

**Before the Hearings Panel
Appointed by Porirua City Council**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Porirua Proposed District Plan

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ALISON DANGERFIELD ON BEHALF OF
HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND POUHERE TAONGA**

PORIRUA PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN

Statement of Evidence on Built Heritage

19 November 2021

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Alison Waiwae Hamilton Dangerfield. I am an Area Manager and Conservation Advisor for Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga ('HNZPT'). I hold a Bachelor of Architecture with Honours and a Bachelor of Building Science Degree from Victoria University of Wellington. I am a Member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, non-practising.
2. I have been employed by HNZPT for nearly 16 years, advising on built heritage matters in the Central Region, from Taranaki to Hawke's Bay, to Marlborough, Nelson and the Chatham Islands.
3. On an annual basis, I have reviewed around 200 heritage places (Listed and non-Listed) which are proposed for new or reviewed Listing, scheduling, future building development or demolition. I have written and reviewed physical descriptions of heritage buildings as a means of establishing heritage values. I have reviewed, edited and peer-reviewed Conservation Plans for properties both under HNZPT guardianship and wider ownership. I have undertaken capital and operational property management for the HNZPT for Crown owned buildings in its guardianship.
4. In addition to my role with HNZPT, I have 30 years' experience in building and architecture, including three years' experience teaching at Victoria University of Wellington School of Architecture.
5. Although this evidence is not prepared for an Environment Court hearing I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014 and have complied with it in when preparing this evidence. I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions I express. This evidence is within my area of expertise. The data, information, facts, assumptions I have considered in forming my opinions, and reasons for my opinions are set out in my evidence.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

6. My evidence is given for HNZPT in relation to the historic heritage chapter of the Proposed District Plan. I have focused my evidence on several matters on which my opinion differs to

the 42A report writer. In particular, I address the following issues: settings of historic heritage, scheduling of interiors for heritage buildings, subdivision of historic heritage sites and a new historic area.

Historic Heritage - Settings

7. A full understanding of historic heritage includes an understanding of the surrounds of the place. The surrounds, or setting, may have changed over time. Even so, I am of the view that heritage places are important for how they fitted into the townscape or landscape. There is an appreciation of its purpose by knowing what occupied its 'elbow room'. Heritage New Zealand has requested that a small group of places (noted in Para 149 Section 42a Report) include a description or definition of its particular setting.
8. The reason to describe settings is the same as for other heritage values. The setting of a heritage place is the space around a place which helps describe its activities and purpose, and supports its heritage values. It is the space that helps a place make sense. For instance: it is the garden that an historic home sits within which gives a sense of its family use; it is the space around a theatre or town hall that gives the gravitas of community assembly for a purpose; and it is the space around a memorial to allow for visibility and communal contemplation in commemorative gathering.
9. Without a setting, we are left with little understanding of how the place fitted in past times, and how it is now related to its original landscape or townscape.
10. There are 8 places in Schedule 3 which Heritage New Zealand has identified without a setting and proposes should have a setting. In my view it is logical and useful to complete a description of them as historic assets by including the setting.
11. A setting could describe in short and simple terms the immediate space around a place. For instance, the Titahi Bay Boatsheds could have the seaside location and proximity noted. In doing so it would recognise that a location by the sea is an important descriptor of its values.
12. The setting might include other landscape features such as a garden or river or hill which are relevant to the place. In doing so, the historic feature is understood by the roomy-ness, or busy-ness that it enjoys, or as in the case of the Transmission Station and Shed, the landscape that was relevant to its operation.

13. The heritage place may be understood by its relationship to other built features which might be described in a setting. For instance, the Plimmerton Railway Station has a context which includes a platform and railway lines within its setting. Even while railway lines may not be part of its scheduling, they are important to the sense of a railway station. Without them, a railway station is a building of ambiguity.
14. An alternative to describing by text is to denote an area around the place by an enclosing line on a plan. It may be as small as the floor plan of a structure (the footprint) or as large as the lot size. It may conceivably be a further distance around the feature. The Motuhara tunnel, for instance, has a setting that includes the approaches at both ends (possibly for some distance). Approaches and entrances make visual, historical and functional sense. Drawing a line to include the approaches is an appropriate setting.
15. For the eight places identified I concur that short, concise descriptors of the settings would be worthy and valuable additions to the heritage citations and I recommend that these be written for each of the eight places. A conservation professional with experience in identifying heritage values could assess these with consideration over 5 days.

