

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

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** former National Bank of New Zealand & resident officer's quarters

**ADDRESS** 15 Mersey Street, Gore

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(April 2022)

**DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** H29 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** n / a  
(at time of assessment)

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Part Lot 1 DP 2209

**GDC FILE NUMBER** 3215338

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1925

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** Atkins & Mitchell, architects

**STYLE** Classical temple

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Overheight single-storey building with irregular rectangular footprint and flat roof concealed by parapets. Symmetrical façade features inset portico with fluted columns and frosted side and fanlight windows, with X-pattern glazing bars, framing a central door. Entry is accessed via a short flight of steps; classical motifs within portico and beneath cornice feature wave and shield and rod patterns. Tripartite windows have multi-pane upper casements set with frosted glass. Principal windows on east wall are framed by pilasters.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Reinforced concrete.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Removal of wrought iron railings between columns, installation of air conditioning unit in west window on facade (pre-2008). Removal of building name lettering (2009).

**SETTING**

The former National Bank stands on the south side of Mersey Street, occupying almost the whole of its site. The building is located within the block bounded by Fairfield Street in the west and Main Street in the east; a driveway runs along the east side of the building while to the west is the blank wall of the Gore RSA extension (c.2017/18). The scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the building is located.

## **HISTORY**

The National Bank of New Zealand opened a branch in Gore in 1902, by which time the Bank of New Zealand, the Bank of Australasia, the Colonial Bank, and the Bank of New South Wales had already established a presence in the town. Plans for a new National Bank building had already been in hand for some time when it was announced in October 1919 that, with World War I having passed, it was hoped they would soon be realised. In the event it was not until January 1925 that tenders were called. CRS (Charles Ricardo Stephens) Barrett was the manager of the bank at the time the new building was erected; he later managed the Invercargill branch until his retirement in 1931. Following the purchase of the National Bank by the ANZ Bank, the two local branches merged and the Mersey Street building was vacated by the bank in July 2009. The building is now in use as professional offices.

## **HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank has historic significance for its association with the development of the district's financial infrastructure and as a reflection of the rising fortunes of Gore's central business district during the interwar period. It was reported in 1919 that almost the full length of Mersey Street between Fairfield and Main Streets was being redeveloped.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of past bank staff and their customers.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank has architectural significance for its classical temple-style design by the bank's architects, Atkins and Mitchell of Wellington, in association with William Dunning of Dunedin. Atkins & Mitchell also designed the National Bank in Invercargill (1927-28), which is very similar in style to the Gore building. The practise, which had begun as Atkins & Bacon in 1908, was continued by Cyril Mitchell and renamed Mitchell and Mitchell in 1932. During the 40-year span of his career Cyril Mitchell was architect to the Reserve Bank and the National Bank and undertook a study of banking chambers in Europe. It was customary for a local architect to supervise the erection of a building designed by a bank or corporate entity's architects; Dunning was born in Tasmania and started his practice in Timaru before relocating to Dunedin where he also supervised the National Bank in Dunedin North.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank has technological and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its interwar reinforced concrete construction and classical detailing. The contractor for the building is currently unknown.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank has contextual significance as a prominent feature within the central business district's streetscape.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the structure post-dates 1900, its site may have limited potential archaeological value.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The former National Bank of New Zealand & resident officer's quarters has overall heritage significance to Gore and to the district of Gore as a whole. The building has historic significance for its association with the development of the district's financial infrastructure and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former staff and their

customers. The former National Bank has architectural significance as a classical temple style design by leading Wellington architects Atkins & Mitchell and contextual significance as a prominent feature within the town centre. As the building post-dates 1900, its site may have limited potential archaeological value.

## REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 15 July 1902, p. 2; 26 July 1902, p. 3; 9 October 1919, p. 4.
- *Otago Daily Times* 14 January 1925, p. 9; 9 July 1927, p. 14.
- *Evening Star* 18 October 1927, p. 2; 26 October 1927, p. 1.
- *Western Star* 23 June 1922, p. 2; 25 January 1927, p. 2.
- *Auckland Star* 3 January 1931, p. 7.
- <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/1435>
- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc04Cycl-t1-body1-d5-d51-d42.html>

**REPORT COMPLETED**

10 May 2022

**AUTHOR**

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Extent of scheduling, former National Bank, 15 Mersey Street, Gore.