

**TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** former Opihi Hotel  
**ADDRESS** 492 Opihi Road, Totara Valley, Pleasant Point  
**PHOTOGRAPH**



(HNZPT)

**FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** No. 71      **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 3144 / 2  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Lot 1 DP 79411

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2481012700

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1878

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** William Upton, architect; Messrs McDougall & Walker,  
stonemasons

**STYLE** Colonial vernacular

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

One and a half storey-building with irregular rectangular footprint and gabled roof forms. Principal elevation faces north-east; main block has symmetrical façade with central entry flanked by windows and sheltered by a veranda. Three timber-framed gabled dormers on each side of the roof. Single-storey weatherboard wing at the north end. Casement windows.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Limestone, timber and corrugated metal.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Veranda removed (date unknown). Single-storey addition to north end, three dormer windows added to rear/south-west elevation, replication of veranda (c.2000-2005).

**SETTING**

The former hotel stands on the north side of Opihi Road, immediately adjacent to the bend in the road that takes it away from the Opihi River. To the north-west is the 'Daisy Hill' farmhouse (Collett Cottage, heritage item # 72). The extent of scheduling is limited to the immediate environs of the former hotel, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the land parcel as a whole.

**HISTORY**

John 'Bullocky' Jones applied for a conditional license for his new accommodation house, the Opihi Hotel, in December 1878. There was an objection to the license on the grounds that there were other hotels in the vicinity but Jones argued that a hotel was wanted because the state of the river often delayed travellers who therefore needed accommodation and hospitality. After he was declared bankrupt Jones' estate sold the property, which included 74 acres of farmland, in July 1879 to Moss Jonas of Timaru. Mr A. Ormsby bought it in August 1880 and in the following month Joseph Nelson, previously a tailor in Timaru, announced that he had become the licensee. The license, by now held by another, had lapsed by June 1883. George Crozier applied for a fresh accommodation house license in June 1886 but this was denied by the Levels Licensing Committee on the grounds that there were other hotels nearby. The former hotel later provided accommodation for visiting anglers. After 1906 the building served as a farmhouse and was known as 'Walnut Grove'. It was owned by the Beedell siblings, Mary, Gertrude and William. The property was subdivided to its current extent in 1998, at which time the former hotel was restored and renovated after a period of abandonment and neglect. It remains a private home.

### **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has historical and social significance for its original use as a hostelry close to the Opihi River. The former accommodation house represents a colonial response to the needs of local travellers, especially those moving stock or delayed due to the river flooding.

### **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former licensees and their patrons.

### **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has architectural significance as the work of Timaru and Temuka architect William JN Upton (c.1837-1910). Upton was a builder/architect who had arrived in the district in c.1863. He built Temuka's Presbyterian Church, designed 'Dinting House', also in Temuka (heritage item # 128), and served for a time as Inspector of Works for the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works. Upton settled in Temuka in c.1882 and lived in a house he designed and built himself. He left the town in late 1884 to try to find work in Auckland, in view of the economic downturn then affecting the country. Upton died in Mangatainoko in September 1910.

### **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has technological and craftsmanship significance for its masonry construction using locally quarried limestone. The building was sympathetically restored by its owners in the early 2000s.

### **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has contextual value as a historic feature in the Opihi Flats landscape, although it is not visible from the roadway, being obscured by hedging. A number of other limestone houses, farm buildings and bridges in the Totara Valley attest to the use of the local building stone in the 1870s and 1880s.

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the former hotel pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the construction of the building and its historic use as an accommodation house and hotel.

### **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Opihi Hotel has overall heritage significance to Totara Valley and Timaru district as a whole. The former hotel has historical and social significance for its historic use as a hotel and accommodation house and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former licensees and their clientele. The former Opihi Hotel has architectural significance as the work of the architect William Upton and technological significance for its masonry construction and original timber detailing. The former Opihi Hotel has contextual value as a historic feature in relation to a large number of other limestone buildings in Totara Valley and its site has potential archaeological significance given the building's date of construction.

## HERITAGE CATEGORY

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## REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 16 September 1868, p. 1; 29 May 1877, p. 1; 14 November 1878, p. 1; 4 December 1878, p. 2; 3 April 1879, p. 3; 3 July 1879, p. 2; 20 December 1879, p. 3; 19 July 1880, p. 1; 9 August 1880, p. 2; 5 January 1882, p. 2; 30 April 1883, p. 2; 7 June 1883, p. 3; 7 June 1886, p. 3; 20 August 1910, p. 6.
- *South Canterbury Times* 27 July 1880, p. 3; 16 September 1880, p. 3; 17 September 1880, p. 1; 7 December 1880, p. 2.
- *Temuka Leader* 21 June 1883, p. 1.
- *Lyttelton Times* 22 June 1881, p. 3; 7 December 1881, p. 3.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/3144>
- A Jones 'John William "Bullocky" & Elizabeth Ann Jones: family reunion - 1862-1987' Temuka, 1987.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand - Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.



Extent of setting, limited to immediate environs, 492 Opihi Road, Totara Valley, Pleasant Point.



Land parcel as a whole, with former accommodation house marked by star.