their relationship to the development of the tram network and, more generally, the city's transportation history. The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life engendered by the tram network and the provision of public transportation to access Christchurch's seaside suburbs. The Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have architectural and aesthetic significance for their Arts and Crafts design by stonemason William Vaughn. The Redcliffs

Tram Shelter and Stone Wall have technological and craftsmanship significance for their construction from local stone by Vaughn and a group of men on relief work. The Redcliffs Tram Shelter, Stone Wall and setting have high contextual significance as their form and materials relate to the immediate seaside environment and they are a landmark along the Monck's Bay waterfront. Archaeological significance is attributed to their potential to provide archaeological evidence prior to 1900, particularly as the Sumner area was a known mahinga kai for early Maori and there are several significant archaeological sites nearby.

REFERENCES:

Christchurch City Council Heritage files *Main Road/Wakatu Avenue, Redcliffs Tram Shelter and Stone Wall*

Christchurch City Libraries Street and Place Names. (updated December 2009). *Wakatu Avenue*. Retrieved 10 December 2009 from <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/PlaceNames/>

De Their, W. (1976). *Sumner to Ferrymead: A Christchurch History*. Christchurch: Pegasus.

Wilson, J; et al. (2005). *Contextual Historical Overview for Christchurch City*.

REPORT DATED: 12 MARCH 2015

PLEASE NOTE THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF WRITING. DUE TO THE ONGOING NATURE OF HERITAGE RESEARCH, FUTURE REASSESSMENT OF THIS HERITAGE ITEM MAY BE NECESSARY TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ITS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.

PLEASE USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CCC HERITAGE FILES.