

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE AREA RECORD FORM

HERITAGE AREA NAME Stafford Street (between the Bay Hill and George Street)

ADDRESS 141-341 Stafford Street, Timaru

LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS various (see TDC GIS map)

VALUATION NUMBERS various (see TDC GIS map)

LOCATION



Figure 1: Canterbury Maps.

OVERVIEW

This historic heritage area is comprised of multiple building lots on either side of Stafford Street between the Bay Hill in the north and George Street in the south. A cart track in the early colonial period, Stafford Street developed into Timaru's 'high street' in the later 19th century with development increasing at its northern end as Caroline Bay created a magnet for retailers and hoteliers in the early 20th century.

The historic heritage area is nationally recognised as a late Victorian/Edwardian urban streetscape with a high level of contextual significance and historic authenticity. Building facades are predominantly classical in style and the area demonstrates both the individuality and consistency achieved by a number of notable local architectural practises using the idiom from the 1870s to 1920s.

Currently eight buildings within the proposed area are scheduled in the operative district plan; it is recommended that one of the eight is deleted from the schedule and one new building is added. Eight buildings are listed by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Toanga.



Figure 2: Detail of Coronation Buildings, Stafford Street, Timaru. Dr A McEwan.

SETTING & DISTINCTIVE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- The section of Stafford Street encompassed by the historic heritage area extends on a north-west to south-east axis between the Bay Hill in the north and George Street in the south. Canon, Church, Strathallan and Beswick Streets intersect with Stafford Street within the area; the elevation of the street increases towards the north.
- The layout of Timaru's town centre streets, determined largely by the topography and location of the port relative to the central business district, creates irregular shaped lots along Stafford Street. Consequently a number of buildings, principally on the north-east side of the street (former Hay's Buildings, Stafford Chambers & Orari Buildings), have distinctive, non-standard footprints.
- Buildings are typically two storeys in height, with decorative commercial classical facades and modern shopfronts. Verandas are typically suspended from the building facades.
- The Stafford Street historic heritage area includes within it the Royal Arcade historic heritage area, which extends through to Sophia Street.

HISTORY

In 1856 the Canterbury provincial government sent surveyor Samuel Hewlings to Timaru. By that time it was already anticipated that Timaru would become the site of the main town of South Canterbury. Hewlings surveyed what became known as the 'government town' between North Street and Patiti Point. The expectation in 1856 was that the heart of Timaru would develop in the 'government town' because the sheltered waters immediately north of Patiti Point seemed the natural place for a port to develop. Somewhat confusingly, because it meant North Street was not on the north side of Timaru in its later years, the Rhodes brothers had already

(in 1853) freeholded around 50 hectares north of the 'government town'. On this land, the Rhodes had Edward Lough lay out a rival town. 'Rhodes Town' was immediately inland from the boat landings and it was here, not in the 'government town', that the commercial centre of Timaru became established after 1859.

