



HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND
POUHERE TAONGA

New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero – Report for a Historic Place **Avebury House, CHRISTCHURCH (List No. 9075, Category 2)**



Avebury House, Robyn Burgess, 18 October 2018, Heritage New Zealand

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Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

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Disclaimer

Please note that entry on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero identifies only the heritage values of the property concerned, and should not be construed as advice on the state of the property, or as a comment of its soundness or safety, including in regard to earthquake risk, safety in the event of fire, or insanitary conditions.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide evidence to support the inclusion Avebury House in the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero as a Category 2 historic place.

Summary

Avebury House, situated in a park setting at 9 Eveleyn Couzins Drive in Richmond, Christchurch, is a large two-storeyed timber dwelling built in 1885 to the designs of James Glanville for the prominent community-minded Flesher family. Alterations carried out in 1907, embellishing the north façade, were also to the designs of Glanville. The house's survival as a place open to the community tells an important story of heritage retention following the drastic loss of homes in the immediate vicinity as a result of large scale demolitions and land clearance after the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-11. Avebury House has aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, historical and social significance or value.

Prominent early colonial settler, Dr J S Gundry, purchased a large parcel of rural land in the part of Christchurch now known as Richmond, as part of a suite of land purchases that he made in the early 1850s, and a cottage was built. In 1871 English settler, William Flesher purchased part of that land parcel and in the mid 1880s asked Christchurch architect, James Glanville, to design the large two-storeyed family home. Known as Avebury, it had a north-facing verandah on the ground floor and a single-storeyed service wing at the rear that, at that time, incorporated Dr Gundry's earlier cottage on the site.

The appearance of Avebury House is largely that of the 1885 design with its 1907 additions. The building presents as a large two-storeyed timber dwelling, with a covered balcony and main entrance on the north front and corner tower at the north-west corner. Fabric evidence of the earlier 1850s cottage is no longer obvious but it is possible some elements survive in the single-storeyed wing at the south. Metal gates at the north-west corner of the large garden site and a single-storeyed brick building, formerly a motor garage, are part of the historic fabric of the site.

Avebury House and its grounds have undergone change over the years, but the house itself is clearly identifiable as that designed by Glanville. It was well documented in photographs in circa 1910, not long after 1907 alterations were carried out to the north façade for William's

son, James Flesher and his family. Garden party events and gatherings were held in the grounds, especially in the early twentieth century. In the mid twentieth century, the property came into the ownership of the Christchurch City Council and it has had a range of community-related uses since that time. Changes include alterations carried out when the building was converted to a youth hostel in the 1970s, notably the glazing in of the verandah and interior modifications. Avebury House survived the threat of demolition in the late 1990s to become a well-used community facility. The social connection with the community has increased over time, especially since the loss of thousands of homes to create the 'red zone' as a result of the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-11. Many of the dislocated residents who had to move away from the Richmond/Avonside area have come to see Avebury House as a key connection to the area, a centre of community resurgence.

1. IDENTIFICATION¹

1.1. Name of Place

Name

Avebury House

Other Names

Avebury

Flesher House (Former)

Avebury Park Youth Hostel (Former)

Cora Wilding Youth Hostel (Former)

1.2. Location Information

Address

9 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue

Christchurch

Local Authority

Christchurch City Council

¹ This section is supplemented by visual aids in Appendix 1 of the report.

1.3. Legal Description

Lot 153 DP 14735 and Res 4836 (RT CB7A/397, *NZ Gazette* 1956, p. 584), Canterbury Land District

1.4. Extent of List Entry

Extent includes the land described as Lot 153 DP 14735 and Res 4836 (RT CB7A/397, *NZ Gazette* 1956, p. 584), Canterbury Land District and the building known as Avebury House, including former garage and metal gates, thereon. (Refer to map in Appendix 1 of the List entry report for further information).

1.5. Eligibility

There is sufficient information included in this report to identify this place. This place is physically eligible for consideration as a historic place. It consists of a combination of land, buildings or structures that are fixed to land which lies within the territorial limits of New Zealand.

1.6. Existing Heritage Recognition

Local Authority and Regional Authority Plan Scheduling

This place is scheduled on the district plan – the reference is Christchurch District Plan (operative December 2017), Schedule of Significant Historic Heritage, Appendix 9.3.7.2., Heritage Item Number 1324 – Former Dwelling and Setting, Avebury House – 9 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue, Christchurch.

Reserve

This place is part of a recreation reserve (*NZ Gazette* 1956, p. 584).

New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Recording Scheme

This place or sites within this place have been recorded by the New Zealand Archaeological Association. The reference is M35/701.

Other Heritage Recognition

The Avebury House Community Trust was awarded the 'Beca Heritage Week Heritage Christchurch Ambassador 2018 award' in October 2018 for services to Beca Heritage Week.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1. Historical Information

Early History

Christchurch and the wider area have a long history of Māori occupation. The vast network of wetlands and plains of Kā Pakihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha (Canterbury Plains) is inherently important to the history of its early occupation. The area was rich in food from the forest and waterways. Major awa (river) such as the Rakahuri (Ashley), Waimakariri, Pūharakekenui (Styx) and Rakaia were supplied from the mountain fed aquifers of Kā Tiritiri o te Moana (Southern Alps). Other spring-fed waterways such as the Ōtākaro (Avon) meandered throughout the landscape. The rivers teamed with tuna, kōkopu, kanakana and inaka; the wetlands were a good supply of wading birds and fibres for weaving, food and medicine; with the forest supplying kererū, kokopa, tui and other fauna as well as building materials. Ara tawhito (travelling routes) crossed over the landscape providing annual and seasonal pathways up and down and across the plains and in some cases skirting or traversing the swamps. Permanent pā sites and temporary kāinga were located within and around the Plains as Ngāi Tahu established and used the mahinga kai sites where they gathered and utilised natural resources from the network of springs, waterways, wetlands, grasslands and lowland podocarp forests that abounded along the rivers and estuaries.² The area now known as Richmond in Christchurch was part of the wetlands as a rich and valuable source of mahinga kai for tangata whenua.

Most of the Canterbury region was purchased from Ngāi Tahu by the Crown in 1848.³ The Canterbury Association oversaw the systematic European settlement of Canterbury and surveyed the town of Christchurch and rural sections outside of the town boundary.⁴

² Huia Pacey, Māori Heritage Advisor (Southern Regional Office), Heritage New Zealand, pers. comm. January 2017.

³ John Wilson, 'Canterbury region - Discovery and settlement', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/map/10316/land-purchased-from-ngai-tahu> (accessed 20 February 2017).

⁴ Geoffrey Rice, *Christchurch Changing: An illustrated history*, rev. ed., Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2008, pp.15-17; Frieda Looser, *Fendall's Legacy: A history of Fendalton and north-west Christchurch*, Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2002, pp.18-19.

Richmond was earlier known as Bingsland, after Maurice Bing, an early settler in the area, who had arrived in Christchurch in around 1860.⁵

Gundry Family

Part of the area included Rural Section (RS) 197, first purchased in September 1851 from the Canterbury Association by Dr John Seager Gundry, who held it as part of a portfolio of property in Christchurch and Lyttelton.⁶ Dr Gundry and his wife Isabella had arrived in Lyttelton on the *Steadfast* in June 1851, where Dr Gundry had been the ship's surgeon.⁷ Before purchasing RS 197, Dr Gundry bought a section in Harewood Road, Papanui, in June 1851, which he named Avebury Farm in memory of 'dear old Avebury' in Wiltshire, England.⁸ At some point in the 1850s, Dr Gundry had a cottage built at RS 197, which also was named Avebury, but there is no evidence that the Gundrys actually lived there.⁹ As well as establishing himself as a surgeon and accoucheur (male midwife), Dr Gundry was an active freemason and took a degree of interest in public affairs in Christchurch and Lyttelton.¹⁰ However, in late 1858 the Gundrys sold up their assets and returned to England.¹¹

Flesher Family

Through an estate agent, Dr Gundry sold 25 acres of Avebury to William Flesher in 1871.¹² William, a shoemaker from Yorkshire, arrived in Lyttelton in 1864.¹³ After working as a shoemaker in Canterbury for some years, he worked in a succession of jobs and eventually, in 1884, he opened a general commission agency in Cashel Street.¹⁴ In circa 1885 William commissioned Christchurch architect, James Glanville, to design the family home on a part of

⁵ Jan Moody, *Avebury House: a House with a Story*, 2003, n.p.

