

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT FOR SCHEDULED HERITAGE BUILDING:

217 MUSSELBURGH RISE – ‘CINTRA’



Photo: <https://www.bayleys.co.nz/63386>

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Temporary 2GP Scheduled Heritage Building Reference No:	BX078
Address:	217 Musselburgh Rise, Dunedin
Other Building Name:	Former Anscombe Residence
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	Does not meet criteria
Design	Meets criteria
Technological/Scientific	Meets 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, including the later extension to the original dining and drawing rooms and combined dormer of the original den and attic room.
	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

Built in 1920, Cintra has historic, design, and technological significance as the private residence of notable Dunedin architect Edmund Anscombe designed in Arts and Crafts/bungalow style using Anscombe's OK Dry Wall construction system.

Cintra is comparable to the age and architectural quality of other scheduled heritage buildings within Dunedin; it also has special heritage value as Anscombe's own home and for the use of a unique construction technology.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Architectural Period	Interwar (1914-1939)
Style	Arts and Crafts/Bungalow
Era/Date of Construction	1920
Architect/Designer/Builder	Edmund Anscombe (architect)
Historic Use & Cultural Associations	Edmund Anscombe's own home
Primary Construction Materials	Plaster finish, OK concrete blocks, Marseilles Tiles, timber joinery.
Notable Architectural Characteristics	Entry porches, low pitch gabled roof, dormer and gable windows, arts and crafts details.

Previous site development

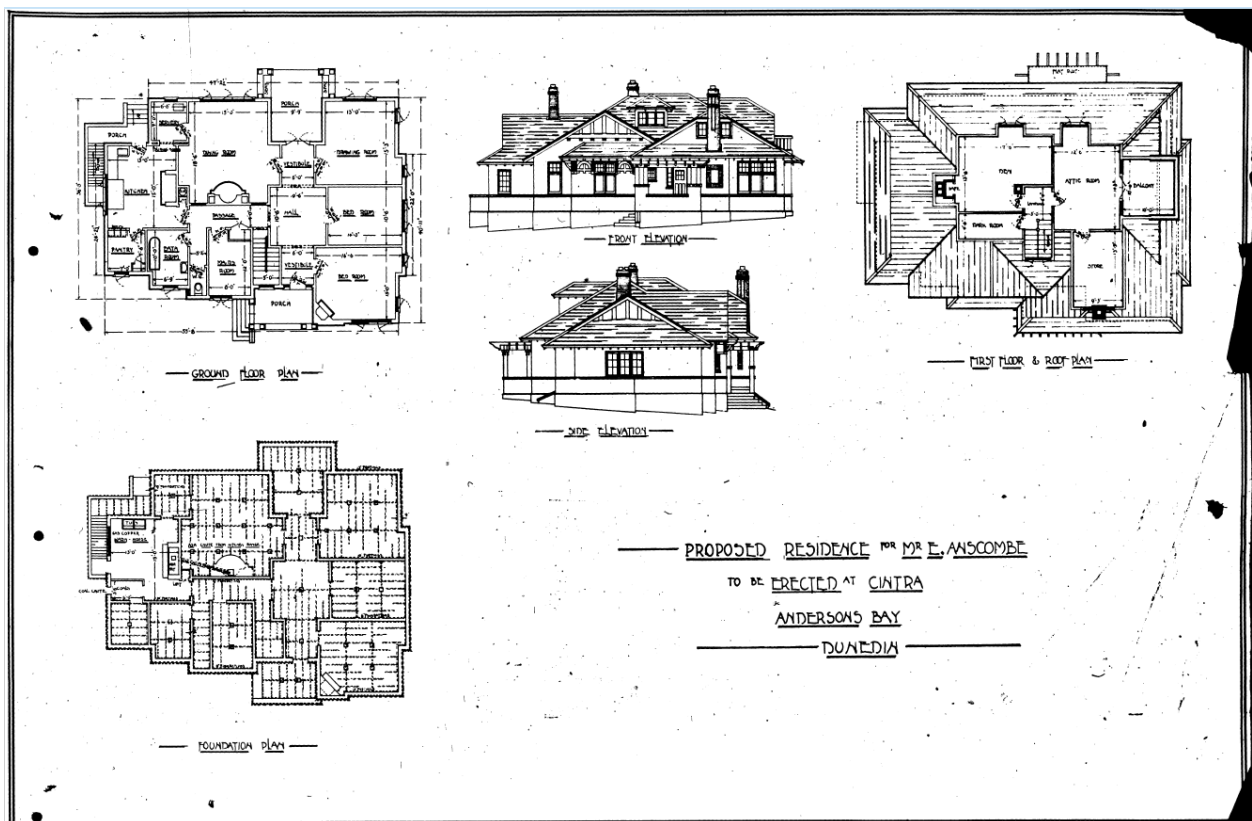
The land on which Anscombe's house was built was previously part of a large land holding named Cintra owned by George McLean. McLean was a Scottish entrepreneur, banker, and merchant, married to the daughter of Mathew Holmes, one of New Zealand's richest men. McLean was knighted in 1909. Cintra, their mansion, was one of the first grand homes in the area. The estate was subdivided at various times. McLean died in 1917.

