

GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall

ADDRESS 71 Middle Street, Pukerau

PHOTOGRAPH



(April 2022)

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

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Section 36 Block II Town of Pukerau

GDC FILE NUMBER 3271513

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1882

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** D Cunningham, contractor

STYLE Vernacular

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with rectangular footprint and gabled roof. Lean-to wing runs along east elevation; shorter lean-tos at north end of west elevation and at rear (north). Symmetrical, south-facing facade has double doors set within blind wall and small shuttered window in end wall of east lean-to. Two-light double-hung sash windows on west wall; stepped parapet conceals gable end.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, timber, cement stucco, corrugated metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

External walls stuccoed; façade remodelled with brick? (date unknown).

SETTING

The former hall stands on the north side of Middle Street, in the block bounded by Pukerau Street in the west and Kaiwera Road in the east. The hall site has an open aspect to the south and is across the road from the settlement's playing courts, sports ground and current community hall. The scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the building is located.

HISTORY

The site for a 'Settler Public Hall' was set aside in Middle Street when Pukerau was surveyed in 1879. An Athenaeum Hall was erected in 1882, so-called because it contained both a library (athenaeum) and a public hall. The hall opened on 29 September 1882 and on April 20 of the following year a benefit concert was held in the new building to liquidate the outstanding debt for its construction. The evening included a performance by the Clinton Brass Band and a scene from Shakespeare's play *Othello*. The hall accommodated Methodist church services in the later 19th century and was the setting for community farewells and socials. A new hall was built in c.1970; the historic hall is now unoccupied.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has historic and social significance for its association with the people of Pukerau and the social life of the community over many decades.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has cultural value as a site of community identity for over 80 years.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has architectural value as a late Victorian vernacular hall that was designed to be fit for purpose. The hall's builder was likely also its designer.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has craftsmanship value as a demonstration of late Victorian building methods and materials. David Cunningham was the local blacksmith and undertaker, the latter occupation frequently undertaken by a carpenter or builder by trade. Cunningham also built a bridge across the Waikoikoi Stream in 1890.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has contextual significance as a local feature that serves as a reminder of the colonial beginnings of the settlement.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the building pre-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological value relating to the colonial development of Pukerau.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has overall heritage significance to Pukerau and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historic and social significance for its association with the Pukerau community and cultural value as a place of community identity for over 80 years. The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has architectural value as a late Victorian vernacular hall designed to be fit for purpose and craftsmanship value for its late Victorian construction and materials by local contractor and undertaker David Cunningham. The former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall has contextual significance as a historic feature and as a reminder of the colonial settlement of Pukerau; its site has potential archaeological value.

REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 17 April 1883, p. 3; 24 April 1883, p. 2; 4 April 1884, p. 3; 11 April 1884, p. 3; 24 June 1887, p. 2; 1 September 1887, p. 3; 19 February 1892, p. 5; 19 October 1899, p. 2; 21 October 1899, p. 4; 24 March 1900, p. 4; 21 May 1901, p. 2;

20 August 1901, p. 2; 12 June 1907, p. 3; 18 June 1913, p. 1; 1 August 1914, p. 4; 3 May 1917, p. 1.

- *Southland Times* 2 September 1882, p. 4.
- *Otago Daily Times* 2 August 1949, p. 10.
- *Otago Witness* 31 July 1890, p. 19.
- *Evening Star* 7 November 1889, p. 2.
- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc04Cycl-t1-body1-d5-d51-d41.html>
- <https://pukeraunz.weebly.com/hall.html>

REPORT COMPLETED

18 May 2022

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, former Pukerau Athenaeum Hall, 71 Middle Street, Pukerau.