Historic Heritage - Subdivision of Heritage Sites

16. Heritage New Zealand has proposed that the 'integrity of a heritage site' is important when considering the subdivision of a site. Dictionary definitions refer to integrity as being unimpaired and having a soundness ¹. When considering subdivision, it collects the impacts together, which may in themselves seem minor, and asks consideration of an overall aim that the historic heritage will be unimpaired.
17. Many historic heritage sites can be subdivided and yet retain their integrity. I believe there are reasonable and manageable outcomes for a great number; sometimes the site just may be too small to leave a place with integrity.

¹ Dictionary.com: 'state of being whole, entire or undiminished
Collins Dictionary: the quality of being unimpaired; soundness

18. A subdivision can assist an owner realise money, or a dream, and the heritage place often can cope with a subdivision without having its values affected. Whether there are impacts is entirely site specific. I believe it remains prudent to consider the effects on historic heritage from subdivisions and the following generalisations show why integrity is worthy of being assessed and considered.
19. Subdivisions should show a respectful distance around historic heritage. If a site is very large, and the feature of historic heritage is in one corner, then the subdivision can be located so that enough space around the heritage feature is maintained and the heritage values can be unaffected.
20. However, for a site where the subdivided land takes most of the available space, and a heritage place finds its context or yard space severely constricted, the heritage values will certainly be diminished. The views of the place may be affected; the relationship to the context constrained; the ability to repair and maintain the place may be affected which will impact on its life; and importantly, the understanding of the place would be diminished through the use of the subdivided land. For instance, this might happen to:
- A large or small house given a tight boundary for its current use, where most of the grounds are subdivided away for development. The potential for a high value future use, using more space, is lost.
 - A public amenity or a commercial heritage site where (seemingly unnecessary) land is subdivided away, thus reducing the opportunities for the heritage place to be supported and protected.
 - A rural heritage property where the heritage house has seemingly sufficient space but the remaining land used for rural purposes, but may include large structures or chemical spraying near the boundary.
21. I have had experience of many places in a predicament where the effects of subdivision were considered minor but the wholistic effect on the place was one of integrity loss. Proposals as early as pre-application stage provide the greatest opportunity to gather the impacts together and view the entire subdivision effects in terms of being undiminished and unimpaired. Two examples follow.
22. **Hoffman Kiln, Palmerston North**, category 1 historic place, where the original proposal for 26 single house site sites of around 320m² to 420m². I could see at the outset a range of

difficulties that would not only affect the wellbeing of the kiln and consequently its integrity of values, but would also cause the kiln (and its values) to impact on the future houses. The pre-application discussions with council raised the concerns. Concurrently, an opportunity arose for a medical centre which, although much larger buildings, provides a good fit with the historic Hoffman Kiln. The needs for carparking and entry allow space between buildings and oversight which is essential to avoiding vandalism. The scale of the buildings is not similar and yet the integrity of the heritage building is more assured with this proposal. The designers have referenced brickmaking in the new medical centre, and it has placed this facility in an area of great need. It is an excellent result. <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/194>

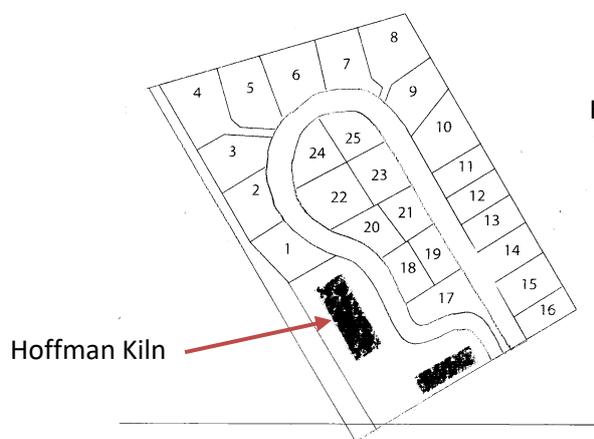


Image 1: Hoffman Site Housing Development
First proposal by Higgins Ltd, 2007

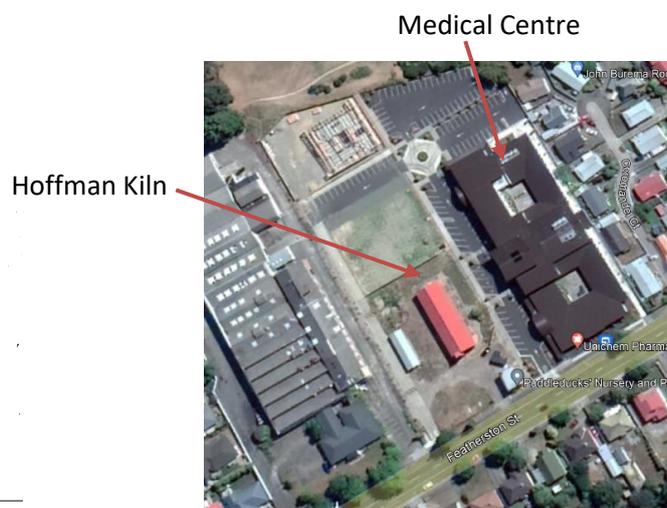


Image 2: Red roof on the Hoffman Kiln with the grey-brown Medical Centre and a further building under construction to the north

23. Disappointingly for **The Grange, Motueka**, category 2 historic place², a charming 1863 rural house, the overall outcome has been negative. This historic house stands as an example of the change arising from subdivision that leaves it impaired and is very hard to undo.

