

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. **HH022**

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Kirk house

ADDRESS 12 Carew Street, Kaiapoi

PHOTOGRAPH



(www)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. New **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 7445 / 1
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Part Lots 13 & 14 DP 711

VALUATION NUMBER 217614900A & 217614900B

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1949-50

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Norman Kirk, owner / builder

STYLE Post-war vernacular

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey dwelling with irregular L-shaped footprint and hipped roof forms. Principal, south-facing elevation has projecting bay with enclosed entrance porch. Casement type windows, external chimney on east elevation.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Concrete block and metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Flat roof replaced by hipped roof (1970). Rear extension (1976). Property cross-leased and second dwelling erected at rear of site (c.1996). Entrance porch enclosed (post-1999).

SETTING

The dwelling stands on the north side of Carew Street; west of its intersection with Williams Street and east of its intersection with Hills Street. The town centre of Kaiapoi is to the north-east and the immediate setting is predominantly residential in character. The extent of scheduling is limited to the southerly portion of the two land parcels on which the former Kirk house is located.

HISTORY

This house was built by Norman Kirk, who served as Prime Minister of New Zealand from November 1972 until his premature death on 31 August 1974. Kirk (1923-74) was born in Waimate, South Canterbury where his father Norman was a cabinetmaker. The family relocated to Christchurch in 1928 and Kirk junior left school at age 13 to become an assistant roof painter. He later began an apprenticeship as a fitter and turner and then got a job with the New Zealand Railways in 1940 at Frankton Junction in Hamilton. Various industrial jobs followed in Hauraki district and Auckland. He married Ruth Miller in Auckland in July 1943. The couple moved to Katikati in the Bay of Plenty in the following year and were to have five children in all. In 1948 the family purchased a section in Kaiapoi, where the Kirks had relatives. Norman Kirk worked at the Firestone Tyre and Rubber Company's factory in Papanui and built the family home, with his father's help, in the evenings and at the weekend from concrete blocks he made himself. At the same time Kirk junior built up the Kaiapoi branch of the Labour Party, soon becoming its chairman. He was elected to the Kaiapoi Borough Council in 1953, becoming the country's youngest mayor at age 30. He was re-elected in 1956, after unsuccessfully running for national office in 1954. Kirk was elected to parliament as the Labour MP for Lyttelton in 1957. He resigned as Mayor of Kaiapoi in January 1958 and subsequently relocated his family to Christchurch. The house has passed through a number of hands since 1958 and was extended in the mid-1970s. In 1999 it was listed as a Category I historic place by Heritage NZPT.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has high historical significance for its association with former Mayor of Kaiapoi and New Zealand Prime Minister Norman Kirk and his family. Kirk was the first prime minister to be born and raised in New Zealand and the fourth Labour politician to hold the office. The house Kirk built also represents the general situation in regard to the availability of building materials after World War II and the DIY ethos that is seen as being integral to New Zealanders' sense of identity.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of a former Kaiapoi mayor and New Zealand prime minister and his family. The house is esteemed by members of the community for its historic association with Norman Kirk.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has architectural value as a post-war vernacular bungalow. The modest size and scale of the house demonstrates the financial capacity of the Kirk family at the time the house was built; stylistically the dwelling is typical of post-WWII English Cottage style bungalows that were the vernacular domestic architectural style of the period.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has technological and craftsmanship significance for its concrete 'cinder block' construction by Norman Kirk, who had learnt how to make such blocks from his father. Throughout the first half of the 20th century concrete blockwork was known for its economy and the relative ease with which owner/builders could construct their own buildings from it.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has contextual significance as a local landmark in view of the fame and historic significance of its original owner/occupier.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the house post-dates 1900 its site may have limited potential archaeological value. An aerial view of Carew Street taken in the early 1940s shows that the property was undeveloped at that time.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Kirk house has high overall significance to Kaiapoi and the Waimakariri district as a whole. The dwelling has high historical significance for its association with former Kaiapoi mayor and New Zealand Prime Minister Norman Kirk and his family and cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of Norman Kirk and the working class, DIY background from which he came. The former Kirk house has architectural value as a post-war vernacular dwelling designed and built by Norman Kirk and technological and craftsmanship significance for its concrete 'cinder block' construction. The former Kirk house has contextual significance as a local landmark; its site may not have potential archaeological values in view of the dwelling's age.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

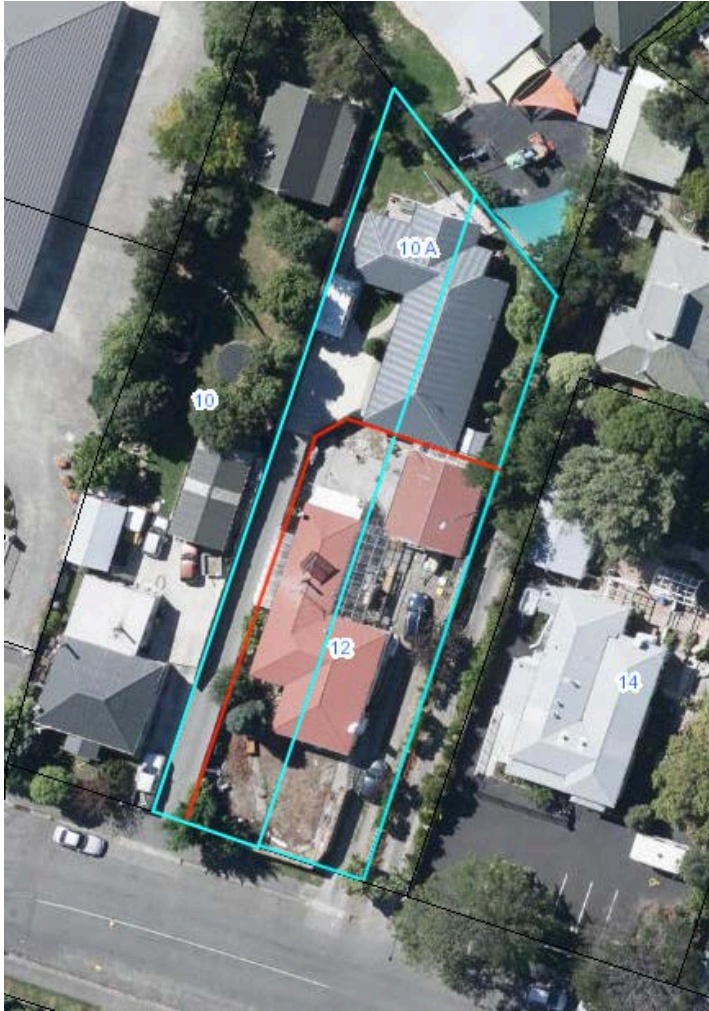
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- DN Hawkins *Beyond the Waimakariri* Christchurch, 2001; available online.
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REPORT COMPLETED

10 April 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, limited to property on which former Kirk house is located, 12 Carew Street, Kaiapoi.