

# The (re)development of New Zealand's Chinese heritage sites and the potential for the Chinese visitor market.

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**Shantytown, West Coast**

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# Introduction

- Background
    - History of the Chinese gold miners
    - Chinese heritage sites in New Zealand
    - Reasons for current interest in Chinese heritage
  - Research objectives
  - Literature review
  - Methodology
    - Site selection
    - Research method
  - Results
  - Discussion
  - Conclusion
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# The Chinese in New Zealand during gold mining era

- Invited but unwelcome
  - First arrived in 1865 from Victoria, Australia
  - Originally from rural areas of Canton province
  - Experienced hardship and excluded by New Zealand society





**Chinese gold miners, Otago, about 1900**



**Chinese Gold Miners with Rev. Don, Otago, 1900**



**Chinese gold miner, Clutha River**



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# Chinese heritage in New Zealand

- Only three sites were registered by Historic Places Trust before 2002
  - Government's formal apology in 2002
    - Establishment of Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust
  - 10 sites were proposed to add to Historic Places Trust Register in 2003
    - 8 added to Register
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# Chinese heritage in New Zealand

- Current ongoing Chinese gold mining projects
    - Research on the Chinese history on the West Coast
    - Lawrence Chinese camp reconstruction
    - Chinese heritage trail in Otago
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# Background: reasons for current interest

- Government apology
    - Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust
  - Changing focus of TNZ
    - Tourism Strategy 2010, 2015 – increasing attention on cultural tourism
  - More Chinese immigrants
  - Free trade agreement
  - Increase in number of Chinese visitors
    - need for a “Chinese-specific tourism product”
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# Research objectives

- To explore the reasons for current (re)development of Chinese heritage sites in New Zealand
  - To explore the tourism potential of Chinese heritage in New Zealand to both domestic and international visitors
    - ***The potential of the Chinese heritage to Chinese tourists***
  - To formulate appropriate suggestions for interpreting Chinese heritage to meet the needs of different groups of tourists
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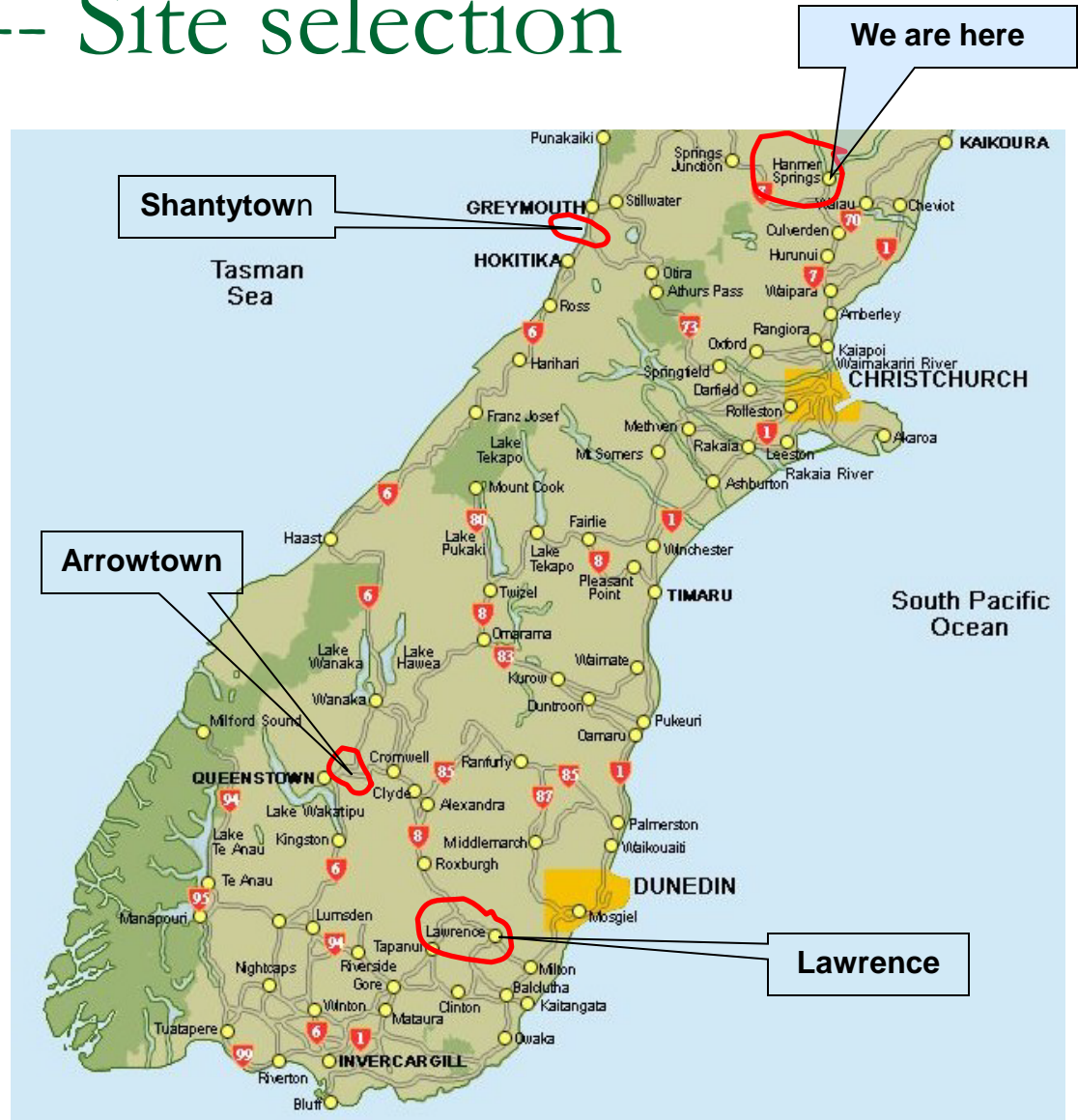
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# Literature review

