

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

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Former Ferguson's lime kiln

**ADDRESS** Hall Road, Kakahu

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(TDC)

**DISTRICT PLAN ITEM No.** HHI172      **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 315 / 1  
(at time of assessment) Former No. 66

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** RS 40218 (Kakahu Lime Kiln Historic Reserve NZGZ  
1980 p. 21)

**VALUATION NUMBER** 2467022300

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1881

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Alexander Fergus[s]on, owner/builder ?

**STYLE** Pot kiln / Industrial

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Cylindrical random rubble stone kiln with arched opening at the base. Circlet of poke holes for ventilation. Firebrick lining.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Limestone and brick.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Capped (1973).

**SETTING**

The former kiln is located within a historic reserve on the west side of Hall Road, north-west of its intersection with Winchester Hanging Rock Road. The Kakahu River is to the south of the reserve and there are quarry sites to the south and west. The extent of setting is the parcel of land on which the former kiln is located, partly in view of the potential archaeological values of the site as a whole. The line of the dray track that serviced the kiln is mapped on SO 13002 (see below).

## **HISTORY**

Kakahu once supported an extensive lime-burning industry based on the locale's good quality limestone and the availability of coal to fuel the kilns. The burnt lime was used for building and agricultural purposes. Lime burnt in the Kakahu district was being marketed from the mid-1870s and there were upwards of five kilns operating by the 1880s. The pot kiln on Hall Road was built in 1881 by Alexander Ferguson[s]on on land he had leased from the Timaru High School Board since 1877. In partnership with George Munro, Ferguson had earlier built the Pioneer Lime Kiln (1876) on the south side of Winchester Hanging Rock Road, west of its intersection with Hall Road. Regular use of the Hall Road kiln probably ceased around 1890, after which the lease was taken over by James Mailer (February 1891). The remains of another kiln and associated structures, built by Messrs Walker and McDougall, are further to the west. A much larger Hoffman kiln built by William Langdon at Kakahu in 1881 was not a success and it was subsequently dismantled for its bricks. A historic reserve was created at the Hall Road kiln site in 1972 (SP 13002) and the pot kiln was capped by JH Wallace Ltd of Timaru in the following year. In the early 2010s new interpretative signage was erected at the site in memory of longstanding NZ Historic Places Trust (Heritage NZPT) stalwart Alan Talbot.

## **HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has historical significance for its association with Kakahu's lime burning industry and the Scottish stonemasons, including Alexander Ferguson, who developed it.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has cultural value as a historic feature esteemed by members of the heritage community and one that also has a commemorative function in its modern-day signage.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has aesthetic significance as a sculptural late 19th century industrial structure that was designed to be fit for purpose at the site from which its raw material was quarried.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has high technological and craftsmanship significance for its construction and former use as a pot kiln for the production of quicklime. A pot kiln is loaded from the top and fired from the bottom, from whence the quicklime is also removed. It is unloaded after each burning of a single load of lime, which could take several days, and is typically located close to its source material. Burnt or quicklime was used to make plaster, mortar and whitewash for use in the construction industry, as well as fertiliser for the farming sector. It is believed the kiln may have been built by Messrs Walker and McDougall, who were stonemasons and lime burners in their own right.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has high contextual significance as a landmark historic feature to which travellers are directed by signage and interpretation boards. There are two surviving kilns in Kakahu and these features and the quarries they supplied attest to the scale of the local industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the nearby availability of the limestone and coal needed in the manufacture of burnt lime.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the former kiln pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the development of lime manufacturing on the site.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Ferguson's lime kiln has high overall heritage significance to Kakahu and to Timaru district as a whole. The structure has historical significance for its association with Alexander Ferguson and colonial lime burning in the district and cultural value as a historic feature held in esteem by members of the heritage community. The former Ferguson's lime kiln has aesthetic significance owing to its sculptural appearance and high technological and craftsmanship significance for its construction and evidence of Victorian lime manufacturing use. The former lime kiln has high contextual significance as a local landmark and in relation to other historic structures related to lime burning in the locale. The site of the former Ferguson's lime kiln has potential archaeological significance in view of the date of the structure's construction.

## **HERITAGE CATEGORY**

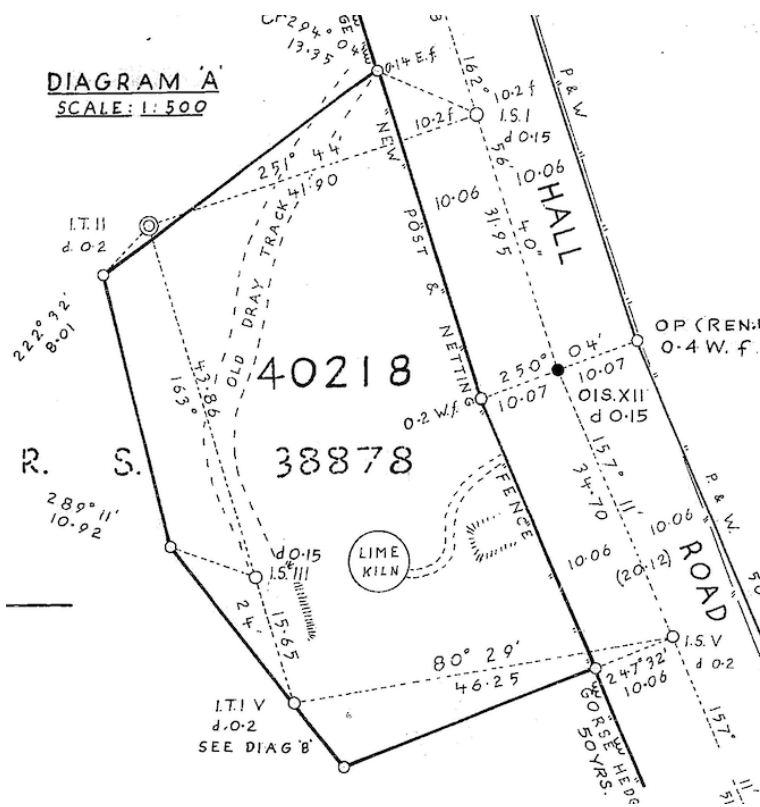
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Extent of setting, former Ferguson's lime kiln, Hall Road, Kakahu.



Detail from SP 13002 showing historic reserve, dated December 1972. LINZ.