24. When the subdivision occurred over a decade and half ago, the future outcome was not foreseen by the owner, and the result has been most unfortunate for the values of the historic house. Its context and surrounds, and its close proximity to the industrial activities of an

² <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1668>

orchard and vineyard have not harmed the physical fabric of the house but have completely removed the appreciation that can be gained. Articulated lorries use the driveway to the house, and 40m stacks of large apple crates are placed along the boundary. The industrial operation is 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Unfortunately it could have been avoided - with forethought, firstly by the owner.



Image 3: The Grange, Whakarewa Street, Motueka with the new sheds and stacks nearby (notation added)

25. I support the request to include the integrity of the historic place as part of the policy for subdivisions. An assessment of the integrity of a place of historic heritage would gather up the impacts on the place and look to see if the building is unimpaired and undiminished. The physical values, the context and surrounds, the ability to repair and maintain the place, and the ability of the place to be used in the way relevant to its history, or an appropriate adaptive reuse would all contribute to this. It could be helpful in allowing heritage sites to be safe while

promoting appropriate use of available land. It would not hinder subdivisions that did not cause impairment.

Historic Heritage - Interiors

26. There is the potential for places to have their interiors recognised. I am of the opinion that if interiors have heritage values and integrity, then the schedule should include a statement about the interior.
27. Interior spaces of heritage places are significant for the ways in which they can add to, and even complete, the story of the place. The dimensions and design of rooms, and their assigned purposes, contribute to the understanding of the structure. Although furniture might have gone or been replaced, there is a tangible understanding of the ways in which people lived or work through the interior spaces.
28. A room has the ability, through its materials and design, to show how the building was used. Whether it is decorative ostentatiously or simply lined will have been steered by the relative wealth and circumstances, or the aspirations, of the owners. The interiors can show the actual spaces where people lived and include and go beyond the 'best' or 'red carpet' rooms to for instance, the size and materials of a dairy (where butter was made); or the small bedroom angles of a worker's cottage; the grace of the main stairway; the steepness of narrow stairs. Interiors show how people lived and worked.
29. Some interiors are worthy of recognition and I recommend that Porirua consider all its scheduled places for their interiors for potentially adding to the citation. In particular, now, I propose that the Gear Homestead schedule citation include a statement about its interiors.

Interiors: Gear Homestead

30. The 1887 Gear Homestead, a category 2 historic place, is significant as the home of James Gear. It reflects the status of an early pioneer in business of the export of refrigerated meat and the founder of the Gear Meat Preserving and Freezing Company. It is significant for its architecture as a wooden palazzo-style house, built of native timbers, with balustraded

verandas, an impressive arrays of columns and a large bracketed cornice. It established a home of gentility for a trade family of prosperous means.³



Image 4: Gear Homestead hall, R Murray, 2007

31. Its interior also reflects the home that Gear established with his family. It has the rooms that show a gracious level of means without total ostentation. It presents a functional but large family house with beautiful and finely worked features. It has been repaired and maintained through its life and is largely and generally unchanged. As a council owned building, it is a historic place that Porirua City Council could recognise the living and bedroom interiors for heritage values through scheduling. The kitchen and service areas could be excluded from the citation as these are spaces which need change for a place to be adaptively reused.

³ Footnote: Gear established his business in 1882 in Petone, where it was one of the most important industries and one of Wellington's largest employers. Since 1975, the Gear Homestead has been owned by Porirua City Council and is an elegant functions venue. The homestead is a two-storey timber weatherboard house with a corrugated iron roof and balustraded timber verandas surrounds the house on three sides, with an open balustrade.

