

Historic Heritage Hearing notes – BPHT submission

Slide 1 – logo of BPHT

Kia ora,

I am Jane Batchelor, speaking on behalf of the BPHT.

Background to the Trust:

BPHT is registered charitable trust formed by the BP Residents Assoc. in 2000.

Catalyst- the potential move of historic church building to Mt Cook

The aim- to foster the heritage of BP area including its buildings/structures, social and natural history.

I have been chair of BPHT for 25 years involved in advocating for the area, fundraising and carrying out a multitude of projects including restoration of heritage structures including the church, cob cottages, cemetery hut, improving public amenities such as the Heritage Walk and ~~traffic issues~~ communicating with several hundred supporters, multi generations of families and volunteers via newsletters, social media, web site, email and written publications. People have entrusted their stories including 11 professional oral histories now lodged with the South Canterbury Museum, an archive of video interviews, photographs, 100s of hours of voluntary time and artifacts ~~donated~~ in the hope that they will be treasured, available and assist Burkes Pass to thrive for the future.

In addition I have run the Trust nursery that has propagated and provided several thousand local native plants, we have established a river restoration project with Arowhenua Native Nursery and have networked with multiple agencies including NZTA, local and regional councils.

Slide 2 – two versions of Overlay

The main points of this submission are:

1) Heritage Overlay of Te Kopi-o-te Opihi

- the Trust opposes the notified version and strongly supports a return to the more continuous version proposed by Richard Knott the Heritage Consultant that was consulted on in July 2024, had 75% supportive feedback to the council to provide adequate protection to heritage values and legibility.
- We believe that it is essential to have the building rules proposed with this July version that provide for new builds to be complementary to the existing heritage in addition to retaining the fencing rule.

2) Strongly support the new additions to the Heritage schedule and retaining the existing ones. The Trust has proposed considering adding to the schedule two new pou recently installed either side of Burkes Pass by NZTA, one in the township and the other in the drive off area near Dog Kennel Corner.

3) Strongly support the recommendations of Richard Knott and the s42a report with minor alternative preferences.

I would like to spend most of the first 15 minutes on the Heritage Overlay issues using some images and allow the final 15 minutes for discussion and any questions.

The Heritage Values of Te Kopi-o-Opihi/BP are ~~indisputable~~ and have ~~S~~ several layers.

The area has ancient deep cultural roots for mana whenua with several place names and geographical features having maori names that are descriptive but mostly no longer used. The township is a more recent layer. *Pakihi - o - māhī kōrora*

Burkes Pass township is a VERY RARE EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, unique in Canterbury and an incredible asset to the Mackenzie District.

Slide 3- waste lands book 1850's

170 years ago, in 1855, when Europeans began to discover this area, a land rush began and this event was significant on a local and national scale with all the consequences that followed. The pass was an easy route to Te Manahuna, the Mackenzie basin, (the largest basin in NZ, about 269 thousand hectares) and people rapidly began to take up this enormous area of 'Waste Lands' for pastoral farming. Pastoralism has had a profound effect on New Zealand's history and its landscape, and shaped our local community.

In response to this

In 1859 Edward Dobson recommended to the Provincial Council "I think it very desirable to reserve a site for a Township on the West side of Burkes Pass. The town would be a central depot for wool, coal, timber, and stores for a very large district." The aim of this township was to support this land rush. To function successfully it required a number of interdependent elements, needed for people, horses and stock, workers and their families, travelers, freight and transport. Sensibly the site Dobson identified west of the pass was not used due to geography and weather, but grew up instead around the Accommodation House/hotel east of the pass.

Slide 4 – Long cutting

The following year in 1860 the Long Cutting made travel over the pass easier.

When viewed from ground level:

Slide 5 – BP 1870's hotel and tussocks

The new township was settled, functioned successfully and the resulting early amenities are largely what we see today.

Slide 6 – BP 1880 distant view with more buildings added school etc seen along the Heritage Walk

Slide 7 – closer view of main street 1870's

Some individual elements of the township that were included in the continuous Overlay include:

Slides 8-15

- 8. The hotel and stables (*first license in Mackenzie granted in 1861, accommodation for travelers, horses and central communication centre, telephone/post office in 1891, justice hearings etc*)
- 9. Church Cat 1 building (*1871 earliest union church on orig site in NZ, also social meeting place, post distribution*)
- 10. Former Paddys market Homestead/ now BP Accommodation House (*orig built as accomod house but never functioned as one c 1880*)
- 11. Tom Winter's blacksmiths shop site, now motels and Limestone water trough
- 12. Mt Cook Road Board office – Cat 2 (*rare surviving road bd office, concrete, importance of transport/original MDC chambers (1883-1891) – significant, role in early local govt.* *reflected the*

