

Longbeach Estate Item L

Flour Mill



Location

Address:	1034 Lower Beach Road, Ashburton
Co-ordinates:	Northing 5678525 , Easting 2404702
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 39648 (CT CB18K/390), Canterbury Land District
Owner:	Longbeach Estate Limited

Purpose

Current Use:	Vacant
Original/Past Uses:	Flour Mill

Heritage Significance and Category

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

Site Assessment

Assessed by:	Arlene Baird, Davie Lovell-Smith Ltd.
Date Assessed:	9 December 2014

Detail	
Description:	<p>This is the Longbeach Estate flour mill with its associated waterwheel (item M). The date of construction of the flour mill is unknown, but thought to be during the 1880s when John Grigg was establishing his model farm.</p> <p>The flour mill is an L shaped building with a gable to the north-west which sides onto a lateral wing with gables on the north-east and south-west. The building is constructed of rendered base walls with timber cladding above and a corrugated iron roof. There are large door openings in all gable elevations and a number of small windows openings along the north-eastern and south-eastern elevations. The land slopes considerably resulting in entrances to the northwest and south-west entering onto the first floor. Unfortunately the building was constructed without guttering or downpipes, which has resulted in severe water damage to much of the timber.</p> <p>Internally the building still retains much of the flour mill equipment (mostly in its south-eastern end). It also still retains its waterwheel against the south-east elevation and the waterwheel's internal mechanisms. The waterwheel is constructed of cast iron with a number of blades arranged on the outside rim forming the driving surface. The wheel is mounted vertically on a horizontal axle, with the tub or Norse wheel mounted horizontally on a vertical shaft.</p> <p>The leat (the open watercourse conducting water to the mill) and the tailrace (watercourse conveying water away from the mill) are formed of concrete and run parallel to the south-eastern elevation of the building. There is a section of timber fluming which would have channelled the water from the leat to just above the wheel.</p>
History:	<p>The Flour Mill</p> <p>At its height in the early 1880s Longbeach covered thirty-two thousand acres and supported a small village for its many workers and their families. John Grigg's permanent staff totalled around 90 people with this number rising to over 350 during busy harvest times. Grigg was known to be a good employer who looked after his staff and their families.</p> <p>The Estate was almost totally self-sufficient for food with a butchery, bakery, flourmill, cookshop and general store. The flour mill was an important part of this self-sufficiency.</p> <p>The flour mill and water wheel, though now disused, are still a tangible link with the remarkable agricultural enterprise developed by John Grigg and his family in the last decades of the 19th century.</p> <p>Longbeach Estate</p> <p>John Grigg was born in Cornwall in 1828. After his parents death he inherited a freehold farm which he sold in 1853 and then sailed for Australia (with his siblings) in the ship "Blackwall," reaching Melbourne early in 1854. Mr. Grigg remained only about six months in Australia, and then came to New Zealand.</p> <p>At first Grigg lived in Auckland then moved south with his wife Martha, their children (of which there were eventually 6) and his siblings. The land was described as Valueless Bog on the Lands Office Map in 1864. This was to become Longbeach and total 32,000 acres stretching from the Ashburton River in the North to the Hinds River in the South, and from the Pacific Ocean on the East to the present North/South Railway in the West.</p>

Detail	
	<p>The Grigg family, including John's sisters, step-sisters and brother, lived in Christchurch for several years while work began on draining the swamp and establishing dwellings. He purchased the Chertsey Accommodation House and transported it by bullock wagon through the Ashburton River to the farm. The family arrived in a convoy of horses and wagons across the swamp in 1872.</p> <p>The Station was a self-supporting Community with its own Post Office, School, General Store, Flourmill, Brickworks, Church, Smithy, Bakery, Cookhouse as well as Stables, Cowsheds, Pig Sties, Woolshed, most of these buildings still remain today.</p> <p>The Garden was first established in 1864 with trees planted as shelterbelts against the North West winds. Longbeach garden has prospered over the years as each generation of the Grigg family has continued with plantings and maintenance. Today there is 16 acres of sweeping lawns and garden.</p> <p>In 1882 Longbeach was put up for sale, due to the amicable end of the agreement between Thomas and John. John purchased back 16,000 hectares and 13,000 sheep. With the frozen export trade firmly in his sights, he grew that number to 37,000 in 12 years and concentrated on lamb fattening. John was also interested in dairying and his son JCN Grigg, was sent to source the best dairy cattle he could find. He settled on Dutch Friesian cattle, descendants of which are still important in local dairy herds today.</p> <p>Besides devoting great enterprise, intelligence, and energy to the development of Longbeach, John Grigg actively assisted in the establishment of the Belfast Freezing Works, in the management of the Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association, and in the work of the Ashburton County Council, the Longbeach Road Board and school committee. He was also for some time a member of the House of Representatives. Mr. Grigg died at Longbeach on the 7th of November, 1901, in his 74th years, and was buried in the Longbeach churchyard beside his wife who had predeceased him by about sixteen years.</p> <p>Longbeach has remained in the same family, passing from John Grigg, to J.C.N. Grigg, to his son J. H. Grigg, who in turn passed it on to his daughter and son in law Virginia and David Thomas, and today it is farmed by their son Bill Thomas, his wife Penny and their four children. Bill was just 23 when he took over running Longbeach from his mother Virginia and her husband David Thomas in 1985.</p>
Notable features:	Timber construction; waterwheel; concrete leat and tailrace; timber flume; internal mechanism of waterwheel; flour mill equipment; setting.
Condition:	The flour mill is in moderate condition. The corrugated roof appears to be intact and water tight. The lack of gutterings and downpipes has led to considerable amount of weathering to the timber, which is in poor condition in some areas. The waterwheel and its associated items are remarkably intact. The wheel itself is very rusted but still in its original position. The concrete leat and tailrace are still in place and in relatively good condition. The timber flume is well weathered but still in place and recognisable for its function. The mechanism for the wheel, and other flour mill equipment inside the flour mill, is in place and in very good condition.
Setting:	The flour mill is situated in the heart of the Estate buildings, between the office to the north-east and the bakery to the south. It is a large building, which dominates this central community. The setting is of high importance due to the flour mill's importance within the Estate and its relationship with the other Estate buildings.









