

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH095
HERITAGE ITEM NAME Oxford Fallen Soldiers' War Memorial
ADDRESS Pearson Park, 54 Main Street, Oxford

PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 10 July 2019)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION RS 41868

VALUATION NUMBER 2153243900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1923

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Unknown

STYLE Obelisk

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Classical obelisk with square cross-section and stepped base. Inscribed panels and attached plaques below pedimented copings; narrow band beneath obelisk bears inscribed mottoes.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Granite, concrete.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Addition of further names commemorating service in World War II (date unknown). Adjacent gates and perimeter fencing replaced (c.1950?).

SETTING

The war memorial is located in Pearson Park near the southern boundary of the land parcel. The domain is bounded by Main Street to the south and access to the memorial and broader park setting is via entrance gates to the east and west of the memorial. The extent of setting is limited to the immediate environs of the memorial but includes the nearby entrance gates, the western gates being inset with World War I and II memorial plaques.

HISTORY

After differences of opinion as to the nature of the war memorial to be erected in Oxford were resolved, tenders for a column type memorial were called in June 1922. In December of the same year the list of names proposed for inscription on the monument were put on display at the local Farmers' Co-operative store. The monument was duly unveiled on ANZAC Day (April 25) 1923 by Lieut-Col. EB Millton of Birch Hill Station. The memorial remains the focus for local ANZAC Day commemorations.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford War Memorial has historic and social significance for its association with the local commemoration of World War I and II and, more generally, the proliferation of ornamental war memorials that were erected throughout New Zealand in the 1920s. It is directly connected to the people, and their families, whose names are inscribed upon the monument.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford War Memorial has cultural significance as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The memorial has commemorative significance and remains the focus for local ANZAC Day commemorations.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford War Memorial has aesthetic value as a conventional obelisk type monument which combines classical motifs with funerary associations.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford War Memorial has craftsmanship value for the quality of its stone construction and detailing. The maker of the monument is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford War Memorial has contextual significance as a historic feature within Pearson Park and for its landmark quality on Oxford's principal thoroughfare.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the memorial post-dates 1900, any potential archaeological significance of the site would likely relate to its earlier use and development. Oxford Domain was renamed Pearson Park in 1889.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Oxford Fallen Soldiers' War Memorial has overall heritage significance to Oxford and the district of Waimakariri. The memorial has historical and social significance for its association with the local men who died serving in World War I and II and cultural significance given its commemorative purpose. The Oxford War Memorial has aesthetic value as a conventional obelisk type monument and craftsmanship value for the quality of its stone construction and detailing. The Oxford War Memorial has contextual significance as a historic feature within Pearson Park and the Oxford town centre. Any potential archaeological values of the site would likely relate to the colonial use and development of the domain.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 8 May 1922, p. 4; 15 May 1922, p. 3; 21 June 1922, p. 15; 23 December 1922, p. 18; 30 January 1923, p. 3; 21 April 1923, p. 1; 27 April 1923, p. 4; 30 April 1923, p. 3.
- *Lyttelton Times* 31 May 1889, p. 6.
- J Phillips & C Maclean *The Sorrow and the Pride – New Zealand War Memorials* Wellington, 1990.
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/oxford-war-memorial>

REPORT COMPLETED

12 June 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of setting, including park gates and limited to immediate environs, Pearson Park, 54 Main Street, Oxford.



The memorial in c.1925, with the Coronation Hall (demolished) to its east. Pan-0060-F, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.