

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

2021 District Plan Item No. HH082
HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Rakahuri', former Ensor homestead
ADDRESS 2 Rakahuri Road, Glentui
PHOTOGRAPH



(www)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H111 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 48072

VALUATION NUMBER 2150004900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1918

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** JS Guthrie, architect

STYLE English Domestic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey homestead with L-shaped footprint and hipped roof forms. Rounded bays with conical roofs frame central entry on principal, north-facing elevation. Ground floor veranda shelters main entry and encircles north-west bay; column supports. Recessed balcony over entry. First floor bay windows reference Palladian motif with arched central window; ground floor French doors are glazed with multiple panes. Tall chimneystacks. Barrel-vaulted pool house.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Reinforced concrete, timber, slate.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Covered pool house addition to west (c.1990).

SETTING

The homestead is located off the southern terminus of Rakahuri Road on the north bank of the Ashley Rakahuri River. To the south across the river is the settlement of Summerhill. The extent of scheduling is the immediate garden setting of the homestead, rather than the land parcel as a whole.

HISTORY

JD Millton's Rakahuri Estate (1889) was acquired by Hugh Ensor in late 1906. Ensor married Kathleen McCracken in the following year and the couple had five children. The Ensors' homestead, including a new wing then in course of construction, was completely destroyed by fire on 5 January 1918. Four months later Christchurch architect JS Guthrie called tenders for a new residence. The Ensors also had a house in Christchurch and an interest in Double Hill Station at Lake Coleridge. Hugh Ensor died at Rakahuri in July 1943; his obituary stated that he was a leading Corriedale sheep breeder and exporter. The executors of Ensor's estate put Rakahuri on the market in August 1944 and it sold later in the month, having initially been passed in at auction. In 1944 the property comprised 2270 acres; advertisements for the clearing sale after the property had sold listed the contents of the homestead in some detail. Rakahuri has passed through a number of hands since 1944; by the late 1980s the homestead had been converted for use as a function and conference centre. The house is now back in private residential use.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri' has historical significance for its association with the Ensor family and, more generally, the farming history of North Canterbury. It also represents the pattern by which many large country estates throughout Canterbury were adapted for hospitality uses in the later 20th century.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri' has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its early residents.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri' has architectural significance as the work of notable Canterbury architect, JS 'Jack' Guthrie (1883-1946). Guthrie worked in partnership with his brother Maurice and in the 1910s and 1920s the firm was one of Christchurch's most successful. Jack Guthrie is a significant figure in New Zealand's architectural history for the design of the landmark California bungalow 'Los Angeles' (1909) and for introducing the American Colonial Georgian Revival style to New Zealand with Long Cottage (1917). Guthrie had earlier designed alterations and additions to 'Rakahuri' (1912), which were lost in the fire of 1918. In addition to a number of Canterbury homestead designs, the Guthrie Brothers were also responsible for the 1918 extension of Ivey Hall at Lincoln College and the main block at Christchurch Boys' High School (1926). The partnership was dissolved in 1926.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri' has technological and craftsmanship significance for its reinforced construction, which reflects the owners' response to the loss of the previous homestead to fire.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri' has contextual value for the contribution it makes to the historic character of the property and as a well-known North Canterbury homestead.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the dwelling post-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological value given the colonial development of the property. From 1874 until 1889, when the property was subdivided and passed to his son, 'Rakahuri' was part of Captain Millton's 'Birch Hill' run.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

'Rakahuri', the former Ensor homestead, has overall heritage significance to the Glentui/Okuku area and Waimakariri district as a whole. The homestead has historical significance for its association with the Ensor family and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its early inhabitants. 'Rakahuri' has architectural significance as a simplified English Domestic Revival style design homestead by JS Guthrie and technological and craftsmanship significance for its reinforced concrete construction. The homestead has contextual value for the contribution it makes to its rural setting and as a well-known North Canterbury homestead. The site of 'Rakahuri' has potential archaeological value given the property's pre-1900 development and use.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

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REPORT COMPLETED

13 March 2019

AUTHOR

Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services



Extent of scheduling, limited to garden setting, 'Rakahuri', 2 Rakahuri Road, Glentui.



Land parcel as a whole, homestead site marked by star.