⁶ *Dr Gundry Diary* June-Oct 1851, p. 96; Moody, 2003, n.p.

⁷ *Lyttelton Times*, 21 Jun 1851, p. 3 and 30 Aug 1851, p. 4; *Dr Gundry Diary* Feb-June 1851, p. 6.

⁸ *Dr Gundry Diary* June-Oct 1851, p. 17 and p. 42; 1871 England Census, Staffordshire, The Close, District 12; Moody, n.p.

⁹ The Electoral Roll for the District of Christchurch 5 July 1853 shows Dr Gundry's place of abode as Cashel Street, Christchurch but the Ground on Which Claim is made is 'freehold estate, six calendar months in possession, 60 acres, section 197, of the clear value of £50'; *Dr Gundry Diary* June-Oct 1851, p. 53.

¹⁰ *Lyttelton Times*, 15 Oct 1853, p. 6.

¹¹ *Dr Gundry Diary* June-Oct 1851, p. 7; URL: <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/heritage/photos/disc13/IMG0053.asp> (accessed 24 Oct 2018)

¹² Moody, 2003, n.p.

¹³ *Star*, 27 Feb 1889, p. 4; Moody, 2003, n.p.

¹⁴ *Star*, 27 Feb 1889, p. 4; Moody, 2003, n.p.

RS 197.¹⁵ This was the large two-storeyed dwelling known as Avebury, with a north-facing verandah on the ground floor and a single-storeyed service wing at the rear that incorporated Dr Gundry's earlier cottage on the site.¹⁶ It had a wide entrance hall leading to a drawing room and dining room. The kitchen, cloakrooms and pantry were located on the east side of the house and a nearby room on the west side was used as a nursery, den and breakfast room.¹⁷ On the first floor were three bedrooms, a bathroom and maids' quarters.¹⁸ William, his wife Dorothy and their family lived in the house. William played an active part in public and church matters, particularly in the Richmond, Avonside and New Brighton communities. After William's death in 1889, his eldest son, James Arthur Flesher inherited the house.¹⁹ James, a barrister and solicitor, was very involved in local affairs and was Mayor of Christchurch between 1923 and 1925.²⁰ James' wife, Margaret, also played an active part in public life and was, for a time, president of the Christchurch Women's Club.²¹

In 1907 James Flesher commissioned the original architect, James Glanville, to design alterations to the house.²² The appearance of the north façade was radically changed to become grander and more decorative.²³ A tower was added to the north-west corner, the drawing room and master bedroom above were extended to the north and bay windows were added. An open balcony was created on the first floor and a decorative gable was added to the main entrance. The grand house and its extensive garden proved to be an ideal venue for garden parties.²⁴ James Flesher died at the age of 65 in August 1930 and was survived by his wife, Margaret, son Hubert de R Flesher and daughter Beryl.²⁵ Hubert inherited Avebury and in 1945 sold the house and eight acres of land to the Crown.²⁶

¹⁵ In the New Zealand Electoral Roles 1881-1881 and 1885-6 for Canterbury, William Flesher is shown as residing at Avebury. In the *New Zealand Gazette*, 20 Apr 1882, p. 620 William Flesher occupies 23 acres 1 roof 28 perches, parts of Rural Section 197.

¹⁶ Moody, 2003, n.p.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ URL: <https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/james-arthur-flesher/> (accessed 26 Oct 2018).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ *Press*, 19 Aug 1935, p. 2.

²² Moody, 2003, n.p.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ *Press*, 25 Feb 1911, p. 10; *Sun*, 12 Feb 1916, p. 11; Moody, 2003, n.p.

²⁵ *Press*, 19 Aug 1930, p. 10.

²⁶ Moody, 2003, n.p; Certificate of Title CB492/280.

Christchurch City Council

The property was transferred to the Mayor, Councillors and Citizens of Christchurch for recreational purposes in 1951.²⁷ Also during this time, part of the land was allocated for state housing and road developments.²⁸ The new street created at this time was named Eveleyn Couzins Avenue in memory of the Mayoress of Christchurch from 1941 to 1945 and nearby Flesher Avenue was named after the Flesher family in acknowledgment of their contribution to the Richmond Community.²⁹ After 1951, under the ownership of the Christchurch City Council, the house was used for some years by the Plunket Society and by gardeners of the surrounding park.³⁰

Adaptation to Youth Hostel

From the mid 1960s the building survived talk of demolition and was leased to the Youth Hostel Association. A number of internal alterations were undertaken at this time, including glazing in the verandahs, the addition of ablution facilities, converting the service rooms into a large communal kitchen and creating a matron's flat in the ground floor of the tower room.³¹ On 3 December 1966, the house was officially opened as the Cora Wilding Youth Hostel, named after the 1932 founder of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) New Zealand.³² It was New Zealand's first permanent city youth hostel and had the country's first resident hostel warden, Mrs Vi Burt.³³

Further extensive maintenance work was carried out by the Youth Hostel Association in 1987.³⁴ The house ceased to operate as a hostel in June 1997.³⁵

²⁷ Certificate of Title CB492/280.

²⁸ Ibid.; Deposited Plan 14735.

²⁹ Moody, 2003, n.p; *Press*, 20 Jun 1945, p. 6; Christchurch Street Names URL: <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/PlaceNames/ChristchurchStreetNames-D-E.pdf> and <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/PlaceNames/ChristchurchStreetNames-F-G.pdf> (accessed 19 Oct 2018); Eveleyn Charlotte Couzins served as mayoress during the mayoral terms of her uncle, Ernest Andrews. Sir Ernest Andrews was the elected mayor from 1941 to 1950, with his niece Miss Couzins acting as an enthusiastic mayoress from 1941 until her death in 1945. URL: <https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/eveleyn-charlotte-couzins/> (accessed 19 Nov 2018).

³⁰ Moody, 2003, n.p.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.; URL: <https://www.yha.co.nz/about/cora-wilding-award> (accessed 12 Nov 2018)

³³ Moody, 2003, n.p; URL: <https://www.yha.co.nz/about/our-heritage> (accessed 18 April 2019)

³⁴ Moody, 2003, n.p.

