

The site is at the western end of Gibson Quay in the area known as Sunset Point (see map below).

Site Features:

The seat is to be located on the large elliptical shaped open grass area that is bordered by the riverside walking track to the south and by a sealed road to the north. The artist may choose the exact location of the seat within this space.

The site overlooks the Hokitika River mouth, with the Southern Alps in the distance. It is a wide open space affording stunning panoramic views of the river mouth, the town, the farmland to the south, and the mountains along the eastern horizon. The beach is very close (within 50 metres), but is not easily visible from the site at ground level.

The walking track along the river edge follows a stop bank that is occasionally accessed by vehicles for maintenance and may be increased in height in future years as the need arises.

Two built structures are located near the site: The Tambo, a large replica sailing ship hull – a memorial to the many ships that were wrecked trying to enter the port in early goldmining days; and a lookout structure similar to the old signal station that warned ships of conditions before crossing the bar.

Climate:

The site is open and exposed to all weather. Strong winds are from the Nor' west, bringing driving rain, and from the Sou'west, bringing cold heavy rain. Light, cool southerly winds often prevail during fine weather.

Site use:

The site is well used by locals at all times of the year, and is especially busy during whitebait season from September to mid-November. Tourists regularly visit Sunset Point for its panoramic views and easy beach access. Campervans often stay short-term in the nearby parking areas.

History:

Originally settled by Maori, Hokitika became a very busy port during the goldrush days of the 1860's. The town was a key supply

outlet for the many nearby goldfields, swelling to a population of over 6000 in 1866. Ships regularly entered the Hokitika River to off-load goods and scores of diggers. Gibson Quay was a bustling place, with plenty of stores, warehouses, stables, hotels and shanties along its length. The offshore bar at the river mouth was changeable and dangerous, claiming many shipwrecks over those few hectic goldrush years.





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SITE PICTURES 2009/10

View of site from Tambo



View across site towards the south. On a clear day Mt Cook/Aoraki is visible in the middle distance



Beach view from Tambo. (looking Southwest)



Looking across the site from the western end



Hokitika river



View from the site looking south



Looking across the site from the river bank walkway



The Tambo



Signal Station



Tambo anchor