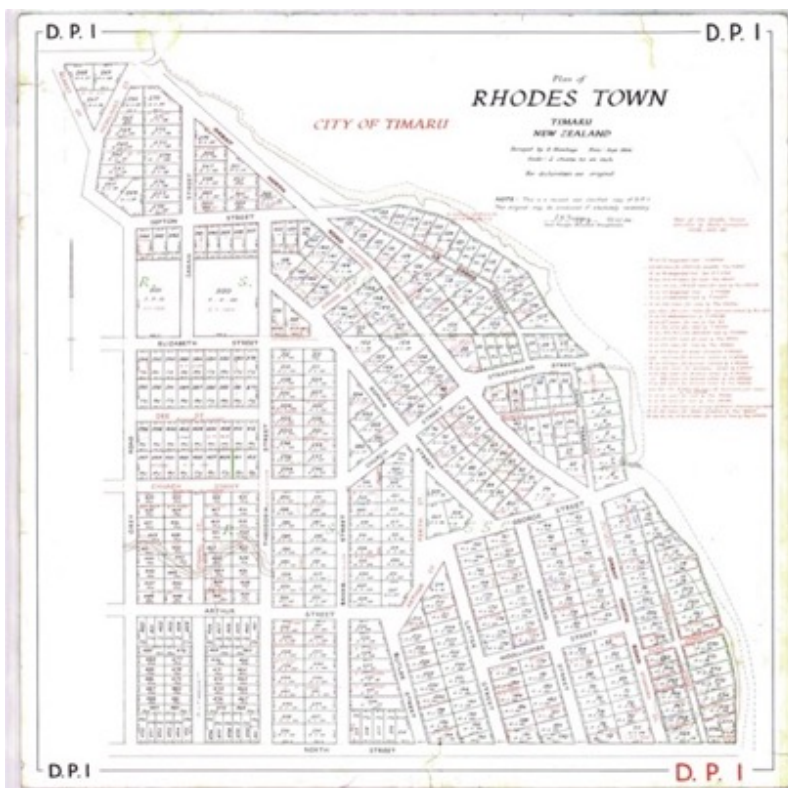


Figure 3: DP 1, Plan of Rhodes Town, Timaru. Surveyed September 1866, redrawn April 1972. LINZ.

By the time of both surveys, what became Stafford Street already existed as a cart track. North of 'Rhodes Town' a track that was later named Evans Street led to the southern edge of the Canterbury Plains and the Levels sheep run. Sections in both the government town and Rhodes Town were slow to sell; most of the first purchasers were speculators rather than people taking up residence in Timaru.

The building of the southern railway in the 1870s, which meant that by the end of the decade passenger and freight trains were running regularly between Christchurch and Dunedin, contributed to Timaru's growth and increasing prosperity through the last two decades of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

From immediately after the disastrous fire of 7 December 1868 until the 1920s Timaru acquired a large number of architecturally-designed commercial buildings. These were concentrated on Stafford Street but also extended along several of the cross-streets. A number of commercial buildings erected before the end of the 19th century survive; including the Old Bank Hotel (1876) and Rhodes' Buildings (1892) on Stafford Street. Notable among the early 20th century buildings erected in Timaru's town centre were 'Tommy' Thomson's Coronation Buildings (1902), the former Hay's Buildings (1907-08), Stafford Chambers (1908), and O'Meeghan's Building (1911-12).



Figure 4: Departure parade on Stafford Street for volunteers of the First NZ Contingent for the South African War, October 1899. 1/2-103242-F, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

The hotels built, or remodelled, in these same years – including the Hydro Grand (demolished) and the Dominion (1872 +) at the north end of Stafford Street and the Grosvenor in Beswick Street – also made an important contribution to Timaru’s modern reputation as one of the best places in the country to view Edwardian architecture.



Figure 5: Stafford Street, c.1915/16. 1/2-006892-G, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

Between the wars there was less new building in Timaru’s commercial heart, but a number of sites along Stafford Street were redeveloped during the 1920s; at the same time as some larger commercial buildings were erected on Sophia Street and Stafford Street south.



WHEN TIMARU IS ON PLEASURE BENT: AN ANIMATED SCENE IN STAFFORD STREET DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON —Green and Hahn

Figure 6: 'When Timaru is on a pleasure bent: An animated scene in Stafford Street during the holiday season' *Auckland Weekly News* 11 July 1934, p. 43. AWNS-19340711-43-1, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections.

When building resumed after World War II a number of Modernist commercial buildings were built in Timaru's business district. In the late 1950s and early 1960s the Perpetual Trustees building running through the block to Cains Terrace and the Bank of New Zealand and MLC buildings overlooking the intersection of George and Stafford Streets signalled the arrival of the International Style to Timaru. At the northern end of Stafford Street Ballantynes department store opened new premises in 1986 on the site, at the corner of Stafford and Canon Streets, on which they had been long established.



