

# Auckland Council District Plan (North Shore Section)

## Proposed Plan Change 38

### Proposed New Item

#### Appendix 11A: Schedule of Buildings, Objects and Places of Heritage Significance



**Name:** Bus Depot Building- Birkenhead Transport Limited

**Address:** 2-22 Verran Road, Birkdale

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ID: 516    Category: B    Use: Bus depot    DP Map: 24

Material 1:    Condition:    Cultural Heritage:

Material 2:    Integrity:    Streetscape:

Construction Dates

From: 1936    To:    Alteration Dates: 1939, 1957

Legal Description: Lots 1-4 Deeds 1307    Zoning: Business 9

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**Architect/Designer/Contractor:**

Not known

**Architectural Style:**

The building is a comparatively unusual building type; it is a utilitarian gabled structure with the repetition of large doorways giving it a strong presence to the street. The building was constructed of reinforced concrete and built progressively in 1936, 1939 and 1957.

**Reference Source:**

Bob Inwards' memories, Birkenhead's Buses, A history of Birkenhead Transport in the ownership of Charlie Inwards' family since 1933, ed. Ian and Elayne Robertson, 2000, p. 18

Bob Inwards' memories, Robertson, p. 35

**NZHPT Listing:**

Not registered by NZHPT.

**Significant Elements:**

Gabled form, with series of large door openings

**Extent of Listing:**

Entire exterior of bus depot shed/building.

**History:**

"Charlie Verran's barn was pulled down so that we could build the bus depot. The office used to be in the back, the very back corner of the building. There was corrugated iron and a wooden floor ... Originally all our buses were under cover.

The first part of the present building that we built (in concrete) in 1936 cost £900. We built the next five bays in 1939, and that cost £1900. Then in 1957 when we outgrew the building we built another five bays on at a cost of £14,500." <sup>1</sup>

Charles Inwards (d. 1977) arrived in Auckland in 1919 and bought shares in the existing Birkenhead Transport Company in 1932, becoming the major shareholder in the company. He then acquired Blue Star Bus Company, and formed the new Birkenhead Transport Company from the two firms.

The 1939 extension was built by Eric Allen, Harry Mumme and Harry Shepherd. <sup>2</sup>

Bus Services in Birkenhead (Summary prepared by David Verran for North Shore Heritage Review, 2010):

*'The first bus in the Birkenhead area was a horse and 6-passenger cart run by Thomas Horton between the wharf and Chelsea village, while Northcote had a similar service from the wharf to the settled parts of the area sometime before. From 1910 Oldham brothers and William Goodall were running buses in the Birkenhead area, from the wharf to Highbury and then to Coronation Road (Goodall) or Verrans Corner (the Oldhams). They were later replaced by Millar and Dunn. However, by 1915 Mayor Wallace favoured a Council run motor bus service.*

*The rest of the Council preferred not to use ratepayer's money for this and instead the privately run Birkenhead Motor Bus and Transit Company started a service from October 1915. This ran from the wharf to Verrans Corner in the west and Glenfield Road to the north. In 1922, this became the Marine Suburbs Bus Company; running out of its own service station at the top of Onewa Road and now Birkenhead Avenue, out as far out as Verrans Corner. From 1927, it faced rivalry from Blue Star Motor Service Ltd, which also added an additional service to the Beach Haven wharf. Blue Star won the battle in early 1928, but not the financial war, and was bought out by*

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<sup>1</sup> Bob Inwards' memories, Birkenhead's Buses, A history of Birkenhead Transport in the ownership of Charlie Inwards' family since 1933, ed. Ian and Elayne Robertson, 2000, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> Bob Inwards' memories, Robertson, p. 35

*Charles Inwards, who also bought out another three drivers who had formed Birkenhead Transport and who covered the Highbury, Pupuke Road and the wharf. Inwards then formed a new Birkenhead Transport Company in 1933. Northcote also had a motor bus company from 1920.*

*By 1936 there were five bus companies operating on the North Shore. Birkenhead Transport Ltd covered the routes between Birkenhead and Beach Haven wharves from its depot at Verrans Corner in Birkdale. The Birkenhead Borough Council had only tar sealed the main road to Verrans Corner until 1947, with successive extensions further out to Beach Haven Wharf.*

*In 1954 the Waitemata Bus and Transport Company was bought out by North Shore Transport, and arrangements made with Birkenhead Transport who took over their Northcote routes and expanded out to the intersection of Wairau and Glenfield Roads. The North Shore Transport Company moved out of its Halls Corner depot in 1963, in favour of the new depot in Diana Drive off Wairau Road. Eventually the Auckland Regional Authority bought out the North Shore Transport Company in 1971.*

Birkenhead Transport continues to provide bus services on the North Shore. The provision of bus services played an important role in the development of Birkenhead and was associated with residential expansion and commercial development. Birkenhead Transport Ltd has been one of the longest running bus companies on the North Shore.

### **Statement of Significance**

#### **Architecture:**

Although a utilitarian structure, the long gabled building with its regular pattern of large openings is distinctive and it has been a local landmark for over seventy years.

#### **History:**

The building is of interest for its association with Charles Inwards and the Birkenhead Transport Company, which has operated since 1933.

The building is important in representing themes in the historic development of Birkenhead including Transport/ Buses.

#### **Context:**

The bus depot is the most readily recognised feature of Verran's Corner.

## APPENDIX

### Photograph:



**A line-up of pre-war buses in 1937: (from left) not known, Stewart, Stewart, Morris, Morris, Reo, Stewart. Photographer unknown. (Inwards Collection)**

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*Bob Inwards' memories, Birkenhead's Buses, A history of Birkenhead Transport in the ownership of Charlie Inwards' family since 1933, ed. Ian and Elayne Robertson, 2000, p. 18*