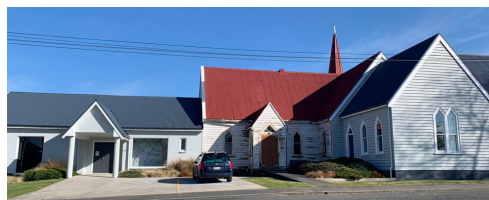


GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former East Gore Presbyterian Church / East Gore Art Centre

ADDRESS 6 Rock Street, Gore

PHOTOGRAPH



(October 2021)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H1 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 2530 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Sections 3 & 4 Block XI Town of East Gore

GDC FILE NUMBER 3262926 & 3248701

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1881

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** RA Lawson, architect; Thomas Latham, contractor

STYLE Gothic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Single-storey building with additive footprint and gabled roof forms. South-facing elevation features a gabled entrance porch flanked by bell tower with a broach spire. North elevation has gabled entry and perpendicular wing with lower ridgeline and secondary entry. Double-hung sash windows have upturned V-shaped heads; triple lancets are inset with louvres in the upper section of the bell tower. Former church hall abuts the east end of church; has gabled entrance portico carried on simple circular columns.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timber framing and cladding, concrete, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Organ installed (1887). Alterations & additions, including new entry off Rock Street and vestry at north end (1891-92). Hall addition (1964). Hall façade remodelled; paired windows on north wall built to road boundary changed to lancets; buttresses, roof vents and chimney removed (c.2009?).

SETTING

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church stands on the south side of Rock Street, in the centre of the block that is bounded by Huron Street to the east. The street is largely residential in character and is elevated above River Terrace and the Mataura River. The road and rail bridges providing access to the town centre are located to the south-west of the

church property. The scheduled setting encompasses the two land parcels on which the building is located; this is consistent with the Heritage NZPT extent of list entry.

HISTORY

Presbyterian services were first conducted in the Gore district by visiting clergy in the early 1860s. By the 1870s a parish based at Mataura had been established and services in Gore were held in private homes or, later, Mackay's Hall. The survey of East Gore in 1877 spurred the development of the settlement and, consequently, the efforts of the local Presbyterian congregation to build a church of their own. Tenders were called in February 1881 and the church opened on 16 October of the same year. In 1884 the congregation called their first minister, the Rev Andrew Mackay, and a manse was built; the Presbytery of Mataura, centred on Gore, was created in 1891. At the same time additions to the church were undertaken, once the purchase of the neighbouring section had been accomplished. The church reopened on 7 February 1892; the new wings changing the orientation of the building from north-south to east-west. The establishment of St Andrew's Church in West Gore eventually led to the East Gore church becoming a second charge in 1952. A hall and new manse were built in 1964 and the church's centenary was celebrated in 1981; dwindling attendance eventually led to the church's closure in 1995. The property was subsequently leased to the Gore Apostolic Church and then acquired by the Eastern Southland Art Gallery in 2001 for use as an artists' studio and residence. The conversion project has been supported by Frans Baetens and Magda van Gils of Auckland's Muka Studio; an open day was held to showcase the new East Gore Art Centre in September 2020.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has historic and social significance for its association with the foundation and development of the Presbyterian congregation of Gore and, more recently, with community efforts to repurpose the building as an art studio and residence.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has cultural and spiritual significance as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The building is associated with 114 years of Christian worship and is esteemed by members of the arts community.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has high architectural significance as one of only two extant timber churches designed by leading Dunedin architect RA Lawson. Robert Lawson (1833-1902) was born and trained in Scotland; he spent a period in Australia before settling in New Zealand in 1862. Lawson's most noted commission was First Church in Dunedin (1867-73); he also designed a number of other Presbyterian churches as well as banks in Dunedin and Oamaru. The 1891-92 additions to the church were designed by William Sharp (1847-1936), an English-born civil engineer who worked in Japan before immigrating to New Zealand in 1878; Sharp was based in Invercargill.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has craftsmanship significance for the quality of its Victorian timber construction and detailing. Thomas Latham (1830-91) immigrated from England in 1858 and, after a decade working as a builder in Dunedin, he later took up farming at Waikaka and augmented his income from that endeavour with building work in and around Gore. Invercargill contractor H Brown undertook the 1891-92 alterations and additions to the church.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has contextual significance as a local landmark whose spire can be seen from the opposite side of the Mataura River. The building serves as a reminder of the history and development of East Gore.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the former church pre-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological significance relating to its earlier use and development.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has overall heritage significance to Gore and to the district of Gore as a whole. The church has historical and social significance for its association with the foundation and development of the Presbyterian church in Gore and cultural and spiritual significance given its historic ecclesiastical purpose and association with the religious and artistic life of the community. The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has high architectural significance as one of only two extant timber churches designed by noted Dunedin architect RA Lawson and craftsmanship significance for the quality of its Victorian timber construction and detailing by Thomas Latham and others. The former East Gore Presbyterian Church has contextual significance as a local landmark whose spire can be seen from West Gore; the building's site has potential archaeological significance in view of the church's age.

REFERENCES

- *Mataura Ensign* 12 December 1884, p. 3; 9 February 1892, p. 4; 28 February 1899, p. 3; 18 February 1902, p. 4; 17 August 1917, p. 5.
- *Bruce Herald* 25 October 1881, p. 3.
- *Otago Daily Times* 16 February 1881, p. 3; 10 March 1881, p. 3; 18 June 1881, p. 2; 10 August 1881, p. 3.
- *Otago Witness* 12 February 1881, p. 21; 26 March 1881, p. 21; 16 April 1881, p. 13; 7 May 1881, p. 19; 21 January 1882, p. 12.
- *Southland Times* 21 February 1991, p. 3; 14 April 1881, p. 2; 15 September 1881, p. 3; 18 October 1881, p. 2.
- *Star* 28 December 1922, p. 6.
- <https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2530>

REPORT COMPLETED

10 May 2022

AUTHOR

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Extent of scheduling, former East Gore Presbyterian Church, 6 Rock Street, Gore.



Church before hall erected, c.1903. Te Papa Tongarewa.