Figure 7: Stafford Street, Timaru showing at right the new Perpetual Trustees buildings, c. November 1958. PAColl-8983-52. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

In the late 20th century, when the final stage of re-routing SH 1 away from Stafford Street to the new by-pass to the west of Timaru's downtown was imminent, enhancement of the city's heritage buildings, many of them on or close to Stafford Street, was proposed as one element of the revitalisation of the central business district. Trust Bank South Canterbury was sympathetic to the idea that reinforcing the late Victorian/Edwardian character of the central business district would benefit the city and thus provided low-cost finance to improve and strengthen the facades of commercial buildings on Stafford and other streets.



Figure 8: Looking north along Stafford Street. Dr A McEwan.

HISTORIC NAMES

Stafford Street was known as the Great North Road until September 1889 when it was renamed in honour of Edward Stafford (1819-1901), the former MP for Timaru and Premier of New Zealand on three separate occasions between 1856 and 1872.



Figure 9: Edward Stafford at centre of detail from montage of 1860 Members of the House of Representatives. ½-012439-F, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high historical and social significance as an example of a colonial shopping and commercial thoroughfare that demonstrates the prosperous growth and development of Timaru in the later 19th and early 20th centuries.

Timaru's role as the largest commercial centre in South Canterbury is reflected in the size and architectural quality of many of the buildings on Stafford Street. The development pattern of the street also attests to the impact the development of Caroline Bay as a visitor attraction had upon the townscape, as it encouraged development towards the north end of Stafford Street in the early 20th century.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has cultural value as a site of community identity, esteem and historic continuity since the later 19th century. The street is the focus of the 'Central Timaru Historic Walk' (see below) and is valued as a historic urban space within the central business district. As evidence of the street's importance to local people, a Friends of the South Canterbury Museum event held in January 2009 to share memories of Stafford Street attracted over 150 people.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high architectural and aesthetic significance for its suite of commercial classical style buildings that are associated with a number of prominent local architects and which use a common palette of classical design elements to create a varied but generally unified urban streetscape. The designers of the commercial buildings erected in Stafford Street in the 60 year period between the late 1860s and late 1920s constitute a roll call of Timaru's leading colonial and early 20th century architects; among them Francis Wilson, Daniel West, Thomas Coulthard Mullions, James Turnbull, Maurice Duval, Thomas Lusk, and Herbert Hall.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has technological and craftsmanship significance for the materials and methods used in the buildings lining it. Timaru bluestone, brick and cement plaster are in evidence, reflecting the borough council's requirements to build in masonry after the fire of December 1868 and the craftsmanship of local builders. It is also notable that thousands of residents crowded Stafford Street on Christmas Eve of 1907 to witness the new electric streetlights being turned on for the first time.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high contextual significance as one of the defining urban features of the township of Timaru. The principal and secondary buildings of the historic heritage area constitute notable individual elements within a cohesive group of late Victorian and Edwardian commercial classical style edifices. The general uniformity of height and the way in which the buildings respond to the topography of the street creates an awareness of the landmark qualities of Stafford Street within the central business district.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the land on which the Stafford Street is located has undergone colonial development since the mid 19th century, the historic heritage area has potential archaeological significance. The area has scientific value due to its potential to provide further information about the street's historic use and development for commercial, retail and hospitality purposes.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high overall historic heritage significance to the Timaru district. The historic heritage area has high historical and social value as a late 19th / early 20th century commercial and retail 'high street' and cultural value as a valued site of community heritage value. The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high architectural and aesthetic significance for its commercial classical style buildings by a number of noted local architectural firms and technological and craftsmanship significance for the materials and methods used in its construction. The Stafford Street historic heritage area has high contextual significance as a unique element within Timaru's central business district; one which is recognised nationally for its landmark qualities. Given the development of the street since the early colonial period the area has potential archaeological values; it also has scientific value due to its potential to provide further information about the area's historic use and development.



