

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT FOR SCHEDULED HERITAGE BUILDING:
ST GEORGE COURT



PROPERTY INFORMATION

Temporary 2GP Scheduled Heritage Building Reference No:	BX022
Address:	1-8/535 George Street, Dunedin North, Dunedin
Located within a Heritage Precinct:	George Street North Residential Heritage Precinct
HNZPT List Reference & Description:	N/A
Heritage Covenant:	No
Building Use at Time of Record:	Private residential
Condition of Property:	Building not known to be at risk due to condition

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

Historic/Social	Meets criteria
Spiritual/Cultural	Does not meet 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 (including street-side garages), excluding garage doors and rear elevation.
✓	External/ancillary elements	Entrance gates on street frontage
	Internal elements and/or rooms	Not considered as part of this desktop assessment. Owner may nominate interior elements for protection
✓	Excluded elements	Garage doors; Rear elevation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St George Court has overall heritage significance to Dunedin. The building has historic and social significance as an inter-war apartment building and design significance as a well-preserved and largely unmodified example of the residential work of local architect Henry McDowell Smith.

St George Court is not comparable to scheduled heritage buildings within Dunedin because this type and period is underrepresented on the schedule. It compares on a national/regional level with recognised similar heritage places.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Architectural Period	Interwar (1914-1939)
Style	Spanish Colonial Revival
Era/Date of Construction	1936-37
Architect/Designer/Builder	H McDowell Smith, architect; R Mitchell, builder
Historic Use & Cultural Associations	Residential flats
Primary Construction Materials	Brick, cement plaster, clay tiles, timber joinery
Notable Architectural Characteristics	Spanish Colonial Revival form and detailing

Previous site development

Deposit Plan 1547 shows that there was a dwelling on the subject property by 1902.

Building design and construction

The building comprises eight flats and six garages; the latter are built to the road boundary. Designed by Henry McDowell Smith for a public company St George Court Ltd, the flats were hailed for their 'high-class' modernity upon completion in March 1937. The flats were designed to fit the terraced site and the building accommodated five, two-bedroom flats and two, three-bedroom ones; one of the three-bedroom flats also boasted a dining room.

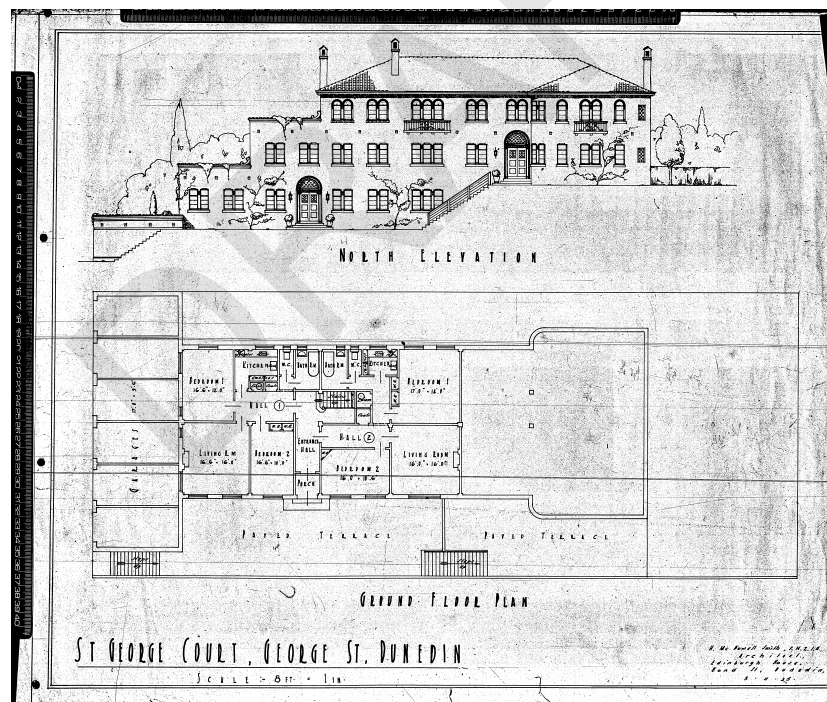
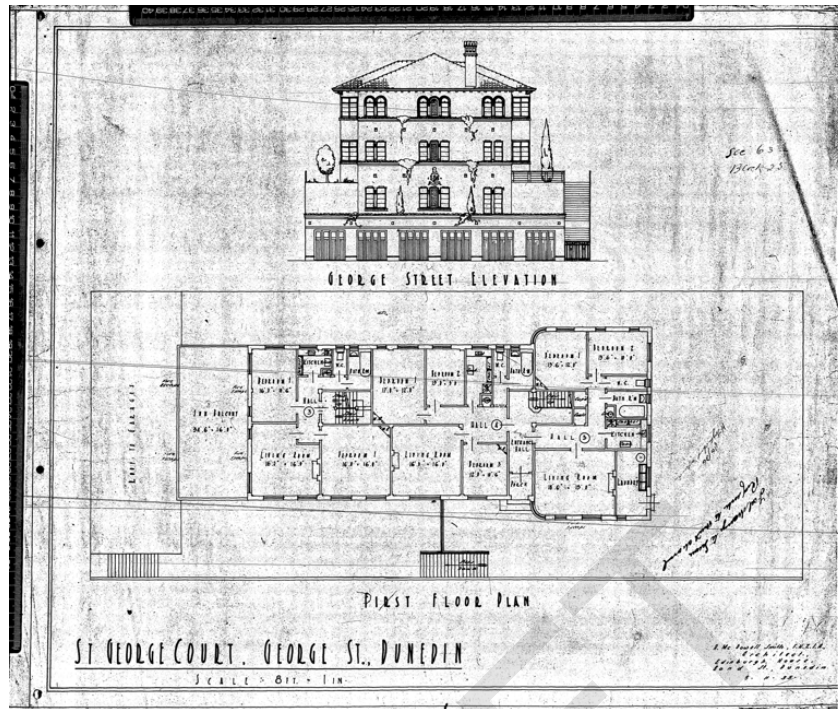


MODERN FLATS.—View of George street frontage of St. George Court, a block of eight modern flats, the erection of which has just been completed for a public company. The lower store is the lounge of one of the occupied flats.