32. The interior has floors, doors and windows of matai, totara and kauri which was a building material suitable at the time for a house of its type, but is now rare within Porirua City as there are few heritage houses of this size and importance.⁴ In describing the Gear Homestead interior, it has been assessed as:

“The house is of 18 rooms. The ground floor contains reception, living and kitchen areas. A special point must be made of the fine Italian marble fireplaces in many of the rooms.⁵ The very best heart timber (was used) and (it has) many unique features, many of which still survive today.⁶ The upstairs is reached by a fine staircase leading in the first place to a mezzanine. A back servant’s staircase leads from this area down to the kitchen quarters. The main staircase continues under an archway decorated with acanthus leaf corbels to the upper floor. The windows and doors on the upper storey correspond in position to that of the ground floor.⁷”

33. In 2010, because of the importance of the interiors, great care was taken with the installation of a sprinkler system to avoid damaging the interiors. Conservation architect Russell Murray was engaged to work with the sprinkler installers to plan a discreet installation that avoided damage to significant fabric. Pipework and sprinkler heads were largely concealed. Cornices and ceiling roses were protected. Pipework reticulation was laid behind plastered ceilings to avoid cutting through timber linings and floors. The ‘patina of age’ was required to be protected. The result is that the Gear Homestead has retained its interiors largely intact.

34. Gear Homestead is rare in Porirua for its typology in having the integrity for its interior fabric and the retention of its heritage values. It is my opinion that the Gear Homestead is an ideal candidate to be recognised for its living and bedroom interiors.

4 Papakowhai is another example of this type and size of house

⁵ *Gear Estate Report*, New Zealand Historic Places Report, O Day, 1975

⁶ Gear Homestead, publication by the Porirua Museum, 1993

⁷ Gear Estate Report, New Zealand Historic Places Report, O Day, 1975

Heritage Areas – Austrian State Houses in Titahi Bay

35. Heritage New Zealand has proposed that further heritage areas should be considered for inclusion in the District Plan. I concur with this proposal and consider that a selection of the Titahi Bay Austrian State Houses represents a good candidate for inclusion in the schedule.
36. The Austrian state houses are unique in New Zealand. Five hundred houses were built in Titahi Bay between 1953 and 1955 to provide low cost housing for a post-war generation. Austrian tradesmen were brought to New Zealand and employed to build the houses out of kitsets shipped from Austria.
37. The houses have been the subject of assessment and writing. The ‘Housing Corporation State Housing Thematic Study’ included the houses in its assessment. Researcher and curator Tony Kellaway marked the 40th anniversary of the houses with an exhibition “40 Years On, 1953-1993, The Austrian Houses of Titahi Bay” and a book. Many of the houses remain in Housing New Zealand ownership as rental accommodation, while others have passed to private owners.
38. Generally, as private houses, they are well maintained. Roofs and weatherboards have been replaced in a like-for-like manner, but the form and outward expression remains distinctively original. (see image below)



Image 5: Typical Austrian State House, November 2021, A Dangerfield

39. A number of the state rental houses show a need for maintenance however it is these that retain the most original fabric - with the neat floor plans over open baseboards; the arrays of windows with noticeable differences to other state houses; and the distinctively open trellised entrance porch.

40. A number of streets have very good collections of the houses and several streets could be selected to form a new historic area. It will also always be possible to have non-contributing buildings within an historic area. Therefore I propose that the existing Austrian State Houses in Te Pene Avenue from Te Puke Street to Piko Street, both sides, not including rear sections or the corner shop but including vacant sites be made into an historic area. Any houses that are not Austrian State Houses could be non-contributing buildings within the area. See map below.



Map: Te Pene Avenue, Titahi Bay

41. There are a number of reasons why this street would be appropriate as a historic area. The street contains good examples of the Austrian State House, in their original form and location,

with many original features. The houses are placed in a row of similarity which showcases their form and character. The houses comprise both privately owned and houses owned by Housing New Zealand. The houses are visible as an array on a well-used route but are elevated above the road which allows them to be seen and appreciated clearly at a distance. Further when repeating forms are side by side, the values of them all rise beyond the sum of their parts. In Te Pene Avenue, the houses face the street from opposite sides and in doing so increase the appearance and contextual values of the Austrian State House.



Image 6: Austrian State Houses on the western side of Te Pene Avenue, November 2021, A Dangerfield



Image 7: Austrian State Houses on the eastern side of Te Pene Avenue, November 2021, A Dangerfield

42. I am of the view that a selected group Austrian State Houses would be a worthy addition to the recognition of the heritage in Porirua. Even with future proposals for housing development, an historic area of this size and array will retain an understanding of the progression of state housing and increase the appreciation of state housing in the long term. This has been seen to happen elsewhere, such as Tarikaka St in the Ngaio suburb of Wellington.

In conclusion

The above comments are my considered opinions based on my knowledge and experience of heritage and are to assist understanding within the evidence provided by my colleague Mr Raymond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Dangerfield". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'A' and 'D'.

Alison Dangerfield

19 November 2021