Figure 10: Stafford Chambers nearing completion, c.1908. 1/1-008714-G, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

EXTENT OF SCHEDULING

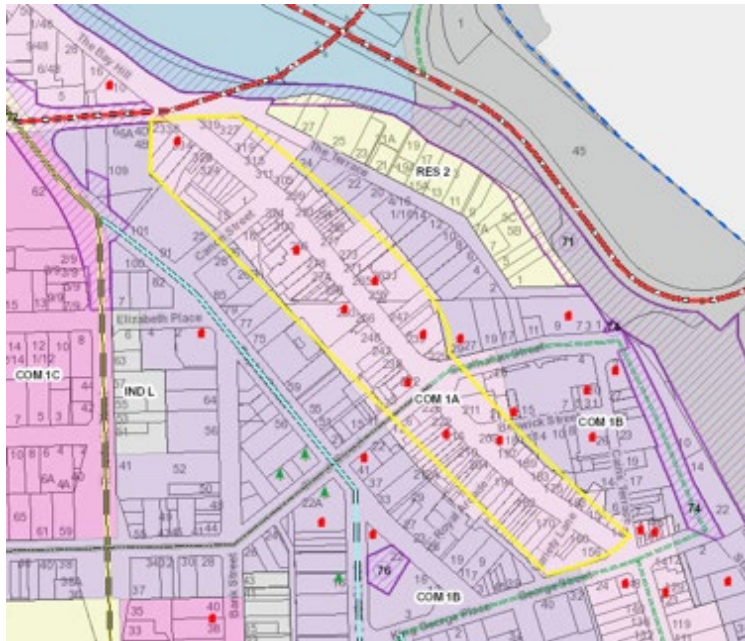


Figure 11: Stafford Street Historic Heritage Area (that portion of the COM 1A zone outlined in yellow).

REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 3 July 1869, p. 5; 15 October 1878, p. 1; 7 September 1891, p. 4; 15 August 1900, p. 3; 23 July 1901, p. 2; 1 January 1902, p. 2; 7 June 1902, p. 3; 14 May 1904, p. 4; 15 March 1909, p. 7; 21 June 1927, p. 1; 10 March 1928, p. 8; 31 January 2009 (available online).
- *South Canterbury Times* 20 September 1889, p. 2.
- *Temuka Leader* 3 August 1878, p. 2.
- *Press* 12 July 1928, p. 15; 13 December 1928, p. 19; 31 July 1935, p. 20.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/edward-stafford>
- <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~nziscant/streets.htm>

* See also, B Bracefield & D Holman 'Timaru Inner City Heritage Audit' (for TDC, May1995) and the individual research files for all scheduled items.

Note: Heritage research reports have been prepared by Heritage Consultancy Services for all scheduled items and for the Royal Arcade historic heritage area, which includes 196 and 200 Stafford Street. The 1995 heritage audit reports and the TDC Built Heritage Google Map have generally been relied on for information relating to the secondary, contributing features within the Stafford Street historic heritage area.

Historic heritage features



Figure 12: Stafford Chambers, 199-209 Stafford Street / 18-22 Beswick Street, 1908; Thomas Coulthard Mullions, architect; HN Hollow, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 13: Rhodes's Buildings, 218, 220, 222, 226 Stafford Street, 1892; M Duval, architect; T Pringle, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 14: former Hay's Buildings, 229-237 Stafford Street, 1907-8; Thomas Coulthard Mullions, architect; Messrs Hunt & Werry, builders. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 15: Old Bank Hotel, 232 Stafford Street, 1876; Daniel West, architect; Henry Thornton, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 16: Coronation Buildings, 256-260 Stafford Street, 1902; JS Turnbull, architect; Messrs Werry & Hunt, builders. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 17: O'Meehan's Buildings, 284-286 Stafford Street, 1911-12; Thomas Lusk, architect. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 18: Dominion Hotel [former Melville Hotel], 334-336 Stafford Street, 1872, 1876, 1886 & 1912; West & Barber, architects (1885/86); Thomas Lusk, architect (1912). Dr A McEwan.