- Existing literature on:
    - Heritage vs heritage tourism
    - Politics of identity
    - Issues of interpretation
    - Chinese/gold mining heritage sites in Australia
      - Eg. Frost (2005, 2006, 2007)
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# Methodology -- Site selection

- Three case study sites
  - Shantytown
  - Arrowtown
  - Lawrence



# Shantytown





# Shantytown -- Chinatown



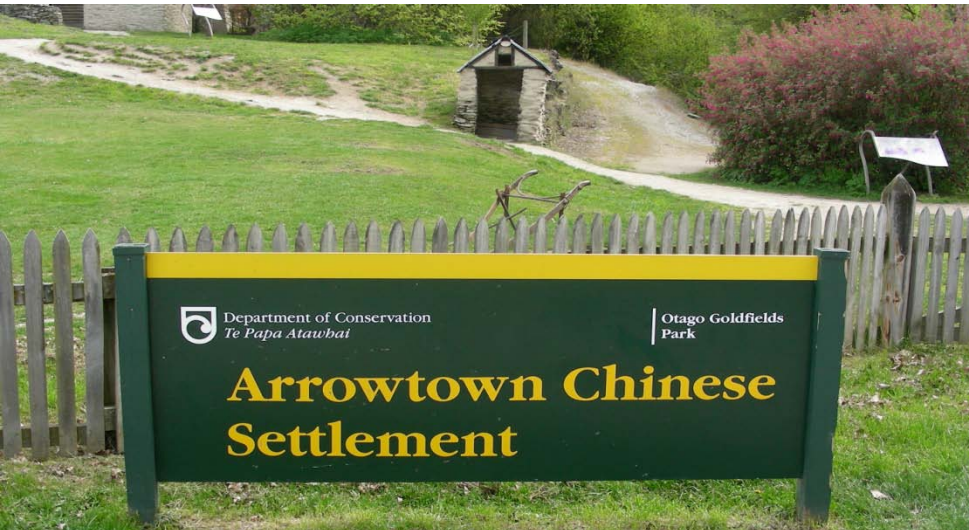


# Shantytown -- Chinatown





# Arrowtown Chinese Settlement





# Lawrence Chinese Camp







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# Methodology -- Research method

- Semi structured Interviews
  - Snow ball sampling
    - Developers, managers, promoters of Chinese heritage sites (sites managers, researchers, museum directors, DOC staff, tour operators)
    - Chinese tour guides
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# Results: potential for Chinese market?

- Suppliers think it might appeal but are unsure
    - We are very thinking at all stages about the Chinese market, developing the Chinese market. And we would like to have an event or attraction that will be good for Chinese visitors, but we are unsure what yet...
      - *Member of Arrowtown Business and Promotion Association*
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# Results: potential for Chinese market?

- ...we don't know for sure that our Chinese visitors want to see an aspect of their heritage here or whether they have come here to see New Zealand and in the way that we might not go to see a Kiwi display when we visit China.
    - *Managers, Shantytown*
  - ...so heritage we think will be quite important to the Chinese tourists as well. The question is whether we can potentiate it, so it becomes a China specific attraction in tourism to New Zealand.
    - *Developer, Lawrence Chinese Camp*
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# Results: potential for Chinese market?

- For the Chinese?
    - Chinese tour guides think it is not, because
      - Motivation of tourists
      - Previous experience of tourists
      - Structure and restrictions of tours
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Shantytown

Arrowtown

Lawrence



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# Discussion

- Problem of marketing?
  - Nature of Chinese tourism in NZ
    - Tour quality
    - Length of tour
    - BUT changing Chinese market – FITs
      - More potential?
  - Problem of site development?
    - Interpretation
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# Discussion

- Is China the wrong market to aim at?
  - E.g. Great appeal of Dunedin Chinese garden to domestic visitors



Chinese Garden, Dunedin





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# Conclusion

- Definitely growing supply side interest
  - Growing number of potential attractions for the Chinese
  - Appeal to Chinese market still largely unknown, especially for FITs
  - The Chinese heritage may have greater appeal to domestic and other international visitors, as it is a part of New Zealand history
  - Further research is needed:
    - Tour operators (inbound and local tour agencies)
    - Chinese visitor surveys (tour and FIT)
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