

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH105
HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Alfred Lee store and residence
ADDRESS 51 Main Street, Oxford
PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 10 July 2019)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. n / a **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 342801

VALUATION NUMBER 2153213000

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1896

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** WV Wilson, architect/builder

STYLE Villa

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint and pyramidal roof with lean-to at rear (south). Principal elevations faces north and east with return veranda carried on braced posts. Corner and north-facing panelled entrance doors, multi-pane casement and double-hung sash windows, bracketed eaves, picket fencing between veranda posts.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timber framing and rusticated weatherboard cladding, corrugated metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Rata Street road widening (1980s?). Aluminium fenestration installed in rear lean-to (date unknown).

SETTING

The building stands on the south side of Main Street, close to the road boundaries of the property, with Rata Street forming the eastern boundary. It is set within the town centre of Oxford, with other commercial buildings in the vicinity; Pearson Park is to the west and the Oxford Library & WDC Service Centre and Oxford Town Hall are to the east. The extent of scheduling is the land parcel on which the building is located and that portion of the road reserve over which the veranda projects.

HISTORY

Alfred Lee built a new store on Main Street in 1896, having been a storekeeper in Oxford since the early 1890s. Lee and his wife Elizabeth had five children and they owned the property until January 1904, after which time the family relocated to Ashburton where Alfred was running a store by the mid-1910s. EW Jordan acquired the property from the Lees and although the Certificate of Title recorded his occupation as storekeeper he was listed as a mail carrier in the electoral roll of 1905-6 and later as a painter and paperhanger. Ernest Jordan also served as Domain Board secretary in the later 1930s. He sold to Allan Cameron, a local garage attendant, in 1944 and in the mid-20th century the building was described as an 'old house' on survey plans, suggesting it was not in commercial use through the course of the 20th century. Since 2005 the building has been in use as a café.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has historical and social significance for its association with the late Victorian commercial development of Oxford. The use of the building as a café since 2005 has revived its original commercial purpose although it is no longer in residential use.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has cultural value as a village centre historic feature that is appreciated by members of the local community.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has architectural significance as a combined commercial and residential building in the villa style. William Varian Wilson (1857-1946), who appears to have designed the building, was an Oxford carpenter turned architect. He later practised in Christchurch.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of late-Victorian construction methods and materials.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has contextual significance as a notable historic feature within the Oxford town centre. The building has retained a good level of external authenticity and serves as a reminder of a historic streetscape that has been overwritten by a number of modern commercial developments in recent years.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the building pre-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological value relating to the property's colonial use and development.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Alfred Lee store and residence has overall heritage significance to Oxford and Waimakariri district as a whole. The building has historic and social significance for its association with the late 19th century commercial development of Oxford and cultural value as a historic feature held in esteem by members of the community. The former Alfred Lee store and residence has architectural significance as a late Victorian commercial/residential building in the villa style believed to have been designed by local carpenter-architect WV Wilson. The former Alfred Lee store and residence has technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of late-Victorian construction methods and materials and

contextual significance as a surviving historic feature within the Oxford town centre streetscape; its site has potential archaeological value given the building's age.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 3 April 1900, p. 2; 14 April 1938, p. 21; 11 November 1932, p. 4; 28 July 1944, p. 1.
- *Oxford Observer* 25 July 1891, p. 2; 26 May 1894, p. 3; 22 September 1894, p. 1; 23 May 1896, p. 3; 17 October 1896, pp. 2 & 3.
- *Sun* 25 February 1916, p. 10.
- DN Hawkins *Beyond the Waimakariri* Christchurch, 2001 (available online).
- <http://transcriptions.nz/Library.BMDs/WILSON.Christchurch.Library.Marriages.html>

REPORT COMPLETED

23 July 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of setting, including the road reserve over which the veranda projects, 51 Main Street, Oxford.