Figure 19: Orari Buildings, 327-341 Stafford Street, 1925; Herbert Hall, architect; JT Hunt, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 20: Priest & Holdgate's Vulcan Warehouse, 1887 (at left) & McKeown buildings, 1902 & 1907 (right). James Hislop, architect & Jones & Palliser, contractors; Vulcan Warehouse. 1902 McKeown's building Daniel West, architect; Messrs Werry & Hunt, builders. 1907 addition, Walter Panton, architect; Palliser & Sons, contractors. Dr A McEwan.

Contributing historic features



Figure 21: former Mays Bakers, 160-162 Stafford Street, 1928. JG Broadhead, contractor. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 22: former Perry & Perry building, 161 Stafford Street, 1869, 1878, 1922; W Williamson, architect; Messrs Sibley & Cliff, contractors (1869); Francis Wilson, architect (1878). Dr A McEwan.



Figure 23: former 'Dominion Butchery', 165 Stafford Street, c.1906. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 24: former Clayton/Hardy building, 167 & 169 Stafford Street, 1902; James Turnbull, architect. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 25: Commercial building, 170-174 Stafford Street, c.1878; Francis Wilson, architect. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 26: former CW Wood building, 173 Stafford Street, 1900; Daniel West, architect; Emil Hall, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 27: McKeown's Building, 176-182 Stafford Street, 1892-93; M Duval, architect. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 28: J Craigie's 'Pareora Buildings', 175A-183 Stafford Street, 1901; J Turnbull, architect; Messrs Hunt & Werry, contractors. Dr A McEwan



Figure 29: 187 Stafford Street, 1892. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 30: former Imrie & Higgins building, 189 Stafford Street, 1885. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 31: former Bank of Australasia, 191-193 Stafford Street, 1905. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 32: former NZ Insurance Co. Ltd building, 197 Stafford Street, pre-1892?. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 33: Durand's Buildings, 202-210 Stafford Street, 1869 + c.1875.



Figure 34: Commercial building, 212-216 Stafford Street, 1877.



Figure 35: Commercial building, 234-236 Stafford Street, c.1883; Francis Wilson, architect, A Sinclair, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 36: Commercial building, 240 Stafford Street, c.1883; Francis Wilson, architect, A Sinclair, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 37: Commercial building, 251 Stafford Street, 1906-8, T Coulthard Mullions, architect. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 38: Shop, 254 Stafford Street, c.1890.



Figure 39: Tekapo Buildings, 255-65 Stafford Street, 1925; Herbert Hall, architect; WJ Harding & Co, builder. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 40: Evans' Buildings [detail], 266-272 Stafford Street, 1904. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 41: Commercial building, 269-71 Stafford Street, 1917. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 42: former Edwards' building, 273 Stafford Street, 1926. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 43: Commercial building, 275 Stafford Street, c.1900. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 44: Commercial building, 277-279 Stafford Street, 1923.



Figure 45: Commercial building, 281 Stafford Street, c.1925.



Figure 46: Commercial building, 283-287 Stafford Street, 1924.



Figure 47: Commercial building, 276 Stafford Street, c.1890. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 48: Commercial building, 295 Stafford Street, 1928. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 49: former Public Bakery building, 298-306 Stafford Street, c.1880. Dr A McEwan.



Figure 50: Commercial building, 332 Stafford Street, 1914 [left] & 326-330 Stafford Street, 1907 [right]. Dr A McEwan.

