

Heritage Item 7

Former Schoolhouse, Barrhill



Location

Address:	24 Sycamore Avenue, Barrhill Village
Co-ordinates:	Northing 5725446, Easting 2417611
Legal Description:	Lots 19 and 20 DP 144
Owner:	Ashburton District Council

Purpose

Current Use:	Dwelling
Original/Past Uses:	Dwelling (School teacher's house)

Heritage Significance and Category

Heritage Significance:	Physical; Historic
Heritage NZ:	Not registered
Ashburton DC:	Category A

Site Assessment

Assessed by:	Arlene Baird, Davie Lovell-Smith Ltd.
Date Assessed:	20 November 2014

Detail	
Description:	<p>This former Schoolhouse was built in 1878 to accommodate the school teacher as part of the creation of the model village of Barrhill. It is noted, along with the former School (Heritage item 6) and St John's Church (Heritage Item 5) as good early examples of the use of concrete.</p> <p>The building is constructed of solid concrete walls with a corrugated, double hipped iron roof and concrete chimney. There is a small lean-to extension to the eastern elevation and a small covered porch above the entrance on the northern elevation. The windows are mainly large four-pane sash opening windows, approximately two per elevation. A back door and smaller windows access the lean-to on the eastern elevation.</p> <p>The building is set in its own defined curtilage surrounded by mature trees and plantings. The shrubs and roses adjacent to the building are quite overgrown, encroaching up the walls and in front of the windows.</p> <p>The building is now owned by Ashburton District Council and is rented to tenants. The interior of the building was not accessed.</p>
History:	<p>John Cathcart Wason was born in Ayrshire, Scotland in 1848 and immigrated to New Zealand in 1868 aged 20. In February 1869 Wason bought the Lendon Run of 20,000 acres (1250 of freehold) on the south bank of the Rakaia River and renamed it Corwar after his home in Scotland. He wanted to create a model estate and planted oaks, limes, walnuts and poplars to create a British appearance. He created a mid-sized freehold estate with a large mansion overlooking the river complete with gate lodge (Heritage Item 8, Corwar Lodge). Part of this estate was a model village, Barrhill, which was to mimic the British ideal of a squire in his manor house with the workers housed nearby.</p> <p>The school and schoolhouse were constructed in 1878 and, along with St John's Church, formed the centre of this community. At its peak Barrhill comprised of the Church, school, schoolhouse, a bakery, blacksmith, post office, boiling works (for mutton), store, inn and about 15 cottages.</p> <p>Wason undertook very European planting within the village such as sycamores, birches, poplars and oaks. Four outer avenues (of four different tree types) form a square which is bisected by two avenues forming a cross.</p> <p>When the railway bypassed Barrhill in the 1890s, the village started to decline and Wason sold up in 1900 and moved back to Scotland. His mansion burned down shortly after that. Over time most of the original buildings in the village have been lost, with just the three concrete buildings remaining in Barrhill and the gate house further along the road. The school closed in 1938 due to a dwindling number of pupils. The Church, school and schoolhouse are now owned by Ashburton District Council and looked after by the Barrhill Village Preservation Society.</p>
Notable Feature:	Concrete construction; double hipped roof; sash windows; open porch over entrance; gateway in hedge linking schoolhouse to school.
Condition:	The building appears to be in relatively good condition. The concrete walls appear to be intact and in good condition. The roof is solid but has areas where the paint has flaked and the iron is rusting. The paintwork around the windows and door appears to be tidy and well maintained. Some of the down pipes are rusting. Note that an internal inspection was not undertaken.

Detail	
Setting:	<p>The former teacher's house is located within its own defined curtilage surrounded by mature trees and planting. The house is in the centre of the village next to the school, however is afforded much more privacy due to the existence of a large macrocarpa hedge. The setting is of high historical significance due to being one of the core buildings of John Cathcart Wason's model village. Also of group value due to its proximity to and links with the original school and schoolhouse.</p>



