

**WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

2021 District Plan Item No.

HH099

HERITAGE ITEM NAME

St David's Union Church (Presbyterian)

ADDRESS

1664 Cust Road, Cust

PHOTOGRAPH



(Dr A McEwan, 10 July 2019)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.
(at time of assessment)

n / a

HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY

n / a

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Part RS 5987

VALUATION NUMBER

2158014200

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION

1935-36

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER**

Cecil Wood, architect; Messrs Wadey & Efford,
contractors

STYLE

Arts & Crafts / Gothic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with irregular rectangular footprint and gabled roof. Entrance porch on south elevation has a broach spire topped by a weather vane. Vestry on the north side has a hipped roof. Splayed buttresses at each corner of the main section, paired windows with stepped, ziggurat heads. Zig zag hood moulds over door and window openings on the entrance. Board and batten gable ends, exposed rafters.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Reinforced concrete cavity walls, textured cement finish, timber, tiles.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Shingle roof replaced with tiles (date unknown).

SETTING

The church is close to the road boundary on the north side of Cust Road slightly offset from its intersection with Earlys Road. A hall is at the rear of the site, which is open to the roadway. The extent of setting is the land parcel on which the church and hall are located, partly in view of the potential archaeological values of the site.

HISTORY

Cust's first Presbyterian church was opened in 1885, roughly a decade after services had first commenced in the village. The current St David's Church was erected on the same site in 1935; the foundation stone having been laid on 24 October of that year. The church was officially opened by the Rev NH Finch on 21 March 1936. (The earlier church was sold for removal and Samuel Smith of 'Bankhead' proposed to relocate it to West Eyreton for use as a farm granary.) The first wedding held in the church took place in early April. Since 1972 St David's has been part of the Oxford District Union Church parish; services are held on the first and third Sundays of the month.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church has historical and social significance for its association with the Presbyterian and Union congregations of Cust and the history of the local church community, which dates to the mid-1870s. St David's also represents the church building efforts that were undertaken by various denominations during the Depression, at which time the government offered a 10% subsidy on the capital cost of building projects in order to provide unemployment relief within the construction industry.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church has cultural and spiritual significance as a place of Presbyterian and Union church worship and fellowship. The church's sanctuary window commemorates Driver Alexander Dewar who was killed in Crete on 21 May 1941 during World War II.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church has architectural significance as the work of acclaimed Christchurch architect Cecil Wood (1878-1947). Wood was one of New Zealand's most successful and highly regarded inter-war architects. He trained with Frederick Strouts and went on to design the Hare Memorial Library (1915) and Memorial Dining Hall (1923-25) at Christ's College; Tai Tapu's St Paul's Anglican Church (1930-31) and Public Library (1931-32), and St Barnabas's Anglican Church at Woodend (H086, 1932-33). Although he did not live to complete the building, Wood also designed the Anglican Cathedral of St Paul in Wellington (1937-47). The Cust church represents a refinement of the church Wood designed for the Anglicans of Woodend; the similarity between the two churches being noted at the time that St David's was opened.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church has technological and craftsmanship significance for its interwar concrete construction and detailing by Rangiora building contractors Wadey and Efford. The firm was also responsible for erecting the Victoria Park band rotunda (1906) and the Catholic convent (1907), both in Rangiora. The building's concrete construction is a sign of the economies needed to progress building projects during the Depression. A two-light stained glass window in the east sanctuary was installed in 1947. Its design by Frederick Mash of Christchurch was based on two paintings, William Holman Hunt's *Light of the World* (1851-53) and Frederick Shields' *The Good Shepherd*. Mash noted at the time of the window's dedication that it was to be his last commission before he retired and was similar to a window he had installed in the Woodend church.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church has contextual significance as a prominently located historic feature on the main road through Cust. The church shares the site with a hall (pre-c.1940) and is to the east of St James' on the Cust Anglican Church (H005).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the church post-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the earlier development of the property by the Presbyterian church.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