³⁵ Ibid.; *Press*, 13 Nov 1999, p. 8

Avebury House Community Trust

In 1999 demolition was again considered an option for the house but eventually the Council decided to restore and adapt it for reuse as a community facility.³⁶ The refurbishment and conservation of Avebury House took several years, under architectural draftsman Malcolm Kitt.³⁷ In December 2001 the Avebury House Community Trust was formed and Avebury House was officially re-opened as a community facility by Prime Minister Helen Clark on 18 September 2002.³⁸

The building and grounds suffered some damage in the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-11, mostly as a result of liquefaction and slumping over the site.³⁹ The timber house generally performed well in the earthquakes but the adjacent outbuilding with concrete pad foundations slumped at the corners of the buildings and the shallow pool incurred damage to its base.⁴⁰ The wider area of Richmond and Avonside suffered particularly badly, however, and ultimately much of wider area was deemed to be 'red zoned' and whole suburbs of houses were demolished.⁴¹ The Christchurch City Council-owned Avebury House and its associated recreation reserve were not included as part of the residential red zone, and it sits at the point of where houses were retained (to its west) and where they were demolished (to its east and south).⁴² The survival and retention of Avebury House is particularly notable as it is in an area where thousands of homes in these riverside suburbs were demolished following the quakes. In 2017, Avebury House was repaired and restored. During this time,

³⁶ Moody, 2003, n.p.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ URL: <http://www.aveburyhouse.co.nz/avebury-house-history.html> (accessed 13 Nov 2018)

³⁹ Post 22/2/11 quake update from John Radburn, Christchurch City Council owned heritage properties (typed notes held on Heritage New Zealand File 12009-978).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Soon after the February 2011 earthquake, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) mapped the Christchurch land into four zones – red, orange, green, and white. Land was marked red if it was so badly damaged by the earthquakes it was likely it would take a prolonged period of time before it could be rebuilt on again; or it was affected by cliff collapse or rock roll where there would be an immediate or unacceptable risk to life; or where other engineering solutions were not practicable. In total, nearly 8,000 properties were deemed red. The Residential Red Zone offer by the government to buy land and homes was considered crucial to Canterbury's recovery. The Residential Red Zone by the Avon River has become a green and open area and work is under way to finalise a concept on how best to use the 600 hectares of land, dubbed the Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor Regeneration Area. URL: http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/yearbook/people/region/cera.aspx and URL: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/business/the-rebuild/99640543/christchurch-red-zone-riverside-plan-not-due-for-another-year> (accessed 20 Nov 2018).

⁴² URL: <https://engage.regeneratechristchurch.nz/background-on-the-residential-red-zone> (accessed 15 Feb 2019).

lath and plaster was stripped off many of the walls, revealing past alterations, and an original ceiling rose was re-exposed when a false ceiling in the former manager's flat was removed.⁴³

Following the quakes, many of the dislocated residents who had to move away from the Richmond and Avonside area – now called the 'Red Zone' - have come to see Avebury House as a key connection to the area. More than ever, it is seen as a centre of community resurgence.⁴⁴ Through the energy of individuals and groups, there are many community activities happening that are associated with Avebury House or near to its grounds. Various gatherings, meetings, fitness or wellbeing groups, book swaps and the Richmond History Group use the house on a regular basis and the building is open to the public on weekdays. It is also used occasionally for special events such as weddings. The community facility continues to be run by the charitable trust, Avebury House Community Trust.

2.2. Physical Information

Current Description

Avebury House and its carefully maintained small park setting is located approximately 100 metres to the north and west of the looping Ōtākaro/Avon River. It is on the edge of the large open green space that has appeared as a result of cleared red zoned land following the 2010-2011 earthquakes. As a large two-storeyed timber building with a distinctive corner tower, Avebury House appears largely that of the 1885 (and 1907) design by architect James Glanville. There may be elements of the original 1850s cottage incorporated in the rear single-storeyed service wing, but this is not clear.⁴⁵

On the north façade, the prominent first floor window blends with the lower bay window and provides a balance to the corner tower. The broad flight of steps to a wide, deep porch, and the front door surrounded by coloured lead lights create a grand entrance. The east and west elevations of the house are simple in character and largely original from the 1880s, with double-hung windows encased in moulded frames with hoods and supporting brackets, and a slender string-course and slight eaves with paired brackets. The west elevation has two later single-storeyed lean-to additions, providing secondary entrances to the house.

⁴³ Amanda Ohs and Maria Adamski, Christchurch City Council, pers comm in email to R Burgess, 26 Nov 2018.

⁴⁴ David Hollander, pers comm, 6 Nov 2018.

⁴⁵ The original cottage is said to have been built into the rear service wing of the house. However, this has changed over time and the author of this report has not seen evidence to confirm which fabric, if any, dates from the earliest period.

Some of the original interior features and layout remain. These include a wide, lofty entrance hall with a moulded archway with carved corbels and staircase with slender moulded balusters and timber handrail. Other features include bay windows and seats, cornice detailing and ceiling roses, dado rails and fireplace openings. A kitchen is located on the east side of the ground floor, and to the south, in the lower wing, are toilets. On the first floor, which has a lower stud height, are six rooms and the enclosed space of the verandah – five are former bedrooms (with built-in wardrobes), and there is a former bathroom and toilet.

Recent additions to the walls of the large room to the west of the hallway are the Honours Boards (World War One, World War Two and Dux) that were formerly at Richmond School.⁴⁶ After the school closed in 2013, the boards were saved and affixed to the walls at Avebury House.⁴⁷

The setting is part of the extent and includes a metal gate at the north-west corner of the site and an early garage, separate from the house to the west.⁴⁸ The former motor garage is a single-storeyed brick building with a hipped roof constructed in the mid 1920s.⁴⁹ This brick building has a near-rectangular concrete pad and double doors on the north side. Currently it is used as a shed and the western side of the building has been adapted for use as disabled toilet.

James Glanville (1841-1913)

James Glanville was an architect as well as building contractor and surveyor. Born in Launceston, Cornwall, England, he had arrived in New Zealand in the 1860s or early 1870s and lived most of his life at New Brighton.⁵⁰ He took an interest in municipal, educational and church matters. He was Mayor of New Brighton from 1908-10. His architectural designs included the Orange Hall in Worcester Street, commercial buildings on the corner of Armagh and Manchester Streets and he was also responsible for a number of domestic buildings in and around Christchurch, such as Leinster House (1900, relocated) and Avebury House (1885,

⁴⁶ A detailed history of the Richmond School Roll of Honour is available at URL: <http://www.aveburyhouse.co.nz/richmond-history-group/richmond-school-roll-of-honour> (accessed Nov 2018)

⁴⁷ Although not necessarily in their final position, these boards are part of the fixtures and fittings of Avebury House (David Hollander, pers comm, 6 Nov 2018).

⁴⁸ Peter Mitchell, *9-11 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue, Christchurch: Report on Archaeological Monitoring, HNZPT Authority 2015/1236EQ*, July 2016, unpublished report for Christchurch City Council.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ *Press*, 21 Aug 1913, p. 8 (Papers Past states 'incorrect date')

additions 1907). The designs of Glanville’s Latimer Square houses and Leinster House shared characteristics of the 1907 alterations to Avebury House and which were typical of Glanville’s work, namely a corner turret and ground and first floor verandahs.

Construction Professionals

James Glanville (Architect for 1885 and 1907 designs)

Malcolm Kitt (Architectural draftsman for 1999 adaptation)

Construction Materials

Timber, glass, corrugated steel

Key Physical Dates

1850s Cottage constructed on the site

1885 Avebury House constructed, incorporating some elements of the earlier cottage in the service wing

1907 Alterations and the addition of a tower, verandahs and projecting bay windows

1920s Garage constructed

1960s Alterations for Youth Hostel

1999 Adaptation

2017 Repair and restoration

Uses

Accommodation House (Former)

Civic Facilities Historic property

Accommodation Backpackers/Youth Hostel (Former)

Health Plunket rooms (Former)

Civic Facilities Wedding venue

2.3. Chattels

There are no chattels included in this List entry.

2.4. Sources

Sources Available and Accessed

The main sources of information used for this report have been the 2003 nomination form for Listing itself, which utilised material held about the property in the Christchurch City Council records. The other key source was Jan Moody's 2003 book, *Avebury House: A House with a Story*. *Dr Gundry's Diary* of 1851 provides a fascinating insight into the practice of land acquisition but do not specifically enlighten in detail about his Avebury property at RS 197.

Further Reading

Hendry, J. A., and A. J. Mair, *More Homes of the Pioneers and other Buildings*, 1974.

Moody, Jan, *Avebury House: A House with a Story*, 2003.

Gundry, John Seager, *Dr Gundry's Diary Feb-June 1851 and June-Oct 1851*, Christchurch, 1982.