Evening Star, Issue 22592, 9 March 1937, Page 2

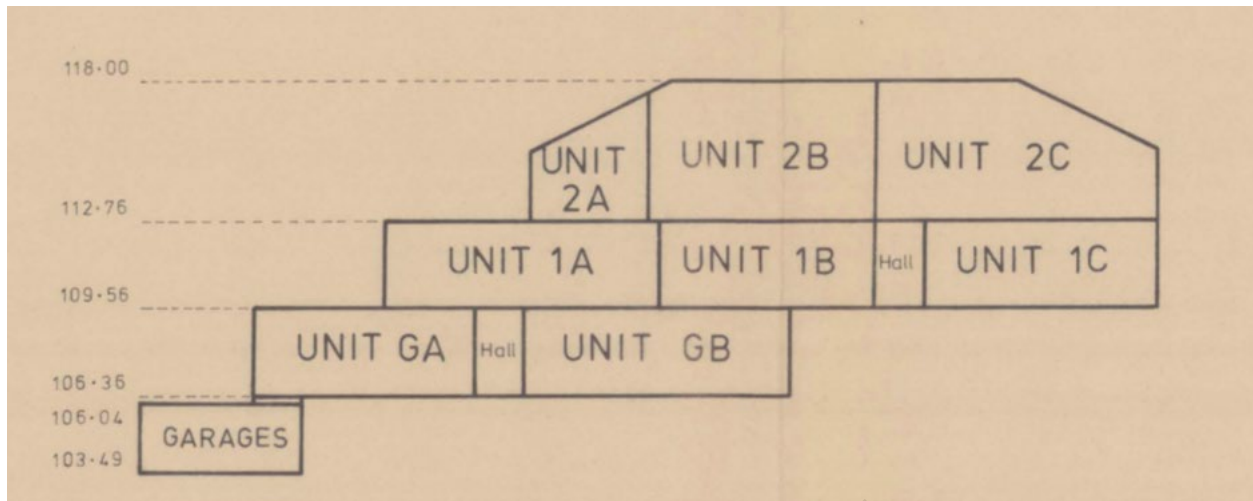
McDowell Smith's design responded to the by-law that restricted elements of the design of new flats and to the terraced site. The resulting design was admired for its modernity and the quality of the accommodation. The newspaper article also noted that there was a high demand for flats in the city, with the block was fully let before the tradespeople had finished work.

It was reported when the building was complete that all eight flats had already been leased and most occupied, some before the tradesmen had finished their work. Early residents included newly married couples, widows, and retired couples.



Later history and development

The flats have been in continual residential use and remain substantially unaltered. New garage doors were fitted in 1965. The building remains in residential use.



Arrangement of flats. DCC files, dated 1982.

Notable people/Themes

Henry McDowell Smith

Henry McDowell Smith (1887-1965) entered a partnership with Edmund Anscombe in 1913 and then practised in his own right after 1921. McDowell Smith also designed the Tennyson Court Flats in Tennyson Street (1938), St Peter's Anglican Church in Queenstown (1932) and Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Gore (1953-57). There is a scholarship in his name available for architecture students from Otago and Southland to support their studies.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORIC/SOCIAL

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. St George Court has historic and social significance as an inter-war apartment building that represents the changing social patterns that prompted the construction of new housing types in the 1920s and 1930s. The flats are also important as they demonstrate the era's growing awareness of domestic economy and efficiency as well as the extent of urban renewal that was taking place in Dunedin at that time.

SPIRITUAL/CULTURAL

The building does not demonstrate heritage values within this criterion.

DESIGN

The building demonstrates heritage values within this criterion. St George Court is an example of the residential work of local architect Henry McDowell Smith that retains a high level of exterior authenticity and

integrity. The building is also indicative of the popularity of the Spanish Colonial Revival style for residential architecture between the world wars.

TECHNOLOGICAL/SCIENTIFIC

The building does not demonstrate heritage values within this criterion.

REFERENCES

Evening Star 9 March 1937, p. 2; 17 February 1940, p. 2; 1 March 1944, p. 6.

Otago Daily Times 19 March 1938, p. 25; 21 April 1938, p. 15; 3 March 1944, p. 1; 20 April 1945, p. 1; 15 June 1946, p. 6; 15 July 1947, p. 2; 13 April 1949, p. 1.

<https://builtindunedin.com/tag/henry-mcdowell-smith/>

Date Assessment Completed	10 December 2022	Author	AM
Date Peer Reviewed	13 April 2023	Reviewer	HB
Date Peer Reviewed	4 July 2023		MM
Date Confirmed Complete	18 July 2024		

Photographs: September 2020.



