

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Ardross', former Aitken Residence
ADDRESS 161 Temuka-Orari Highway, Winchester

PHOTOGRAPH



District Plan Item No. New **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** n / a

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 2 DP 26832

VALUATION NUMBER 2470000100

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1912-13

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Hall & Marchant, architects [?]

STYLE English Domestic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey house with an irregular rectangular footprint and multiple gabled roof forms. Grouped casement and fanlight type fenestration, half-timbering on gable ends, oriel window above recessed entry on principal (east-facing) elevation. Entry is framed by arched opening. Exposed brick on ground floor and stucco cladding on first. Full-height bay window to north of entry. Exposed rafters, jettied gable ends supported by paired or single brackets. Hip-roofed wing at rear (west-facing) elevation.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, cement stucco, timber, brick, Marseilles tiles and slate.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Marquee addition to north elevation (c.2015).

SETTING

The house stands on the west side of the Temuka-Orari Highway, close by its intersection with Vernon Street. It stands at some distance from the roadway within a mature garden setting; a former stable building is also on the site. The Winchester Lodge 1737 is on the opposite side of the highway and the Wolseley Hotel is further to the south. The east bank of the Waihi River borders the property. The extent of setting is the land parcel on which the house is located.

HISTORY

The former home of Winchester 'founder' John Albert Young (1832-1910), which was known as 'The Villa', was demolished by John Aitken in March 1912 to make way for his new home. Aitken (aka Aitkin, c.1839-1920), who was a Scottish shepherd before he emigrated to New Zealand in 1866, farmed at Smithfield, Winchester before selling his land for subdivision and settling in the township. He died at 'Ardross' in April 1920, having been predeceased by his only son John (died 1892) and his wife Elizabeth (died 1906). Aitken evidently built the house in partnership with John McInnes (c.1871-1919), with whom John and Elizabeth Aitken are buried in Temuka Cemetery. The house was named for Ardross in the Scottish Highlands where John Aitken senior was born. After some years of neglect, the house was restored and converted to hospitality uses in the mid-1990s. More recently it has operated as the Mia Flora café and garden centre.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has historical significance for its association with John Aitken and, more generally, the early 20th century development of Winchester. The house also represents the common pattern of large, architecturally-designed country houses being adapted to hospitality uses in the later 20th century.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former residents.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has architectural significance as a well-preserved example of the English Domestic Revival style, which may have been the work of Timaru architects Hall and Marchant. In the July 1913 issue of *Progress* it was noted that the firm had recently completed a 12-room home in Winchester to the value of £3000. The partnership was responsible for the Hydro Grand Hotel in Timaru (1912, demolished) and the Carnegie Library in Fairlie (1912-14). Frederick Marchant (1852-1917) was a civil engineer by training and was in partnership with G Laing-Meason in the 1880s and 1890s; he registered as an architect in 1914. Herbert Hall (1884-1940) was born and educated in Christchurch and trained with Fred Barlow and the Luttrell Brothers before establishing himself in Timaru in c.1910 and registering as an architect in 1918. Hall also designed the South Canterbury War Memorial in Timaru (1925, heritage item # 17), St David's Pioneer Memorial Church at Cave (1930) and the Chateau in Tongariro National Park (1928).

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has technological and craftsmanship value for its brick construction and detailing. The builder is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has contextual significance as a local landmark, due to its size, style, streetscape presence and its hospitality and commercial use for over 20 years.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the house post-dates 1900 any potential archaeological significance its site may have would likely relate to the colonial development of JA Young's earlier house and property. The brick stable building on the site may predate the Aitken house. The property was subdivided to its current extent in 1966.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

'Ardross' has overall heritage significance to Winchester and Timaru district as a whole. The house has historical significance for its association with John Aitken and the early 20th century development of Winchester and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former residents. 'Ardross' has architectural significance as a well-preserved English Domestic Revival style house possibly designed by Timaru architects Hall & Marchant and technical and craftsmanship value for its construction and detailing. 'Ardross' has contextual significance as a local landmark; as the house post-dates 1900 any archaeological values present on the site would likely relate to its earlier development by JA Young.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 4 October 1883, p. 1; 10 October 1896, p. 1; 14 April 1920, pp. 3 & 6; 1 October 2015 (available online).
- *Temuka Leader* 10 May 1883, p. 2; 7 June 1883, p. 2; 17 September 1892, p. 2; 18 August 1910, p. 2; 9 March 1912, p. 3; 26 March 1912, p. 3; 15 April 1920, p. 2.
- *Lyttelton Times* 19 August 1910, p. 9.
- *Press* 19 September 1892, p. 5.
- *Progress* 1 July 1913, p. 41.
- *The Geraldine News* 24 September 2015, p. 1.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- https://sites.rootsweb.com/~nzlscant/fairlie_public_library.htm
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Extent of setting, 161 Temuka-Orari Highway (SH 1), Winchester.