Peter Mitchell, *9-11 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue, Christchurch: Report on Archaeological Monitoring, HNZPT Authority 2015/1236EQ*, July 2016, unpublished report for Christchurch City Council (copy held on Heritage New Zealand File 12009-978).

3. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT⁵¹

3.1. Section 66 (1) Assessment

This place has been assessed for, and found to possess aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, historical and social significance or value. It is considered that this place qualifies as part of New Zealand's historic and cultural heritage.

Aesthetic Significance or Value

Avebury House has aesthetic significance. Its visual appearance elicits an emotional response for its appearance and also as a rare symbolic survivor of an area hit especially hard by the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-2011 and where few houses now stand. There would have been a real sense of loss that would have occurred had it been destroyed. The combination of a large decorative timber house within a lush garden setting is evocative of

⁵¹ For the relevant sections of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 see Appendix 4: Significance Assessment Information.

late nineteenth settlement in Christchurch, when many substantial homes were constructed on large parcels of land in a rural or semi-rural setting.

Archaeological Significance or Value

Avebury House has archaeological value as it has the potential to provide physical evidence relating to the lives of the inhabitants of the house, including the potential for evidence of the original cottage built in the 1850s and later significantly expanded.

Architectural Significance or Value

Avebury House has architectural value. It is essentially a large two-storeyed Victorian dwelling dating from the mid 1880s with decorative alterations from 1907, both periods being to the designs of Christchurch architect, James Glanville. Despite some change over time, many of the original features and materials remain and the building is a local icon for its architectural style and features such as the staircase, bay windows and corner tower.

Avebury House is an important surviving example of Glanville's domestic work. The 1907 addition is typical of his style, with its corner turret, and is a good example of the additive style of New Zealand domestic architecture.

Historical Significance or Value

Avebury House has historical significance. The first cottage on the site was built in the 1850s as an investment property for Dr Gundry, one of Canterbury's early English immigrants, telling a story of pioneer settlement and the early development of the area. The subsequent construction of the much larger dwelling for the Flesher family in the 1880s illustrates the way properties were developed to suit their owners' increased wealth and growing families. The Flesher family played a prominent part in municipal matters and within the local communities of Richmond, Avonside and New Brighton.

The transfer of the property in 1951 to the mayor, councillors and citizens of Christchurch for recreational purposes reflects a phase in town planning when there was a move towards providing for adequate numbers of recreation or neighbourhood parks in residential areas. This typically occurred once the properties passed out of family ownership because the property extended beyond most modern families' needs. Large dwellings with substantial grounds now in public, community or educational use are a feature characterising a number of Christchurch suburbs. Ownership of Avebury House and grounds by the Crown and then

Christchurch City Council reflects its long use as a community facility since the mid twentieth century – functioning variously as Plunket rooms, New Zealand’s first permanent city youth hostel, and latterly a venue open to the public and especially for use by local community groups. The survival and retention of Avebury House is part of the story of the drastic events and unprecedented rapid change due to the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-11, notably in immediate surrounds of Avonside and Richmond.

Social Significance or Value

Avebury House has social significance. When lived in by William and Dorothy Flesher, the fancy house and grounds were frequently opened to the public for community events, such as charity fairs and garden parties. The Flesher family, active in public affairs, would have regularly hosted guests at the house. From the 1950s, the property became available for public use. Initially it was used by the Plunket Society and would have been frequented by mothers with their babies. For more than three decades from the mid 1960s, it was a youth hostel, a place for young and not-so-young travellers to stay, experience the environment and meet others. It is significant not only as the first city youth hostel in New Zealand but also the first to have a resident hostel warden. When the Council seriously considered demolishing the house in the late 1990s due to the costs of its upkeep, there was a groundswell of opposition by local council members as well as members of the community. Their voice was heard and Avebury House was retained for use as a public facility – it is a place where people frequent to socialise, learn and relax. Social gatherings include regular meetings, open days and occasional weddings.

As a rare survivor in this riverside area decimated by the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-2011, it is seen by some as a centre for community resurgence. It enables a connection to Richmond, Avonside and adjoining areas along the Avon for people who were displaced by the large scale red zoning in this area as a result of the earthquakes.

3.2. Section 66 (3) Assessment

It is considered that this place qualifies as a Category 2 historic place. It was assessed against, and found to qualify under the following criteria: a, b, e, f.

(a) The extent to which the place reflects important or representative aspects of New Zealand history

Avebury House reflects aspects of New Zealand's colonial settlement and social history. Built as a substantial early Richmond dwelling for the prominent Flesher family in circa 1885, and incorporating an even earlier cottage built in the 1850s for early settler Dr Gundry, it is representative of the way wealthy families invested, settled and lived in Christchurch at the time. It has wider significance too, demonstrating how William Flesher, a settler of modest background as a shoemaker arriving in 1864, could succeed sufficiently within 21 years of arrival in Christchurch to commission a large architecturally designed house in 1885. The extension of the house in 1907 by his son, James, a lawyer who was widely involved in public affairs, shows how the house grew along with the prominence of the family. It demonstrates the possibilities that could open up to a tradesman emigrating to New Zealand.

(b) The association of the place with events, persons, or ideas of importance in New Zealand history

The history of Avebury House demonstrates the place's association with colonial settlement and settlers Dr Gundry and later, William and Dorothy Flesher and their son who became Mayor of Christchurch, James Flesher. From the 1950s it was briefly used as Plunket Rooms, thereby being part of the widespread New Zealand innovative programmes developed by the Plunket Society in response to the needs of young families, especially mothers and their babies. For more than three decades Avebury House was used as a youth hostel, thereby being part of the international youth hostel movement to encourage young people to travel and meet others. It was named after the 1932 founder of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) New Zealand, Cora Wilding. In more recent times it is associated with the major events of the Canterbury Earthquakes (2010-11) and their aftermath and it is hailed as a survivor in an area where great swathes of homes have been lost.

(e) The community association with, or public esteem for the place

Public esteem and community association with Avebury House can be demonstrated. Its qualities were demonstrably valued especially in the 1990s when public pressure resulted in the retention of the building, and again more recently when it was repaired, strengthened and restored to allow its continued community use following the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010-11. The profile of Avebury House as a heritage building has been raised in the light of loss of swathes of houses in the 'red zone' of Avonside and Richmond as a Government response to clearance due to land damage in the area during the quakes. The Avebury House Community Trust was awarded the 'Beca Heritage Week Heritage Christchurch Ambassador 2018 award' in October 2018 for services to Beca Heritage Week.

