

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH025
HERITAGE ITEM NAME Queen's Monument
ADDRESS Darnley Square, cnr Cass and Davie Streets, Kaiapoi
PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 22 December 2018)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. New **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Part RS 320

VALUATION NUMBER 2175226900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1901

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** JB Mansfield, monumental mason

STYLE Figurative obelisk

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Plinth mounted on stepped base is topped by statue of a winged angel. Figure faces east, has downcast head, wears a loose robe and bears flowers. Memorial tablets mounted on each face of the plinth; only the east one is inscribed. Draped cloth decorative effect crowns plinth below figure. Paved surround.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Marble, concrete.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Unknown, if any.

SETTING

The Queen's Monument stands near the centre of Darnley Square, which is bounded by Davie and Cass Streets to the north-west and north-east respectively. Pedestrian access to the reserve is also via Williams Street. An asphalt path laid diagonally through the reserve leads to and from the monument. The scheduled setting is the immediate environs of the memorial, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the site as a whole.

HISTORY

Victoria Day 1901 (24 May, aka Empire Day) was chosen for the unveiling of what was claimed to be the first monument erected in the British Empire to commemorate the death of Queen Victoria on 22 January 1901. The memorial had been proposed by local carter, flax dresser and ship owner John Sims (1831-1919) and its funding and erection was overseen by a committee that also included the then Mayor E Feldwick. Mayor J Daly presided over the unveiling by Feldwick's daughter, which involved the handing over of the monument to the borough council. In 1903 Darnley Square was described as 'a common rendezvous, especially in times when the public heart is reached by some event of a joyous or sorrowful nature' (*Cyclopaedia of NZ*, p. 422); more recently it has been the site of a playground and the foreground of a number of community and recreational facilities.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has high historic and social significance for its association with the local commemoration of Queen Victoria's life and reign. The monument was hailed as the first memorial erected 'in the colonies' after the monarch's death in January 1901; it preceded all but one of the four statues of the queen that were erected in the four main centres in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Queen's Monument also represents local feelings of allegiance to the British monarchy and an awareness and appreciation that the length of the queen's reign coincided with the colonial history of New Zealand.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has cultural value as a place of community identity and historic continuity.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has aesthetic significance as a conventional Edwardian funerary memorial topped by a winged angel which was described as representing 'Peace and Purity' when it was unveiled. The iconography of the monument is suggestive of mourning, in contrast to the statues of Queen Victoria erected in the four main centres that emphasised her historic legacy and imperial status.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has craftsmanship significance for its materials and execution. The mason responsible for the monument was Joseph Bolton Mansfield of Christchurch. Mansfield had taken over the business of J Sheriff (est. 1863) in c.1883; the firm was later styled as JB Mansfield and Sons. Given the brief time between the decision to erect the monument and its unveiling it is probable that Mansfield already had the Grecian marble angel figure in stock.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has contextual significance as a local historic feature within the setting of Darnley Square. The presence of the memorial in the reserve speaks to the park's historic role and visibility within the community. The memorial also has a relationship with the former Sims house in Williams Street (H023).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the memorial post-dates 1900, its site may have potential archaeological significance relating to its 19th century use and development. The reserve was set aside when the town was first surveyed and was the initial location of St Bartholomew's Anglican Church (1855-60).

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Queen's Monument has high overall heritage significance to Kaiapoi and to the district of Waimakariri as a whole. The memorial has high historic and social significance for its association with the life and reign of Queen Victoria and local sentiments in that regard and cultural value given its commemorative purpose. The Queen's Monument has aesthetic significance for its design and iconography and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its design and execution by JB Mansfield. The Queen's Monument has contextual significance as a local historic feature and its site may have potential archaeological values relating to its mid-19th century use and development.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 30 April 1901, p. 6; 25 May 1901, p. 5; 5 December 1908, p. 11.
- *Lyttelton Times* 3 May 1901, p. 4; 25 May 1901, p. 2.
- *Star* 25 January 1883, p. 2; 23 March 1900, p. 1; 25 May 1901, p. 6; 5 December 1908, p. 5.
- *Evening Post* 27 May 1901, p. 4.
- *Sun* 22 October 1919, p. 4.
- *Thames Star* 31 May 1901, p. 2.
- M Dunn *New Zealand Sculpture – A History* Auckland, 2002.
- <https://libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz/heritage/local-history/places-of-the-waimakariri/kaiapoi/a-history-of-the-parks-and-reserves-of-kaiapoi>
- <https://sites.google.com/site/samhistmakers/history-sites/british-empire-1/-6-queen-victoria-statues>
- <http://ketechristchurch.peoplesnetworknz.info/en/site/topics/show/2092-monumental-stonemasons-who-worked-in-linwood-cemetery#.XRu-uC2B1EI>
- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc03Cycl-t1-body1-d4-d1-d1.html>
- M Stocker 'Queen Victoria Memorials in New Zealand: A Centenary Appraisal' *Bulletin of New Zealand Art History* Vol. 22, 2001, pp. 7-28.

REPORT COMPLETED

2 July 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, limited to immediate environs of the monument, Darnley Square, Kaiapoi.



Dr A McEwan.



Gravestones on display at Mansfield's yard, Christchurch, c.1910. 1/1-004356-G, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.