

**DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 249
*DWELLING AND SETTING – 2 HELMORES LANE,
CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: M.VAIR-PIOVA, 17/12/2014

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical and social values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular person, group, organisation, institution, event, phase or activity; the continuity and/or change of a phase or activity; social, historical, traditional, economic, political or other patterns.

The dwelling at 2 Helmore Lane has historical and social significance because it was built in 1945 by architect Heathcote Helmore for his own use. Helmore (1899-1965) had a family association with the area going back to the 1860s when Joseph Cornish Helmore, a solicitor from Exeter, purchased a 50-acre block, bounded by the Avon Stream, Wairarapa Stream, Rossall Street and Garden Road. Following J C Helmore's death in 1920 the property was subdivided in to smaller blocks and sold off.

Heathcote Helmore was a leading architect in Christchurch between the world wars and a notable patron of the arts. He was a president of the Canterbury Society of Arts and was closely involved with Canterbury Museum, securing many items for the collection through his association with the early families of Canterbury. The dwelling was built in part to house his collection of antiques and Chinese lacquer furniture, which were later displayed in the

Heathcote Helmore room at Canterbury Museum. The architect's former home has changed hands several times since his death in 1965. The dwelling requires re-levelling as a result of damage caused by the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural and spiritual values that demonstrate or are associated with the distinctive characteristics of a way of life, philosophy, tradition, religion, or other belief, including: the symbolic or commemorative value of the place; significance to Tangata Whenua; and/or associations with an identifiable group and esteemed by this group for its cultural values.

The dwelling at 2 Helmores Lane has cultural significance as the mid-20th century suburban residence designed by the architect for himself and reusing parts of an earlier house. The size of the dwelling and the range of rooms it contains demonstrate the way of life of its past and present residents. The Helmore family's long-standing association with this part of the city is commemorated in the names of Millbrook Reserve, named after J C Helmore's residence, and in the name of the lane itself.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural and aesthetic values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular style, period or designer, design values, form, scale, colour, texture and material of the place.

The house at 2 Helmores Lane has architectural and aesthetic significance for its design by Heathcote Helmore. Helmore served his articles with Cecil Wood for three years before going overseas and spending two years working for Sir Edwin Lutyens in England. After he returned to Christchurch he established the firm of Helmore and Cotterill with Henry Cotterill in 1924.

Built in 1945 Helmore's design responded to the restrictions on residential building size that were brought in to address war-time material shortages. The architect built the house around an existing ballroom and service area taken from his parents' house in nearby Rhodes Street. He then added a two-storeyed Colonial Georgian weatherboard wing, thus circumventing the maximum floor size then in force. With its steeply pitched slate roof, shuttered windows and sense of classical formality the house is a notable late example of the Colonial Georgian Revival style that Helmore and Cotterill had helped to popularise between the wars in Christchurch. The former ballroom, with its 3.7 metre (12 foot) stud and large classically arched windows, is one of the principal features of the house.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Technological and craftsmanship values that demonstrate or are associated with: the nature and use of materials, finishes and/or technological or constructional methods which were innovative, or of notable quality for the period.

The house at 2 Helmores Lane has technological and craftsmanship significance due to the quality of its construction and finish. The integration of a relocated structure with the new build undertaken in 1945 demonstrates contemporary craftsmanship in the construction of this house.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contextual values that demonstrate or are associated with: a relationship to the environment (constructed and natural), a landscape, setting, group, precinct or streetscape; a degree of

consistency in terms of type, scale, form, materials, texture, colour, style and/or detail; recognised landmarks and landscape which are recognised and contribute to the unique identity of the environment.

The house at 2 Helmores Lane and setting has contextual significance as one of a number of listed, architecturally-designed houses in Helmores Lane; the others being located at 16 and 25. Heathcote Helmore also designed no 25 and Cecil Wood designed the dwelling at 16 Helmores Lane as his own home.

The house at 2 Helmores Lane is set within a mature garden behind a high fence with post and rail wooden gates that allow a view of the two-storeyed house beyond. The house has some presence within the streetscape due to its proximity to the street, scale and architectural character. The broader setting includes mature street trees, Millbrook Reserve, the Helmores Lane Bridge and Little Hagley Park.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological or scientific values that demonstrate or are associated with: the potential to provide information through physical or scientific evidence an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.

The house and setting at 2 Helmores Lane are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provided archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on this site, including that which occurred before 1900. Although the dwelling was erected in the mid-20th century, development in the area, by members of the Helmore family, took place from the early 1860s.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The dwelling and its setting at 2 Helmores Lane have overall significance to Christchurch, including Banks Peninsula. The dwelling has historical and social significance for its association with the architect Heathcote Helmore, who built his own home on land that had originally been in his family since the 1860s. The dwelling has cultural significance as a demonstration of the way of life of one of the city's influential interwar architects. It has architectural and aesthetic significance as a mid-career Colonial Georgian Revival style design by Heathcote Helmore. The dwelling has technological and craftsmanship for the quality of its construction and architectural detailing. The dwelling and its setting has contextual significance for its contribution to the streetscape and the established residential character of the area. The house and setting at 2 Helmores Lane are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provided archaeological evidence relating to past construction methods and materials, and human activity on this site, including that which occurred before 1900.

REFERENCES:

CCC Heritage File

'Obituary - Mr H G Helmore's Work in Architecture and Arts' *The Press* 22 May 1965, p. 14.

Wells R. & Heward, V. (2004) 2 Helmores Lane. *Christchurch Heritage Houses*. Caxton Press.

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