(f) The potential of the place for public education

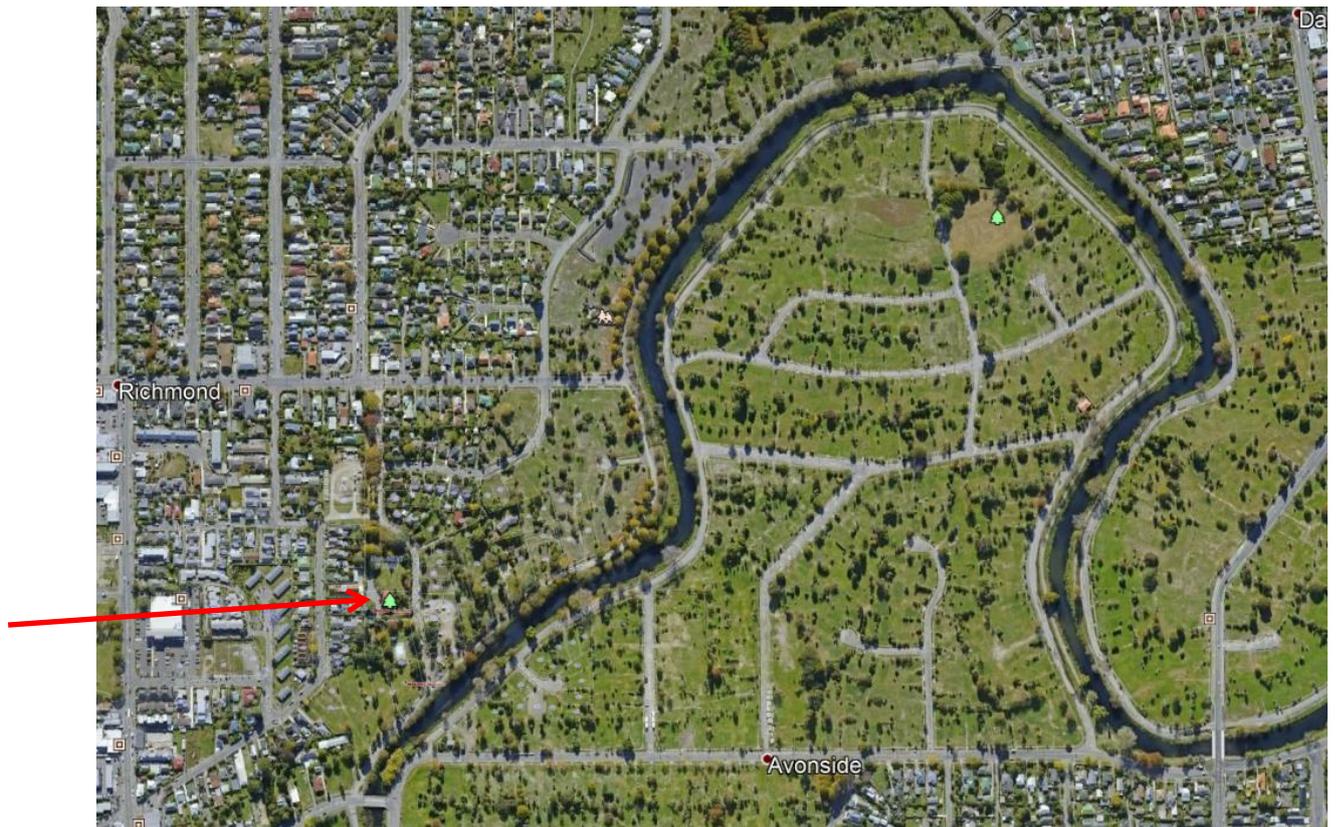
Avebury House is accessible and open to the public. Its reputation, size, setting and appearance attract visitors and it is a valued community asset, especially in the Richmond neighbourhood. Through the combination of standing building, park setting and historical material in the house, Avebury House gives some insight into what life was like in different periods since Victorian times.

4. APPENDICES

4.1. Appendix 1: Visual Identification Aids

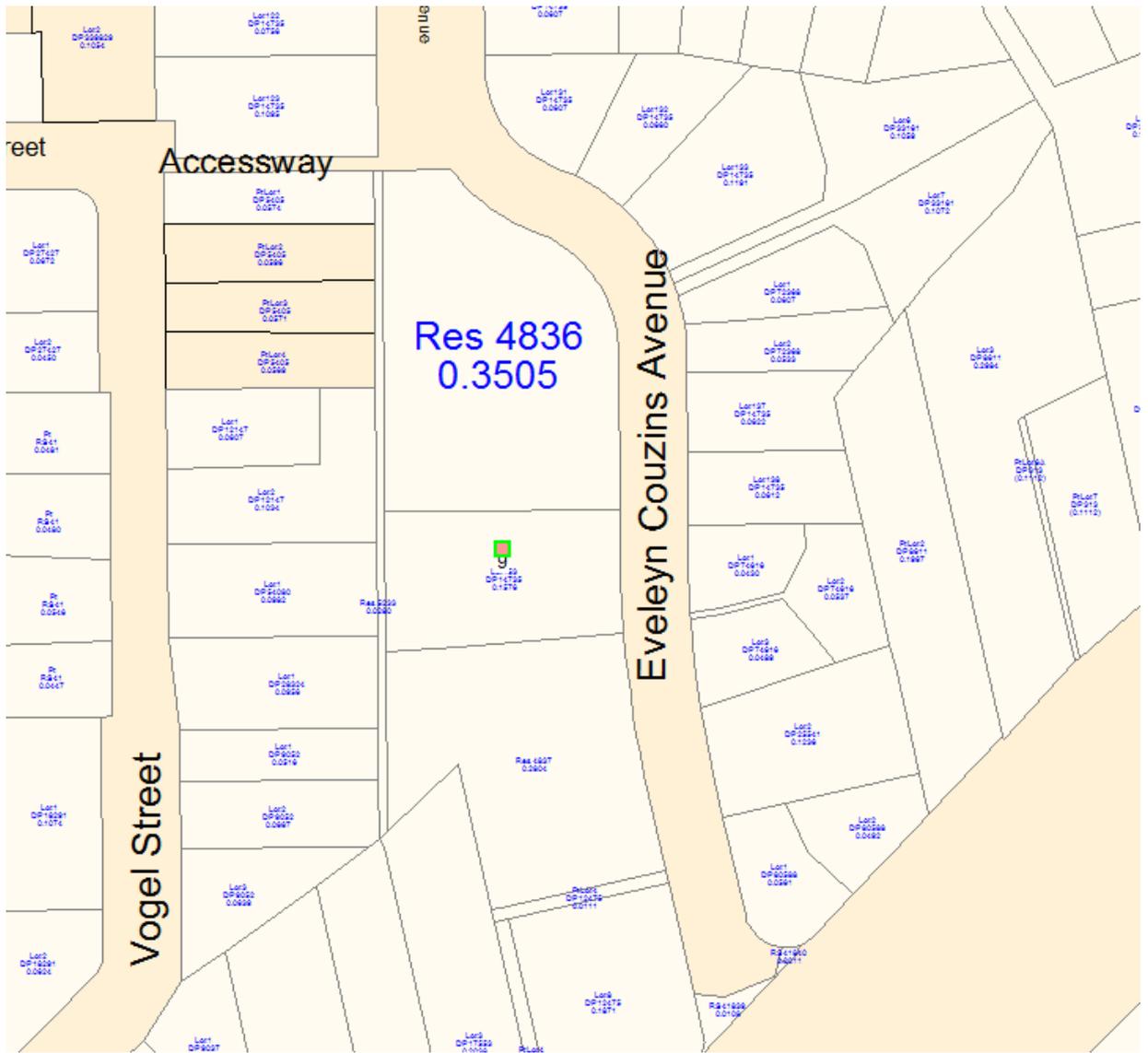
Location Maps





Arrow marks the site of Avebury House. Note the large swathe of green areas immediately to the south, east and north-east of Avebury House, which is the area that was formerly populated with houses but after the 2010-11 quakes demolished and deemed 'red zone', unsuitable for building. The dark loop is Ōtākaro, the Avon River.

Canterbury maps aerial view URL: <https://mapviewer.canterburymaps.govt.nz/> (accessed 1 Nov 2018).