Maps

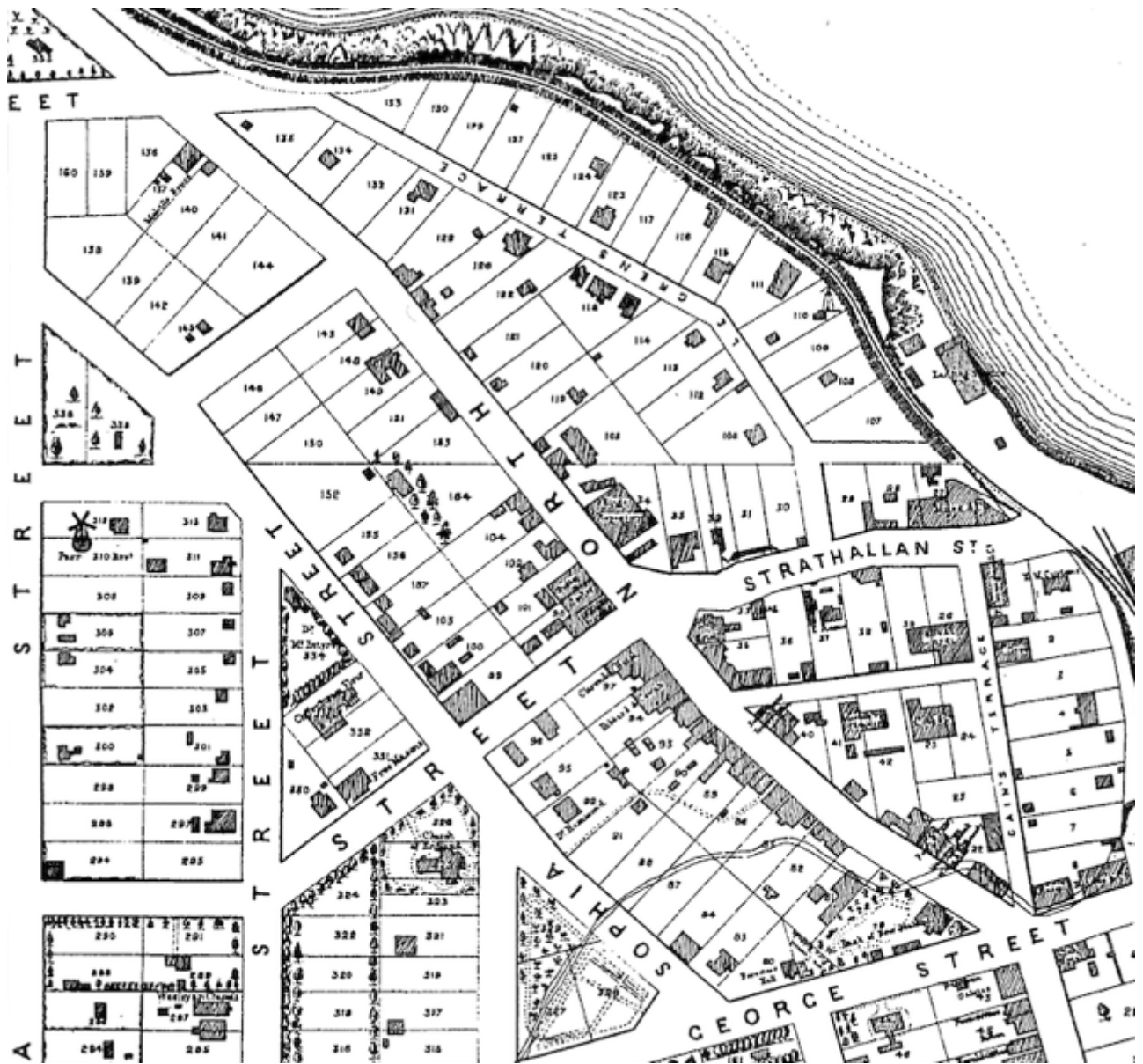


Figure 51: Detail from 1875 'Plan of Timaru Townships' showing Stafford Street development to date. South Canterbury Museum.