13 Cob cottages, Alma Cat - 2 building, Anniss and Elm Tree – (workers cottages, part of unique collection cob, treeless landscape, once common, now rare) 13d. Preston painting
 14 School and Teachers house (both built 1878) Managers House
 15 Rabbit Board buildings-1950's HQ for Mackenzie District Rabbit Bd to deal with this catastrophic pest that caused devastation to pastoral farming, it was a major employer, involved 4 houses and many out buildings, none apart from the Mt Cook Rd Bd office is on the Heritage Schedule but never the less is an important part of the story of this place.

Not captured in these photographs are:

- Various open space amenities Collie Club grounds, sports field, horse racing, police pound for stray animals, reserves for house cow, school pony paddock, ice rink. Amenities more recently added are the Rural Fire building and sewage pond.
- Social clubs and groups first Mackenzie rugby, cricket, CWI, Caledonian Society- forerunner to the existing Mackenzie Pipe band.

Development slowed after the planned rail link surveyed to connect with the port of Timaru in 1878 did not eventuate by 1883 and as a consequence we have inherited this intact early township.

Future amenities under development are walking track along the Opihi River, the Central South Cycle Trail connecting all the small townships from Washdyke to Lake Tekapo and several small businesses that capitalise on the heritage of the area.

Images from above capturing the most of the important elements of the township:

Slide 16 – Birds eye view of Burkes Pass – E.N 1872-1904

Slide 17 – View from hotel hill 1880

Slide 18 – Google Earth view 2025

In Summary;

1) Heritage Overlay- We have a rare, virtually intact, visible, early European settlement, with most of the functional elements built for its original purpose to provide support to pastoral farming without the distraction of subsequent significant infill and development. **This is a fragile, once only opportunity to retain its legibility,** give it recognition in the DP and be good custodians for the future.

The current overlay notified in November 2024 is little more than the status quo with virtually nothing to address and guide development along this vulnerable strip for the next 30 years. The significant chunks of road frontage removed from the July '24 continuous overlay potentially makes the overlay disjointed and the ability to see it as a whole, difficult or non-existent. The July version had already made compromises with removal of several controversial areas that were possibly less crucial.

Heritage sites and buildings here did not exist in isolation, they were part of a whole community ecosystem, where people were born, went to school, worked, played, developed relationships and died. Just like the Dark Sky is not all about a few individual stars but the total experience, and just as a few specimen trees don't make a forest.

A Heritage Overlay with continuity would enable our stories to be told not just through the images and written word but in a tangible and believable manner.

In addition the continuity by retaining integrity and authenticity of the town creates the potential to be considered as a HNZ designated Heritage Area or a Tohu Whenua for the benefit of the current residents and for future residents, visitors and businesses.

See these benefits in other heritage areas here & overseas.

The Heritage Overlay needs:

- Continuity *+ building rules*
- Fencing rules – not enough on its own as permeability just allows a distracting build to be seen
- Set backs to be 5m minimum
- New builds and extensions to heritage buildings to be non compliant- still provides a pathway for MDC to consider all factors and if less than minor to proceed but it gives a clear message and predictability.

The Trust agrees with Richard Knott that the town has high significance on all criteria not only of local but national importance giving the Mckenzie District an asset to be proud of and to be an advantage in future.

2) BPHT supports the new additions to the Schedule of the School teachers house, Elm Tree cob Cottage and the former Paddys Market/now BP Accommodation House as logical and valuable additions to the fabric of the township and proposes the addition of the two pou

- tell the cultural story and are a mihihi or welcome
- beautifully crafted significant mahi toi/art works making links to ancient history and present day mana whenua
- as part of the heritage stocktake consistent with other items sited on the road reserve e.g. Burke Memorial, Mackenzie memorial, Dog Kennel Corner memorial and the limestone trough.

The Desired Outcome for the Trust

The Trust strongly supports the recommendations of R Knott and the s42a report to return to the version proposed and consulted on with majority support in July 2024.

Advantages - improvement in amenities
 - buy & sell properties, + value & predictability
 - supports small businesses.

- 1 Holiday home owner - supportive of heritage but anxious about incl. sch.t. house
- 2 indiv objections - property has been removed from both versions of overlay.
- Res. Assoc claim - inaccurate as evidenced by plan, survey & submissions & non specific - no detail.