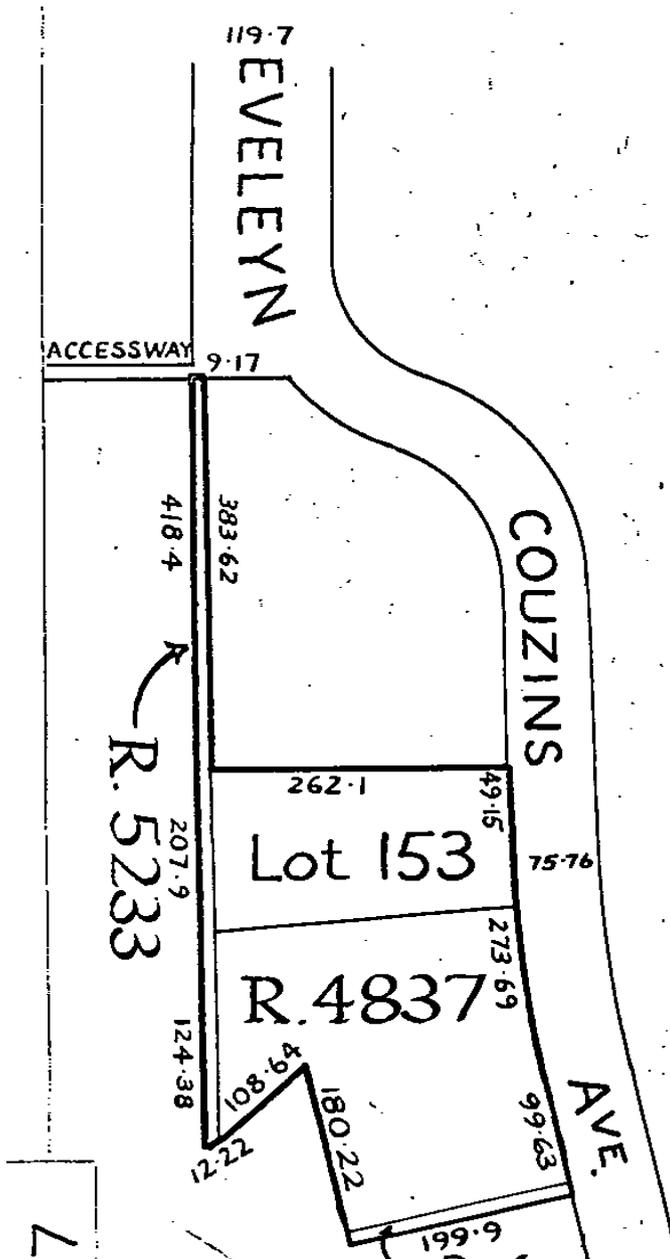
Quickmap showing 9 Eveleyn Couzins Avenue



Maps of Extent

Extent includes the land described as Lot 153 DP 14735 and Res 4836 (RT CB7A/397, NZ Gazette 1956, p. 584), Canterbury Land District and the building known as Avebury House, including former garage, thereon. Note the red arrow points to the location of the garage and the yellow arrow points to the approximate location of the metal gates, both obscured by trees in the aerial photograph. The gates are included within the extent.

Canterbury maps latest imagery, URL: <https://mapviewer.canterburymaps.govt.nz/> (accessed 9 November 2018)



No. 7A / 397

D. P. 12475 METRIC AREA: -4770m²

Total Area ~ 1.0.28.6

Scale: 1 inch = 2 chains

*Note Amend OS copy
drag when next
office*

Diagram associated with Record of Title CB7A/397

Assis

Inter

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Upper Hutt High School—Schools Added to List for Election of Governors by School Committees

PURSUANT to clause 3 of the Order in Council* providing for the constitution of the Board of Governors for the Upper Hutt High School, the Minister of Education hereby declares that Brentwood, Fraser Crescent, and Pinehaven public schools shall be additional schools to which paragraph (f) of clause 2 of the aforesaid order applies.

Dated at Wellington this 27th day of April 1956.

R. M. ALGIE, Minister of Education.

*Gazette, 20 August 1953, p. 1346.

Kaitiā Drainage Area—Penalty on Overdue Rates

PURSUANT to section 76 of the Rating Act 1925 and the Swamp Drainage Act 1915 and its amendments, the ratepayers within the Kaitiā Drainage Area are hereby notified that 10 per cent additional will be added to all rates for the year ending 31 March 1956, unpaid on 30 May 1956.

Rates may be paid at any money-order office or to the Collector of Rates, Lands and Survey Department, P.O. Box 2205, Auckland C. 1.

Dated at Wellington this 27th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 15/42/5)

Declaration That the Ohawe Domain Shall be a Recreation Reserve Subject to Part II of the Reserves and Domains Act 1953

PURSUANT to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, the Minister of Lands hereby declares that the Ohawe Domain, described in the Schedule hereto, shall cease to be subject to the provisions of Part III of the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, and shall be deemed to be a recreation reserve subject to Part II of the said Act.

SCHEDULE

TARANAKI LAND DISTRICT

SECTIONS 317, 318, 319, and 320, Town of Ohawe: Area, 3 acres 2 roods 15 perches, more or less. (S.O. Plan 7723.)

Dated at Wellington this 26th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 1/198; D.O. 8/1/32)

Land Reserved in the Land District of Wellington

PURSUANT to the Land Act 1948, the Minister of Lands hereby sets apart the land described in the Schedule hereto as a reserve for scenic purposes.

SCHEDULE

WELLINGTON LAND DISTRICT

SECTIONS 21, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35, Mangawharariki Township, situated in Block XV, Hautapu Survey District: Total area, 5 acres 3 roods 20 perches, more or less. (S.O. Plan 13862.)

Dated at Wellington this 26th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 403; D.O. 8/5/8)

Land Reserved in the Land District of Marlborough

PURSUANT to the Land Act 1948, the Minister of Lands hereby sets apart the land described in the Schedule hereto as a reserve for historic purposes.

SCHEDULE

MARLBOROUGH LAND DISTRICT—KAITANGATA PA

SECTION 435 (formerly part Lots G and H), Town of Kaitiā, situated in Block XI, Mount Fyffe Survey District: Area, 4 acres 1 rood 6'8 perches, more or less. (S.O. Plan 1710.)

Dated at Wellington this 20th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 4/797; D.O. 8/124)

Land Reserved in the Land District of North Auckland and Vested in the Auckland City Council

PURSUANT to the Land Act 1948, the Minister of Lands hereby sets apart the land described in the Schedule hereto as a reserve for historic purposes, and, further, pursuant to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, vests the said reserve in the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Auckland, in trust, for that purpose.

SCHEDULE

NORTH AUCKLAND LAND DISTRICT—SITE OF FIRST NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT

ALLOTMENT 11 of Section 12, City of Auckland, situated in Block VIII, Rangitoto Survey District: Area, 1 rood 7'2 perches, more or less. (S.O. Plan 39705.)

Dated at Wellington this 1st day of May 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 6/3/183; D.O. 3/1817)

Lands Reserved in the Land District of Canterbury and Vested in the Christchurch City Council

PURSUANT to the Land Act 1948, the Minister of Lands hereby sets apart the lands described in the Schedule hereto as reserves for recreation, and, further, pursuant to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, vests the said reserves in the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Christchurch, in trust, for that purpose.

SCHEDULE

CANTERBURY LAND DISTRICT

RESERVE 4836: Area, 3 roods 18'6 perches, more or less. (Shown as Lot 152, D.P. 14735, being part Rural Section 197.) Part certificate of title, Volume 492, folio 280.

Also Reserve 4837: Area, 2 roods 30'8 perches, more or less. (Shown as Lot 144, D.P. 14735, being part Rural Section 197.) Part certificate of title, Volume 492, folio 280. Subject to easement in Transfer No. 64734.

Both situated in Block XI, Christchurch Survey District, City of Christchurch.

Dated at Wellington this 26th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 1/1107/9; D.O. 30/25)

Vesting a Reserve in the Hamilton City Council

PURSUANT to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, the Minister of Lands hereby vests the reserve described in the Schedule hereto in the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Hamilton, in trust, for plantation purposes.

SCHEDULE

SOUTH AUCKLAND LAND DISTRICT

LOT 16, D.P. 28418, being part Allotment 242, Pukete Parish, situated in Block XIII, Komakorau Survey District: Area, 23'4 perches, more or less. Parts certificates of title, Volume 320, folio 76, and Volume 426, folio 173, and balance certificate of title, Volume 355, folio 62. Together with appurtenant right of way over Lot 14, D.P. 14611, created by Transfer No. 157395.

