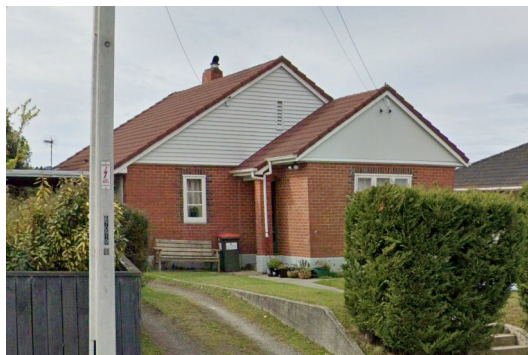


HERITAGE ASSESSMENT FOR SCHEDULED HERITAGE BUILDING:
11 WILKINSON STREET - DUNEDIN'S FIRST STATE HOUSE (1930S STATE HOUSING SCHEME)



Google Streetview, accessed 1 June 2023

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Temporary 2GP Scheduled Heritage Building Reference No:	BX079
Address	11 Wilkinson Street, Liberton, Dunedin
Located within a Heritage Precinct	No
HNZPT List Reference & Description	N/A
Heritage Covenant:	No
Building Use at Time of Record	Residential
Condition of Property:	Not known to be at risk because of condition

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

Historic/Social	Meets criteria
Spiritual/Cultural	Meets criteria
Design	Meets criteria
Technological/Scientific	Does not meet criteria

RECOMMENDATION:

The building meets one or more of the significance criteria from Policy 2.4.2.1.b and is recommended for inclusion in Appendix A1.1 of the 2GP.

RECOMMENDED PROTECTION

[Tick]	Features	Details
✓	Building envelope	Entire external building envelope
	External/ancillary elements	
	Internal elements and/or rooms	Not considered as part of this desktop assessment. Owner may nominate interior elements for protection
	Excluded elements	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

11 Wilkinson Street has historic and design significance as the first state house in Dunedin to be tenanted under Labour Government's 1930s state housing scheme. As a typical example of an early state house, 11 Wilkinson Street demonstrates the State's vision for the ideal of domestic architecture and social initiatives that dominated 1930s New Zealand and formed the policies of the first Labour Government.

11 Wilkinson is not comparable to scheduled heritage buildings within Dunedin because this period and type is underrepresented on the schedule. It compares on a national level with recognised heritage places of similar history.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Architectural Period	Interwar (1914-1939)
Style	State House – English Cottage
Era/Date of Construction	1937
Architect/Designer/Builder	Department of Housing Construction architects Love Construction (Contractors)
Historic Use & Cultural Associations	Dunedin's first tenanted State House
Primary Construction Materials	Brick, tile roof, weatherboard, timber framed window joinery
Notable Architectural Characteristics	Typical 'English Cottage' detailing, clinker brick detailing, gable louvre, window shutters.

Previous site development

The land on which 11 Wilkinson Street was built on land owned by the Otago Education Board. It was surveyed for subdivision in 1934.

In Dunedin, the first state house developments were in Liberton and Wakari. In Liberton, state houses were built on former Education Board land. Three new streets were built in a 'horseshoe' shape, named

for the past secretaries of the Board – James Wilkinson, Patrick Pryde, and John Hislop (as was common for new state house subdivisions).¹

By 1939, fifty-seven state houses were being completed every week and over 30,000 state houses would be built by the time Labour left office in 1949.²

Design and construction – Housing Construction Brand/State Advances Corporation

Love Construction Company won the contract to build the Dunedin's first state houses. Sixty-four dwellings were built in the Liberton area. Although the houses had similar finishes (brick and tile) and similar multi-paned casement windows, the designs were varied, preventing a monotonous appearance. *Built in Dunedin* identifies 11 Wilkinson Street as the first house to be tenanted. Tenancies were allocated by ballot.³ Alf and Beryl Seamer were the first tenants – Alf was a civil servant working for the Department of Agriculture. The Seamers remained at the house until 1942. Bill and Esma Lobb were the next to move in, staying until 1950.



11 Wilkinson Street on its completion.



Moving in day at 11 Wilkinson Street, 1 March 1938.

Later history and development

The exterior of 11 Wilkinson Street remains in substantially original condition, however there have been a series of alterations (one of the gable ends has been reclad, the chimney removed, original roof likely replaced, and the false shutters have been removed from the street elevation) and a carport has been constructed on the west elevation. The interior has been reconfigured. It remains in Kainga Ora ownership.

¹ <https://builtindunedin.com/2013/08/31/dunedin-first-state-house/> accessed 1 June 2023.

² <https://builtindunedin.com/2013/08/31/dunedin-first-state-house/> accessed 1 June 2023.