DP 2349 (1913) shows a house at the rear of the lot on which Anscombe would build, with the associated stable at the front of the adjacent section. The title was issued to Anscombe in July 1920, the same year the house was built.

Design

Anscombe designed this house for his family early/mid-way through his career. Plans show a one and a half storey Arts and Crafts/bungalow-style residence. The house has a low pitch Marseilles tile roof with multiple gabled roof forms, brick chimneys, exposed rafter tails, timber casement windows with multi-pane top lights, dormers, and entry porches front and rear. The exterior has a plaster finish.

The rear elevation faces north-west. The principal rooms are located at the rear of the dwelling; however, the design of the street elevation has not been compromised by the arrangement of service areas at the rear. Anscombe's design successfully responds 'in the round' to its site constraints.

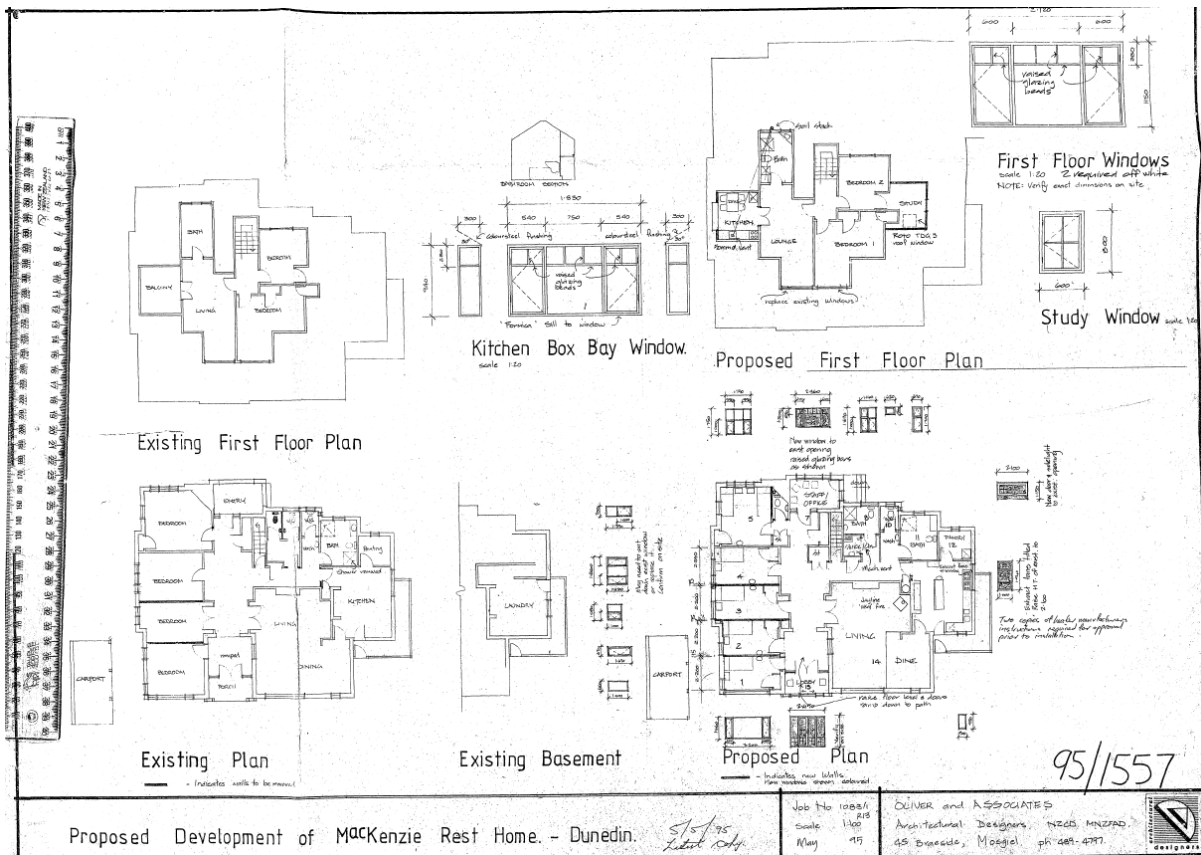


Plans of the dwelling. Source DCC Property File

Later history and development

Anscombe sold Cintra in 1928, subdividing the property.

