

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH034
HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Flaxton', Stevenson homestead
ADDRESS 38 Flaxton Road, Flaxton
PHOTOGRAPH



(HNZPT)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H009 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 3798 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION RS 2020

VALUATION NUMBER 2159124000

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION c.1877/80?

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Unknown

STYLE Italianate villa

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey dwelling with rectangular footprint and hipped roof. Double-hung sash windows, bracketed eaves and corbelled chimneys. Bay window and veranda, with balcony above, on principal, north-facing elevation. Second bay window is located on the west elevation within that portion of the house which is of timber construction. Fanlight-shaped panels above first floor windows on principal elevation. Single-storey wing with monopitch roof at rear (south elevation).

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Concrete, timber framing and weatherboard cladding, slate & corrugated metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Veranda partially enclosed (date unknown). Single-storey additions (1930s + *proposed*). Double-gable roof replaced by half-hipped roof (early 2000s?).

SETTING

The dwelling stands on the east side of Flaxton Road, north of its intersection with Hicklands and Skewbridge Roads. The farm property as a whole extends to Paisley Road in the east and Skewbridge Road in the south. Ornamental gates and a formal garden provide the setting for the homestead, which shares the property with the usual rural outbuildings and service areas. The extent of scheduling is limited to the immediate garden setting of the house, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the land parcel as a whole.

HISTORY

John Stevenson (1835-85) was an Ayrshire ploughman who emigrated from Scotland with his wife Jane (nee Boyd) in 1862 and thereafter developed a successful farming business on Drain Road in the Rangiora Swamp. Stevenson became a sheep breeder of some note and served on the Mandeville and Rangiora Road Board. John and Jane Stevenson had eleven children, their daughter Elizabeth (1870-1940) married Oamaru architect John Megget Forrester and the couple endowed the town's Forrester Gallery. Another child, son George (1878-1960), later farmed in Marlborough where he discovered a New Zealand tree broom that was named in his honour (*Chordospartium stevensonii*). John Stevenson's funeral in late July 1885 was said to be the largest seen in Flaxton to that date. The Stevenson family held a reunion in 1998 and the homestead property remains in family ownership today.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton' has historical significance for its association with the Stevenson family and, more generally, the pastoral development of Rangiora district. The house represents the financial success and social standing emigrants were able to achieve through their own efforts in the later 19th century.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton' has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of several generations of the Stevenson family.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton' has architectural significance as an Italianate villa, a style of architecture that enjoyed widespread popularity for large rural residences in the 1870s and early 1880s. The designer of the building is currently unknown; Christchurch architect/designers Samuel Farr, Peter Martin and the Jacobsen Brothers all being possible candidates.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton' has technological and craftsmanship significance for the evidence it provides of Victorian building methods and materials, including mass concrete. The builder of the homestead is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton' has contextual value for the contribution it makes to the historic character of its rural setting and the visual evidence it provides of the colonial settlement of Flaxton.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As 'Flaxton' pre-dates 1900 its site may have potential archaeological significance relating to both the construction of the homestead and the colonial use of the property.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

'Flaxton', the Stevenson homestead, has overall significance to Flaxton and the Waimakariri district as a whole. The dwelling has historical significance as a colonial homestead associated with an early settler family and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of several generations of the Stevenson family. 'Flaxton' has architectural significance as an Italianate villa style dwelling and technological and craftsmanship significance for its later 19th century construction methods and materials. The former Stevenson farmhouse has contextual value for the contribution it makes to the historic character of its rural setting and its site has potential archaeological significance in view of the property's colonial use and development.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 11 March 1875, p. 2; 1 October 1880, p. 2; 8 December 1881, p. 3; 30 July 1885, p. 2.
- *Oamaru Mail* 7 May 1906, p. 2.
- *Lyttleton Times* 10 January 1872, p. 1; 20 February 1873, p. 2; 5 March 1874, p. 2; 23 December 1902, p. 1.
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903; available online.
- DN Hawkins *Beyond the Waimakariri* Christchurch, 2001; available online.
- <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/3798>
- <https://culturewaitaki.org.nz/north-otago-museum/blog/god-and-empire>
- <http://www.nzbotanicalsociety.org.nz/newsletter/NZBotSoc-2001-66.pdf>
- <http://www.young.co.nz/Architects/124/FlaxtonHomestead>

REPORT COMPLETED

11 March 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, limited to immediate garden setting, 38 Flaxton Road, Flaxton.



Land parcel as a whole.



MRS J. STEVENSON'S HOMESTEAD, FLAXTON.

Cyclopedia of NZ.