No.2 Central Timaru Historic Walk

Time: 30 minutes

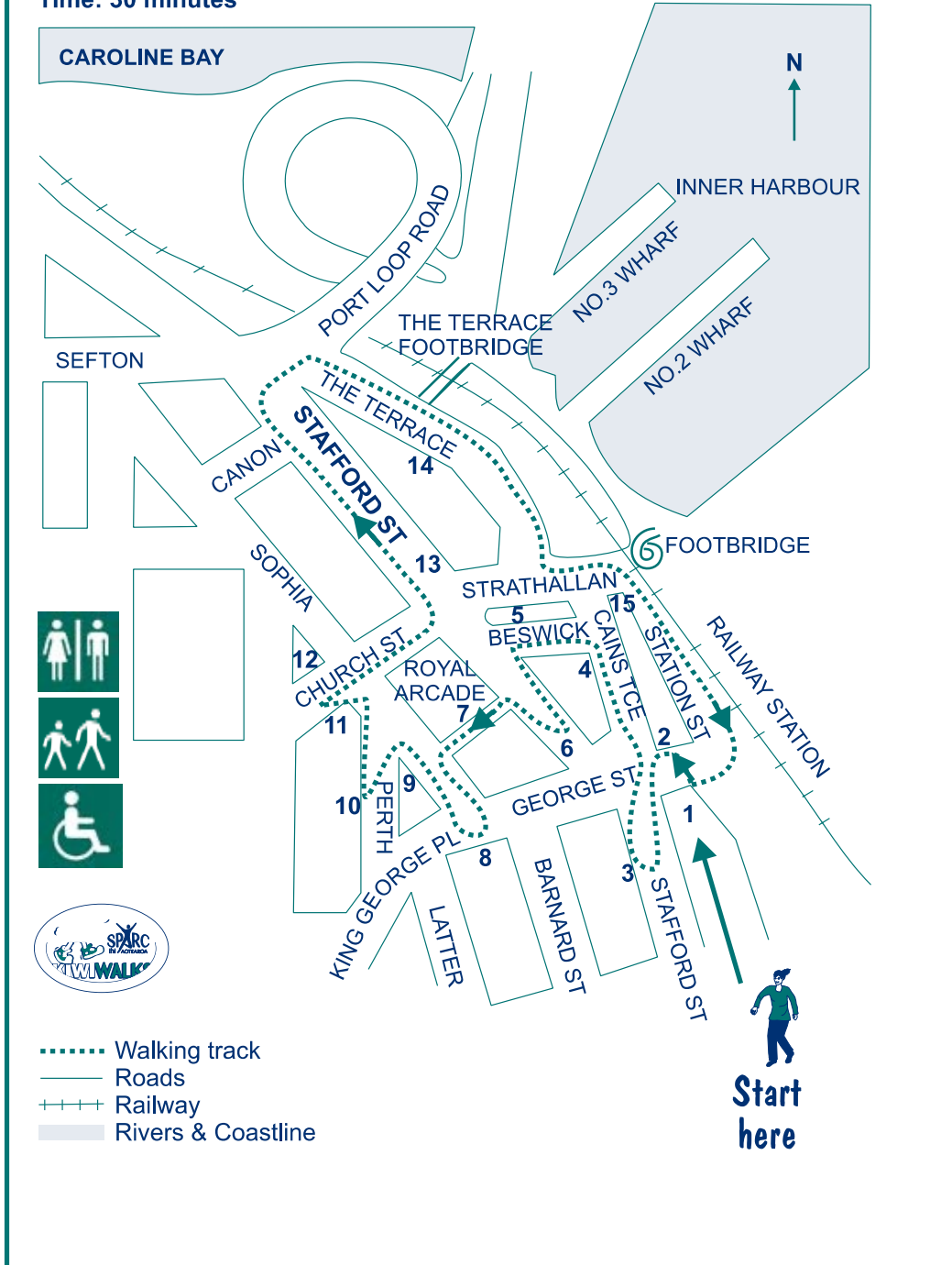


Figure 52: TDC Central Timaru Historic Walk; available online.



Figure 53: TDC Built Heritage Google Map. Brown pins mark structures of historic significance and/or interest; 43 pins are located within the heritage area. Accessed 25 January 2020.