A garage was erected in 1935 and a workshop in 1939. The house has been altered over the years, including an extension to the rear in 1956 (extending the original drawing room), and an undated extension to the dining room. These extensions extend out to almost the depth of the central porch. Two car shelters were also constructed in 1956. The dwelling was converted to a rest home in 1981 and drawings show the two dormer windows on the rear pitch of the roof combined (original den and attic room). Further internal alterations were undertaken. Numerous timber framed windows have been



Plans dated 1995 showing further alterations to the dwelling. Source DCC Property File

Notable People/Themes

Edmund Anscombe (1874-1948)

Born in England, Anscombe’s family emigrated to New Zealand when he was an infant. He served an apprenticeship as a carpenter. In 1901 he left New Zealand to study architecture in the United States. It is believed he studied by correspondence and supported himself as a builder. He returned to Dunedin in 1907 and in January 1908 won a design competition for the School of Mines building at the University of Otago. His success led to his appointment as architect to the University of Otago, a position he held until 1929. He gained commissions for several major Dunedin buildings including Otago Girls’ High School, and Palmerston Town Hall. He went into partnership with LD Coombs in 1913, and with H McDowell Smith in 1914. He completed commissions in areas as far afield as Invercargill and Palmerston North. He advanced theories of industrial construction including in 1920 the development of cellular concrete blocks. The blocks were used in the government housing scheme at Miramar in Wellington. He was the official architect for Dunedin’s 1925-1926 New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition. He left Dunedin in 1929 and established a practice in Wellington. His most important work was the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition of 1939-40. ¹

Anscombe’s OK Dry Wall System

¹ Greg Bowron. 'Anscombe, Edmund', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1998, updated July, 2013. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4a17/anscombe-edmund> (accessed 16 January 2023)

Anscombe was interested in building technologies. In 1920 he applied for patents for a two-piece concrete-block manufacture (44081) and a concrete block making machine (44217), with the letters patents sealed in 1921. Architectural historian Christine McCarthy writes that these patents described Anscombe's OK Dry Wall System with which he built his own house.² McCarthy also provides a discussion of the history of concrete block construction in New Zealand and internationally.

The system involved 14 different block types designed to accommodate building requirements – including foundations, ventilation grids, corners, and window reveals. The blocks were rectilinear and about half the thickness of conventional concrete blocks. The outer surface was flat, the inner moulded to minimise the material. The blocks formed one side of a cavity wall tied to its other half by wire ties. Anscombe promoted his system arguing for the economy, longevity, and ease of construction. The system was used in government housing in Miramar in Wellington in 1920. He also published an 18-page brochure promoting the system, featuring his own house on the cover.³

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORIC/SOCIAL

The building demonstrates demonstrate heritage values within this criterion. Cintra has historic significance for its association with Edmund Anscombe. Cintra was designed by Anscombe for his own residence. He advanced theories of industrial construction including in 1920 the development of cellular concrete blocks. He was the official architect for Dunedin's 1925-1926 New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition. He left Dunedin in 1929 and established a practice in Wellington. His most important work was the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition of 1939-40.

SPIRITUAL/CULTURAL

The building does not demonstrate heritage values within this criterion.

DESIGN

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. Cintra has design significance as an Arts and Crafts/bungalow style residence designed by notable Dunedin architect Edmund Anscombe as his own residence. In its materials and design, it is quality residence that has largely maintained its original architectural intent.

² Christine McCarthy, 'Concrete passions: Anscombe's material politics,' *AHA: Architectural History Aotearoa* (2011) vol 8: p.20.

³ Edmund Anscombe, *The House Everlasting: Homes Constructed with O.K. Concrete Building Blocks* (a.k.a. *The O.K. Dry Wall System of Building Construction: an Illustrated Treatise for the Enterprising Owner and Builder: Featuring this Modern System of Building and the Ideal O.K. Block-Making Machine*, Dunedin: O.K. Dry Wall System Proprietary, 1921.

TECHNOLOGICAL/SCIENTIFIC

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. Cintra has technological significance for its use of Anscombe's OK Dry Wall System of construction. Anscombe took out a patent for this system in 1920 and promoted it in the 1920s. Cintra was the first house constructed using the system and served as the model in Anscombe's promotional material.

REFERENCES

[Sir George and Lady Isabella McLean | Toitū Otago Settlers Museum Official Website \(toituosm.com\)](http://toituosm.com)

Greg Bowron. 'Anscombe, Edmund', Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, first published in 1998, updated July, 2013. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4a17/anscombe-edmund> (accessed 13 January 2023) (Add references here)

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Date Assessment Completed	16 January 2023	Author	HB
Date Peer Reviewed	17 July 2024	Reviewer	MM
Date Confirmed Complete	26 July 2024		
Date Revised (R1)	4 April 2025. Additional information and revisions to the recommended protection.		



<https://www.bayleys.co.nz/63386> accessed 13 January 2023

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WEDNESDAY, 25th JANUARY,
At 12 o'clock.

At Rooms, Liverpool and Bond streets.

JOHAN REID AND SONS, LTD.,
instructed by E. Anscombe, Esq. (who
has sold his residence and subdivided the
balance of his well-known property), will
offer these **SPLENDID ALLOTMENTS** as
above. As these sites vary considerably in
size and value, all classes of buyers should
inspect. Very easy terms.

This property, known as "**Cintra**," was
originally selected and owned by the late
Hon. Matthew Holmes, and is one of the
best known properties about **Dunedin**, and
being situated close to Ross's Corner, An-
derson's Bay, is very convenient.

Lithograph plans obtainable on applica-
tion.

Page 7 A

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7

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