Dated at Wellington this 26th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 6/1/846; D.O. 8/865)

Change of the Purpose of a Reserve

PURSUANT to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, the Minister of Lands hereby changes the purpose of the reserve described in the Schedule hereto from a reserve for municipal purposes to a reserve for scenic purposes.

SCHEDULE

WELLINGTON LAND DISTRICT

SECTION 36, Mangawharariki Township, situated in Block XV, Hautapu Survey District: Area, 1 acre and 24 perches, more or less. (S.O. Plan 13862.)

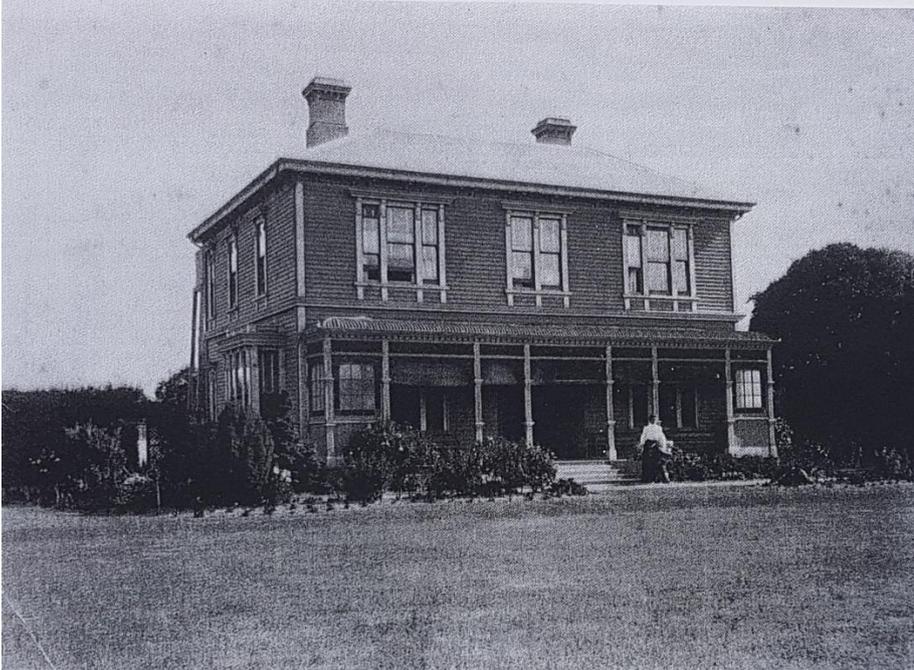
Dated at Wellington this 26th day of April 1956.

E. B. CORBETT, Minister of Lands.

(L. and S. H.O. 403; D.O. 8/5/8)

4.2. Appendix 2: Visual Aids to Historical Information

Historical Photographs



Avebury prior to alterations, Dr P Sheppard, circa 1900. Copy of image held by Richmond History Group, Avebury House. [Photograph shows the north and part of the east elevations prior to the 1907 alterations]



Garden Party, circa 1910, Flesher Family Photo Album (Richmond History Group, Avebury House) [Photograph shows that the north elevation has now been altered while the east elevation remains as it did in the circa 1900 photograph above]



Detail from Canterbury Maps Historical Aerial Image 1940-44. URL: <https://mapviewer.canterburymaps.govt.nz/> (accessed 9 November 2018). Arrow marks the garage to the west of the house and shows the expanse of lawn and trees north of the house. To the south of the house is a tennis court but this area, not included in the extent, has since been remodelled to have a paddling pool and children's playground.



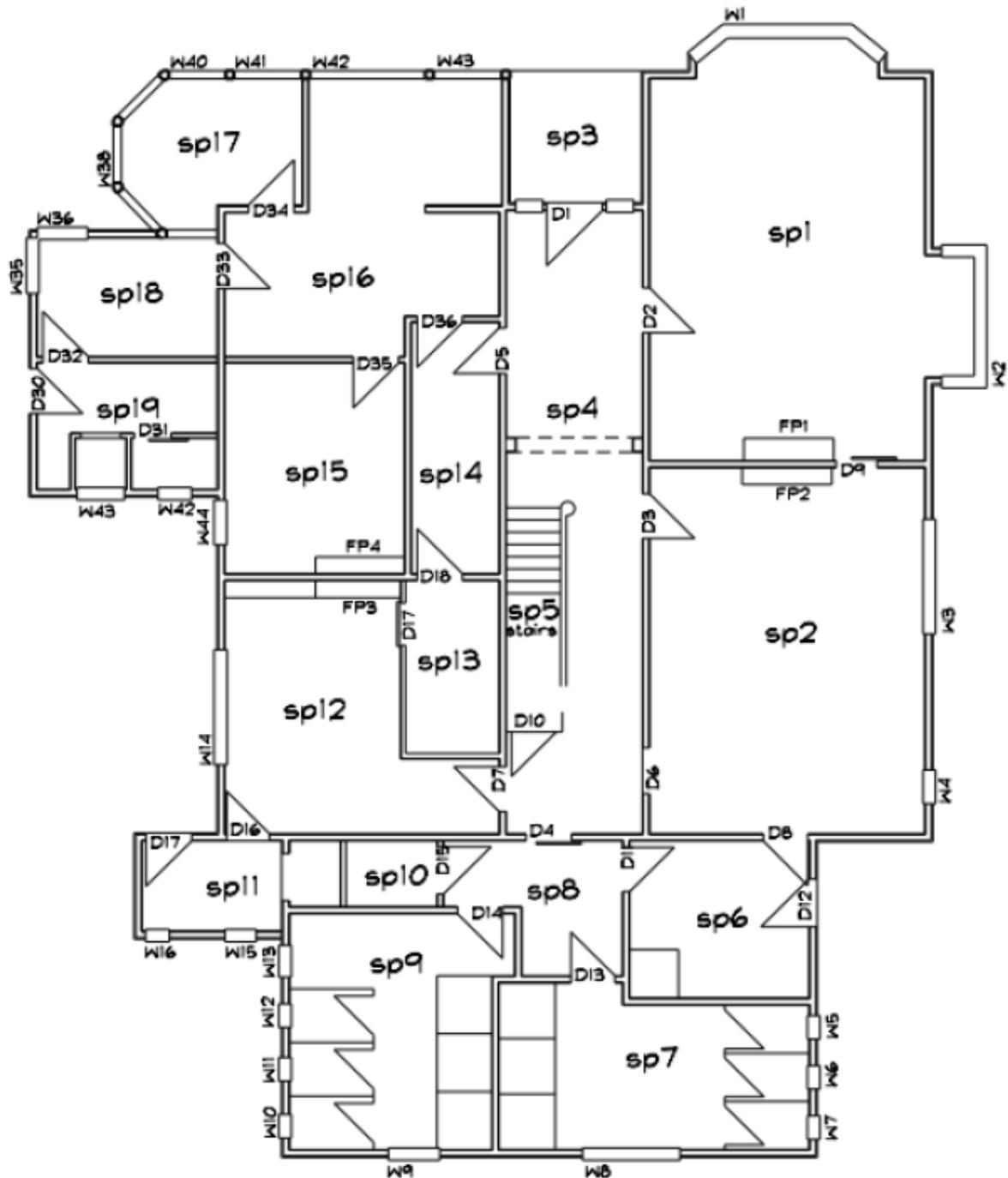
Cora Wilding Youth Hostel, Avebury Common Room (now Flesher Room) with Matron Ms Rogers in doorway to kitchen, 1968. Donated by Gwyn Rogers (Richmond History Group, Avebury House)



