

Heritage Item 2

Mudbrick Cottage



Location

Address:	54 Longbeach Road, Ashburton
Co-ordinates:	Northing 5695028 , Easting 2404286
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 71710
Owner:	S M and K J Clements

Purpose

Current Use:	Vacant
Original/Past Uses:	Dwelling; Dairy; Wash house

Heritage Significance and Category

Heritage Significance:	Physical; Historic		
Heritage NZ:	Historic Place Category 2	List # 7517	Date Listed: 13 June 2003
Ashburton DC:	Category A		

Site Assessment

Assessed by:	Arlene Baird, Davie Lovell-Smith Ltd.
Date Assessed:	1 November 2014

Detail	
<p>Description:</p>	<p>This is a small, two room cottage built in or around 1860, probably to accommodate a boundary rider who minded stock on unfenced land.</p> <p>The cottage is constructed of pre-formed sundried bricks which would have been made from earth, grass/straw and stones (some very large). A similar mixture formed the mortar between the bricks. The building has a pitched corrugated iron roof on a timber frame and a concrete floor. There is one door opening into the building with a wooden lintel on the elevation facing the road (eastern). There are three window openings, two on the same elevation as the door- both have wooden lintels, one has been boarded up and one has a mesh over the opening (albeit there is now a large hole in that mesh). The western elevation has one window opening which still retains its frame and four-paned glass window. At some stage the wooden lintel above this window has been replaced with bricks.</p> <p>Since being registered by Heritage New Zealand in 2003, significant repairs have been undertaken - the north west corner of the building has been considerably repaired, with approximately 40 mud bricks being repaired/replaced. These bricks appear considerably different in colour and shape to the worn bricks, only due to their newness. That corner of the roof has also been repaired.</p> <p>Internally the building has two small rooms – the external door enters into the main room which has two of the above mentioned windows and a fireplace (with camp oven) also constructed of mud bricks. A doorway leads through to a second room which is lit by one window. At a later stage, probably 1877-80, the building was used as a wash house and a copper was installed in the main room beside the fireplace.</p> <p>Brick size: 18 x 9 x 7 inches uniformly made.</p>
<p>History:</p>	<p>In 1854 brothers Allan, John and Robertson McLean, having emigrated from Scotland, took up Run 38 which at that time consisted of 46,000 acres. They named their property Lagmhor which is Gaelic for 'large fields'. When their partnership dissolved some time later, John McLean took over Lagmhor. At that time the run extended from the Ashburton River to the Hinds River and was bounded by the Westerfield Run on the inland side and by Longbeach towards the coast. John lived on the property as manager and is thought to be one of the first resident land owners in this part of Canterbury. His homestead was central to the block with shepherds located about the run in small dwellings – it is thought this mud brick cottage was constructed for this purpose.</p> <p>Apparently Lagmhor was renowned for the emphasis McLean placed on fencing his property effectively. High quality timber posts were used with seven strands of heavy wire placed four inches apart to create large enclosures. However, boundary riders and shepherds were still needed extensively from 1854 until the end of the 1860s.</p> <p>There is no definite date of construction for this cottage, however through extensive research Heritage New Zealand concluded that it seems probable that the cottage was built in the early years of pasturage. Remnants of other shepherds' or boundary keepers' dwellings remain on what was the Lagmhor estate, though none are of this same construction. The size and nature of the building indicate an early construction date and a similar use.</p>

Detail	
Notable Features:	<p>This area was surveyed and Rural Section 23333 consisting of 41 acres was sold as a Crown Grant on 20 December 1875 to Thomas Atkinson. Atkinson sold the 41 acres to Robert Smithies in October 1877 for £82 or £2 pounds an acre. It is thought that Smithies used the larger room as a wash house (so this is probably when the copper was installed) and perhaps the smaller room as a dairy. Smithies retained the land until it was sold to Annie McLeod for £200 in October 1895. It was sold again in 1907 to Thomas Clark for £1,000. The next owner was John Grice who paid £900 for the 41 acres in 1915 to carry out his horse training activities. When he died in 1967 ownership transferred to his daughter Helen White who lived here with her husband Jim (during this time it was known as White's Cottage). It was transferred to him in 1995 and following his death in 2001 Lot 1 (of two subdivided lots) was purchased by Stephen and Karen Clements who are the current owners.</p> <p>Mud brick construction; large stones within the walls; concrete floor; copper; camp oven.</p>
Condition:	<p>The cottage is considered to be the best example of an earth building within the Ashburton district and is unique in Canterbury – unique due to the use of sundried bricks and concrete floor, unusual for such a small functional building.</p> <p>For its age and construction, this building is in very good physical condition. As mentioned above, repairs have been undertaken within the past 10 years which have seen the most vulnerable sections of the building restored. The corrugated roof is in a good water tight state. The mud brick walls have been repaired where necessary and are now in a solid condition. The mesh covering one of the windows has a large hole in it and is therefore open. The door and the woodwork around the door and windows is worn and the paint is faded, There are cracks across the internal floor.</p>
Setting:	<p>The building would originally have been in a remote location on the boundary of the Lagmhor run. There are nearby foundations from an early farmhouse/homestead, however the current dwelling for this land was built in the 1920s. The building currently sits on its own piece of grassed land, fenced to the northern side, shrubs, cabbage trees and plants to the eastern side and the access track to the south and west. It is loosely surrounded by more modern sheds and corrugated iron buildings.</p> <p>The location of this building is of high historical importance, due to its function as a boundary rider's accommodation in the early days of the Lagmhor Estate.</p>