³ *Otago Daily Times*, ISSUE 23433, 23 FEBRUARY 1938, PAGE 6



Liberton in April 1947 ("Whites Aviation Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library"). 11 Wilkinson Street is 6th from the bottom left corner

Notable people/Themes

State Housing in New Zealand

In the wake of the Great Depression, the first Labour government, which came to power in 1935, wanted to provide new suburban homes for working class people and to provide work for those left jobless. John A Lee, undersecretary for Housing, lead the government's initiative that saw 'the largest housing construction scheme in the nation's history.' The 1936 Budget saw a programme to build 5,000 state rental houses throughout New Zealand.⁴ Private builders erected thousands of high-quality state houses. Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage opened the first of these in Miramar, Wellington in September 1937.⁵

Love Construction

Love Brothers Construction is a significant Dunedin building contractor. Love Brothers Construction was established in Port Chalmers by JY, Bill, and Bob Love. One of their first major contracts was for the Provincial Hotel in Port Chalmers (1916). In 1925, in a joint venture with Fletcher Construction, they constructed the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition in 1925. In 1927, they were awarded the tenders for both the Regent Theatre and Dunedin Town Hall. In 1937, they won the contract for 38 state houses in Liberton. Other significant Dunedin projects were the Cadbury Fry Hudson bulk store (1953), Aquinas Hall (1954), and Queen Mary Maternity Hospital (1956). Nationally, they were involved in several large projects, including the Social Security Building (1939, in a joint venture with Fletchers), and the Centennial Exhibition (Wellington, 1940). During World War II, Love Construction built camps, military buildings, and prefabricated huts. In 1969, WH Naylor and Love Construction merged to form Naylor Love, recently celebrating 100 years in business.⁶

⁴ <https://builtindunedin.com/2013/08/31/dunedin-first-state-house/> accessed 1 June 2023.

⁵ 'The state steps in and out', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/we-call-it-home/the-state-steps-in-and-out> , (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 21-Jul-2014

⁶ <https://www.naylorlove.co.nz/about-us/timeline/> accessed 2 June 2021

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORIC/SOCIAL

The dwelling demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. 11 Wilkinson Street has historical significance for its association with the beginning of the Labour Government's 1930s state housing scheme in Dunedin. The first generation of houses were built in permanent materials to designs based around variations on an 'English Cottage' style. 11 Wilkinson Street was the first of Dunedin's state houses to be tenanted.

SPIRITUAL/CULTURAL

The dwelling demonstrates cultural heritage values within this criterion. The Labour Government's creation of the state housing scheme was a cultural shift that transformed housing in New Zealand. As Dunedin's first state house, 11 Wilkinson Street can be considered a cultural symbol of the state house scheme locally.

DESIGN

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. 11 Wilkinson Street has design significance as a recognisable example of the first generation of state houses built as part of the Labour Government's state housing scheme. As a typical example of an early state house, 11 Wilkinson Street is architecturally important for the insight it provides vision for the ideal of domestic architecture and social initiatives that dominated 1930s New Zealand and formed the policies of the first Labour Government.

TECHNOLOGICAL/SCIENTIFIC

The building does not demonstrate heritage values within this criterion.

REFERENCES

<https://builtindunedin.com/2013/08/31/dunedin-first-state-house/> accessed 1 June 2023

Otago Daily Times, 8 April 1937 p.12 ('The Liberton project – its success doubted'), 19 April 1937 p.10 (Dunedin contract let), 31 August 1937 p.4 (progress), 2 March 1938 p.4 ('Liberton homes – first tenant moves in')

Site and House Plans 13/8 - House 6/135 on Lot 6 Deposited Plan 4333 [11 Wilkinson Street, Liberton], R16701125, c. 1937, Box 9/g/13/3 – 23 (Archives New Zealand)

Heritage New Zealand, 'First State House', [Welcome to Heritage New Zealand](#), accessed 6 October 2023

Date Assessment Completed	6 October 2023	Author	HB
Date Peer Reviewed	21 June 2024	Reviewer	MM

APPENDIX

arrived in the city by motor about 1.30 this afternoon.

The first of the houses being built under the Government scheme on the Liberton sub-division was occupied early this morning. The tenant was a busy man when a 'Star' reporter arrived on the scene, and he had no comments to make beyond the statement that a man was lucky to get a house to-day. Another house was occupied this afternoon, and others are rapidly nearing completion. By Saturday it is expected that seven houses will be occupied. When the settlement is fully tenanted it should prove very attractive, as the houses are all different. At present Liberton is a busy place, dozens of houses still being in the hands of the carpenters, and extensive additions are also being made to the school. There are as yet no dividing fences between the houses, but as soon as the wet weather sets in hedges will be planted, and the presence of these should enhance the picturesque aspect of the settlement.

EVENING STAR, ISSUE 22895, 1 MARCH 1938, PAGE 8