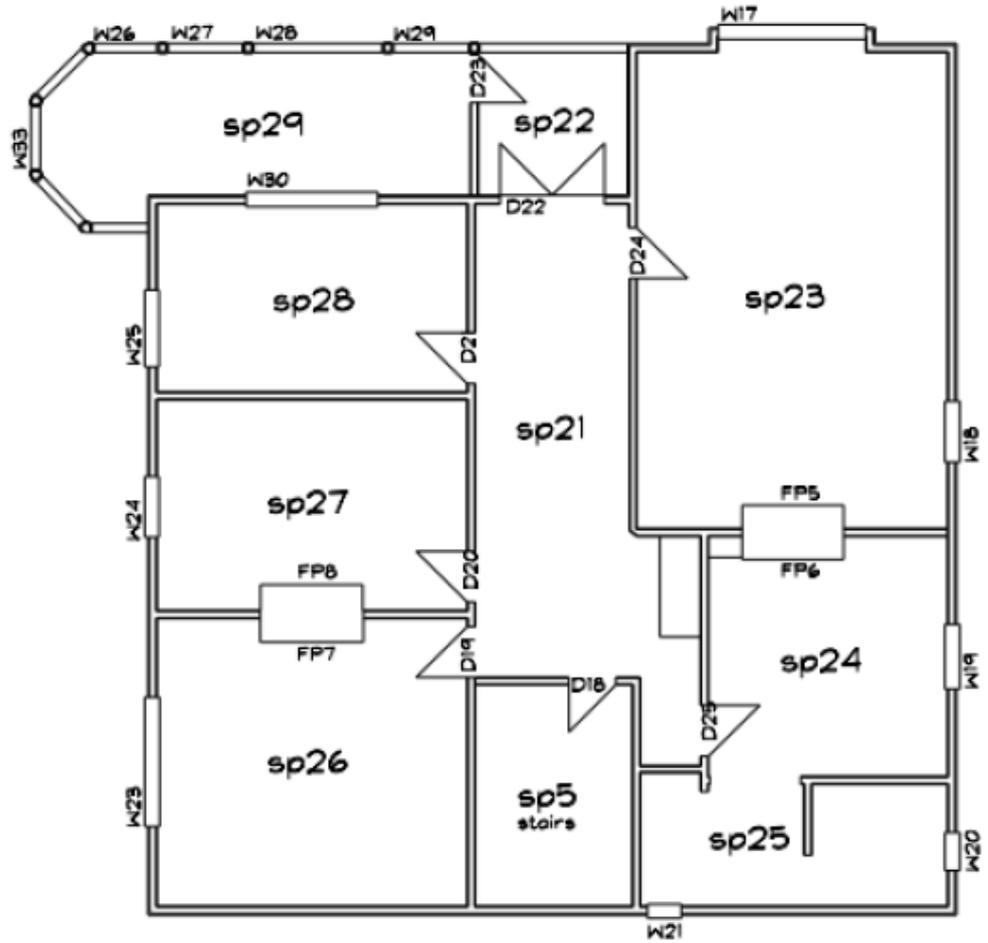
Cora Wilding Youth Hostel, January 1979, Kete Christchurch, AT-2012-PH-059.jpg

4.3. Appendix 3: Visual Aids to Physical Information

Current Plans



Grd FLOOR PLAN



1st FLOOR PLAN

Christchurch City Council Records, City Design Unit, Drawings by Malcolm Kitt, 2000⁵²

⁵² Reproduced in District Plan Listed Heritage Place Heritage Assessment, Statement of Significance Heritage Item Number 1324, Former Dwelling and Setting, Avebury House – 9 Evelyn Couzins Avenue (sic), Christchurch, 2015

Current Photographs of Place



North elevation, Avebury House (R Burgess, 18 October 2018, Heritage New Zealand)



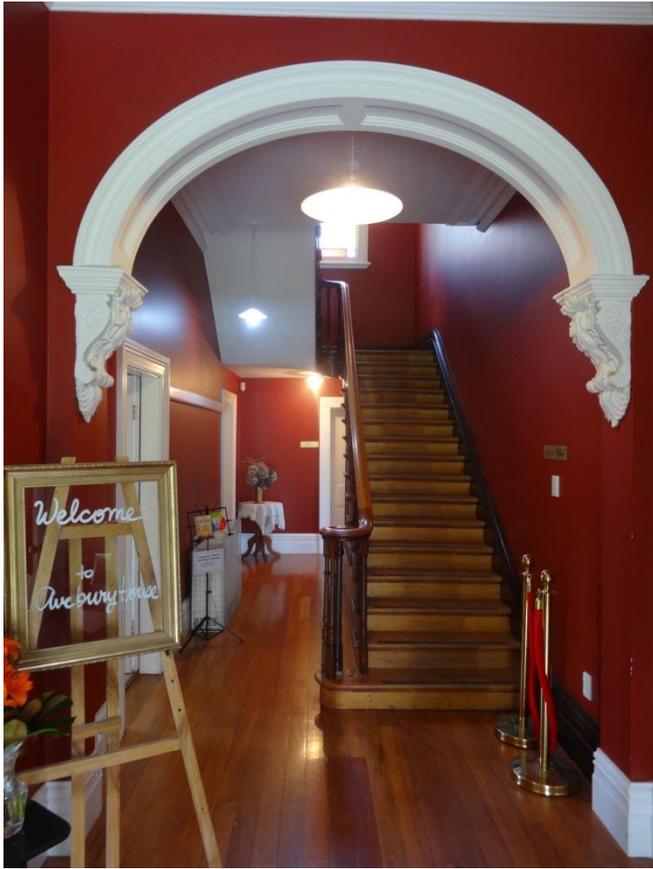
Detail of East elevation, Avebury House (R Burgess, 18 October 2018, Heritage New Zealand)



South-west corner of Avebury House (R Burgess, 6 November 2018, Heritage New Zealand)



Gates at the north-west part of the site, looking north (R Burgess, 6 November 2018, Heritage New Zealand)



Entrance hall and staircase, Avebury House (R Burgess, 18 October 2018, Heritage New Zealand)



Honours Boards affixed to the walls in the north-west room of the ground floor (R Burgess, 6 November 2018, Heritage New Zealand).

4.4. Appendix 4: Significance Assessment Information

Part 4 of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

Chattels or object or class of chattels or objects (Section 65(6))

Under Section 65(6) of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, an entry on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero relating to a historic place may include any chattel or object or class of chattels or objects –

- a) Situated in or on that place; and
- b) Considered by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga to contribute to the significance of that place; and
- c) Proposed by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga for inclusion on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero.

Significance or value (Section 66(1))

Under Section 66(1) of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga may enter any historic place or historic area on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero if the place possesses aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, technological, or traditional significance or value.

Category of historic place (Section 66(3))

Under Section 66(3) of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga may assign Category 1 status or Category 2 status to any historic place, having regard to any of the following criteria:

- a) The extent to which the place reflects important or representative aspects of New Zealand history
- b) The association of the place with events, persons, or ideas of importance in New Zealand history
- c) The potential of the place to provide knowledge of New Zealand history
- d) The importance of the place to tangata whenua
- e) The community association with, or public esteem for, the place
- f) The potential of the place for public education
- g) The technical accomplishment, value, or design of the place
- h) The symbolic or commemorative value of the place

- i) The importance of identifying historic places known to date from an early period of New Zealand settlement
- j) The importance of identifying rare types of historic places
- k) The extent to which the place forms part of a wider historical and cultural area

Additional criteria may be prescribed in regulations made under this Act for the purpose of assigning Category 1 or Category 2 status to a historic place, provided they are not inconsistent with the criteria set out in subsection (3)

Additional criteria may be prescribed in regulations made under this Act for entering historic places or historic areas of interest to Māori, wāhi tūpuna, wāhi tapu, or wāhi tapu areas on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero, provided they are not inconsistent with the criteria set out in subsection (3) or (5) or in regulations made under subsection (4).

NOTE: Category 1 historic places are 'places of special or outstanding historical or cultural heritage significance or value.' Category 2 historic places are 'places of historical or cultural heritage significance or value.'