

# HERITAGE

## *What is it?*

***Our heritage is all that we have inherited from the past that connects the community in the present and that guides the community toward the future.***

## *Why is this important?*

An understanding of our heritage values uniquely define both our community and personal sense of self identity and place. Heritage values derive from the evidence of the past, people and their activities, associations and beliefs, and the unique qualities of our places for the Tangata Whenua and our diverse communities.



Heritage values are intrinsic to our built and natural environment - buildings, places, spaces, objects, archaeological, ecological and wāhi tapu sites, which uniquely define Christchurch and Banks Peninsula. Heritage values may be tangible and embodied in our physical environment, or intangible and comprise the association of our shared knowledge and beliefs.

## *Data*

Our heritage can be protected through both statutory and community processes, but community participation, advocacy and commitment are essential. The Resource Management Act provides for the protection of heritage as a matter of national importance for the avoidance or mitigation of adverse effects on heritage values. The Christchurch City Plan<sup>1</sup> and the Banks Peninsula District Plan identify items of heritage value which we as a community consider to be of particular significance.<sup>2</sup> However, there are many types of heritage and items of lesser heritage significance which are not included for protection through the district plans.

Significant heritage protection has also been achieved by community groups. In many instances protection can be provided through the community and the Christchurch City Council which can contribute through heritage advocacy and advice, grants, loans, covenants and heritage trusts. For example the Sydenham Heritage Trust worked with the Council to purchase the Sydenham Heritage Church in 2001.<sup>3</sup>

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) is the national historic heritage agency and is funded through the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Its work, powers and functions are prescribed by the Historic Places Act 1993. The NZHPT retains regulatory responsibilities regarding archaeological sites and provides advice to Tangata Whenua on the conservation and protection of Māori heritage.

The Public Records Act 2005 requires the Council to archive documents relevant to the history and heritage of the community, and to provide these as an information resource for current and future generations.

<sup>1</sup> The Christchurch City Plan also includes Heritage Policies for Tangata Whenua, Protected Trees, Public Awareness and Heritage Assistance.

<sup>2</sup> The Categories of Heritage Significance and the Criteria for heritage listing are included in Christchurch City Plan, Volume 2, Section 4 'City Identity, Objective 4.3 'Heritage protection' and Policy 4.3.1 'Heritage Items' (Explanation and reasons).

<sup>3</sup> The Church was damaged in the 2011 February earthquake and was demolished subsequently.

Prior to the Canterbury earthquakes the District Plans for Christchurch and Banks Peninsula included 589 and 335 listed heritage buildings, places and objects respectively.<sup>4</sup> In Christchurch the central city contained 308 heritage items were recognised as being of high heritage significance.

### ***Impact on inequalities***

At this stage, it is difficult to determine what are the impacts on inequalities will be. The red zoning and demolition of many buildings has left many gaps across the city. These abandoned lots can be targets for graffiti and other anti social behaviours that can make people who live near them feel marginalised and unsafe. The Greening the Rubble Trust is a community project for Christchurch which creates temporary public parks and gardens on sites of demolished buildings on commercial streets. These sites are in public use until owners are ready to redevelop – which might be from six months to a few years later.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Solutions***

Financial resources for the recovery of heritage buildings include the Canterbury Earthquake Heritage Buildings Fund<sup>6</sup>, The Council Heritage Incentive Fund<sup>7</sup>, Council Annual Plan line item funding<sup>8</sup>, Lotteries Board Grants – Environment and Heritage, and Local Community Trusts. In addition the Council owns and manages over 70 listed heritage assets which are provided with financial support which represent a considerable investment in the heritage of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula.

The principal requirements for retention and recovery of heritage buildings are the need to have a use for the building which can support economic returns, and the financial resources to repair and upgrade the building. Adaptive re-use may be required to ensure that a heritage building can have a continuing use. The post-earthquake cordoning of the Central Business District has further created a city wide dispersion of businesses, leaving a number of remaining heritage buildings without use or access. The time frame and the scale of the return to use for these buildings are uncertain.

Little data has been obtained regarding the state of non-building heritage objects such as trees and ecological sites post earthquake. Whilst efforts have been made to retain trees within red zoned residential areas, this may not be possible when demolition of houses takes place. The Avon-Otakaro Network [AvON] is a network of individuals and organisations promoting the future use of the residential red zone lands as an ecological and recreational reserve.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Connections with other issues***

Arts and Culture, Social Connectedness, Urban Design, and Open and Green Space.

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<sup>4</sup> The Christchurch heritage listings are included in the City Plan Volume 3, Part 10 'Heritage and Amenities', Appendix 1, 2, and 2A.

<sup>5</sup> <http://greeningtherubble.org.nz/wp>

<sup>6</sup> Funds are from donations with an equivalent fund match from Central Government up to \$5 million.

<sup>7</sup> The Heritage Incentive Fund has been operative since the 1990s and currently receives an annual budget of \$763,000.

<sup>8</sup> For example an annual grant to the Arts Centre Trust Board is currently of \$800,000.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.avonotakaronetwork.co.nz/>

## *Impact of the earthquakes*

*As time passes and these papers are updated the initial sections on the impact of the earthquake are going to be kept as an archive of what we thought the situation was at the time. Updates where possible are provided.*

### **As at August 2012**

As a consequence of the earthquakes and subsequent demolitions, 117 of the 309 listed heritage items in central Christchurch have been demolished. The City Council has reported that 29% listed heritage items have been demolished in the whole of Christchurch. Almost 10% of the heritage items in Banks Peninsula have been demolished. The future of many of the remaining heritage buildings is uncertain, in particular those which are already partially demolished.

The Building Act 2004 provides for building construction to ensure life and safety to building occupants. The minimum Building Code for seismic strengthening in Canterbury has been raised to 34% of New Building Strength (NBS) following the 2010 Canterbury earthquakes. This NBS is a minimum statutory requirement for strengthening existing buildings which meets life safety requirements, but not the protection or integrity of a heritage building or fabric.

The economic cost to meet Building Code requirements are a significant contributor to the loss of heritage buildings. Seismic strengthening costs have now been considerably increased. Improvements to buildings for seismic strengthening also trigger a further need to meet additional Building Code standards for example for fire protection and disabled access.<sup>10</sup>

Heritage values continue to change as our community evolves over time. Where there is a sense of continuity in the recognition and understanding of our heritage, then our self-identity is reinforced. Where this sense of continuity is seriously disrupted then our ability to retain our sense of community and personal identity can be significantly tested. The Canterbury earthquakes since 2010 have been responsible for a substantial dislocation both to our communities and our heritage.<sup>11</sup>

### **As at November 2011**

The Canterbury earthquakes have had a significant impact on the city's built heritage. Close communication and liaison is needed between local and national government heritage planners and managers and community members, groups and associations interested in preserving and rebuilding heritage. There is a need for plans and policies regarding the management of heritage buildings that remain as well as funding and incentives for repairing and strengthening buildings. Where possible, building materials should be reused and the community involved in their re-use or disposal.

Earthquake damage to heritage items such as trees, historical objects (such as those stored in museums and structures such as monuments) and ecological heritage sites is unknown at present but will need to be considered in future planning for the city.

Prepared by Christchurch City Council and Community and Public Health.

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<sup>10</sup> Of all previous Council Heritage Incentive Grants for the conservation and maintenance of heritage buildings, over 60% of the grant costs were used to meet Building Code standards.

<sup>11</sup> A sense of place and identity is contributed to by both contemporary and heritage buildings. In the Christchurch Central Business District within the 'red zone' it has been estimated that up to 80% of buildings will be demolished.