St David's Union Church (Presbyterian) has overall heritage significance to Cust and Waimakariri district as a whole. The church has historic and social significance for its association with the Presbyterian and Union congregations of Cust and cultural and spiritual significance for its religious use and commemorative fittings. St David's Union Church has architectural significance as an Arts and Crafts design by pre-eminent Christchurch architect Cecil Wood and technological and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its concrete construction and detailing by Wadey & Efford of Rangiora. St David's Union Church has contextual significance as a historic feature on a prominent site within Cust. The church property has potential archaeological significance in view of the prior development that occurred on the site.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

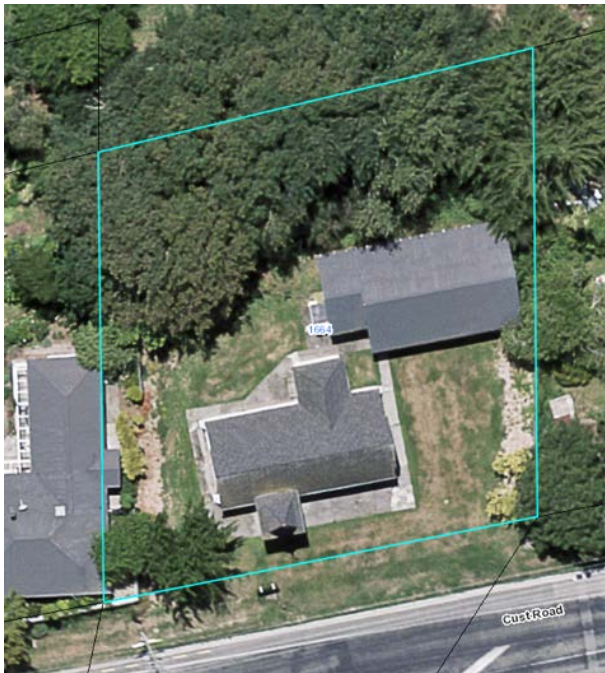
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REPORT COMPLETED

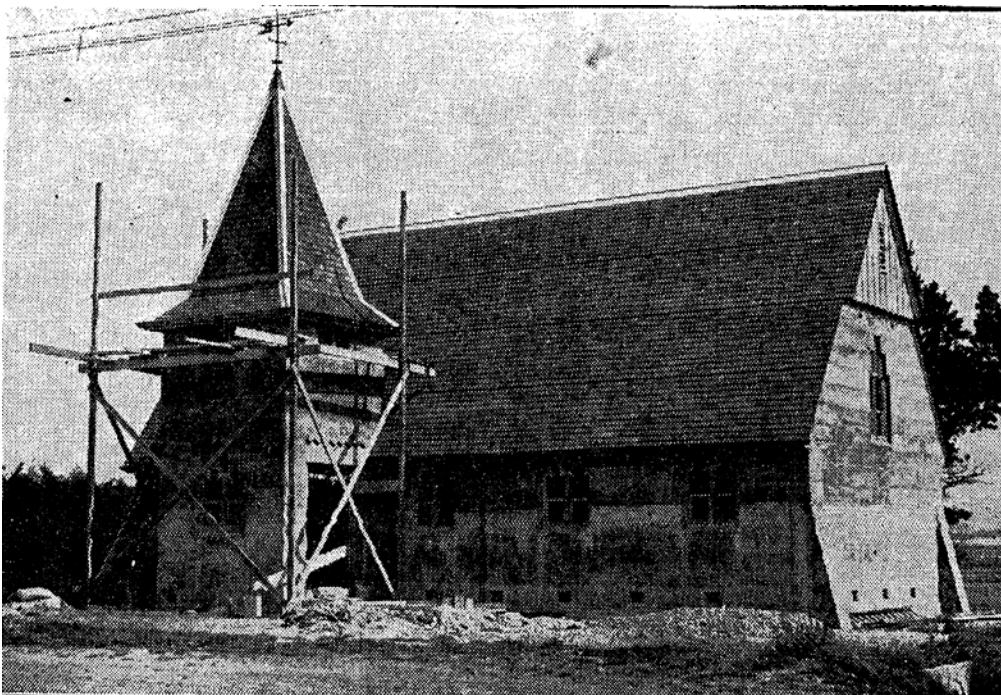
4 July 2019

AUTHOR

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Extent of setting, 1664 Cust Road, Cust.



'New Church in North Canterbury' *Press* 8 February 1936, p. 21. PapersPast.