

1033B Napier Road

Ashhurst

NZHPT Registration Number:	2813
NZHPT Registration Type:	Historic Place – Category II
NZHPT Registration Date:	30/04/10
City/District Council:	Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status:	Not listed



Brief History

This house is situated along Napier Road (State Highway 3) just north of and opposite to the intersection of Raukawa Road. It was built circa 1878 and is one of the earliest surviving buildings from the beginning of European planned settlement in the Manawatu. The modest timber house has two gabled sections and a lean-to spanning the rear of the house. It is an example of the “double box cottage”, a common New Zealand building type from the late nineteenth century. It has much in common with another Ashhurst house, 294-306 Cambridge Avenue, also Category II.

The house was originally the homestead of one of the first farms established in Ashhurst’s outlying areas. Founded in 1877, Ashhurst was the last of three towns established within the Manchester Block by the Emigrant and Colonists’ Aid Corporation which purchased the land from the Government in 1871. Settlers were provided with both a town section and a country section and as with the other towns of the Manchester Block, once the town of Ashhurst was established, settlers were encouraged to develop farms. These farms were intended to support the town initially, and to grow to form the basis of the local economy.

Newspapers from 1878 found lining original parts of the house suggest that it was built as part of this move into the surrounding rural area following the establishment of the town. The development of the Manchester Block settlements was aided by the immigration and public works policies of Julius Vogel, which resulted in the arrival of many European immigrants to New Zealand during the 1870s.

The simple form of the building demonstrates the original owners' focus on meeting their immediate practical needs, and the cottage may have been constructed by the owners themselves. Despite this, the front gable decoration and addition of a verandah show that the owners were conscious of international fashions in architecture and wished their home to be more than simply utilitarian. The lean-to was added to the rear of the house in 1900. Such additions are common to buildings of this type, since owners often desired to expand the living space once resources became available. Little alteration has been made to the building over the years, so it remains an intact example of the building type. However, changes were made to the interior arrangement of the lean-to addition in the late twentieth century.

Just over a decade after it was built, the house is known to have been owned by Joseph McLeavy. By that time, the new Palmerston North to Napier railway line ran through the section. The property was sold in 1909 and then farmed by a succession of parties, before being purchased by the Parkes family in the early 1950s. The homestead housed several generations of the family prior to its sale as a separate section in 1998. The Parkes family retained the land and continue to farm it.

Principal Source:

House, NZHPT Register no. 2813, 14/12/2009, Karen Astwood, NZHPT.

