

## To CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL

### A submission from Central Otago Heritage Trust in support of Marco Creemers and Ryan Sanders, RC220425 754 Earnsclough Road, Alexandra



#### Introduction:

Earnsclough Station Homestead is entered onto the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero (List number: 7405) as a Category 1 Historic Place in recognition of its historical, architectural, social and aesthetic significance. The application seeks land use consent for exterior alterations to the Earnsclough Station Homestead, which is listed in Schedule 19.4 of the Central Otago District Plan (the District Plan): Register of Heritage Buildings, Places, Sites & Objects and Notable Trees as a Category I Heritage Listed building.

#### Applicants Proposal

The Applicants are the new owners of the Earnsclough Homestead which was built in the 1920s. They propose to undertake alterations including rendering a portion of the brick exterior, while leaving a small area on the southern elevation unrendered. The proposed rendering will incorporate seismic strengthening and weatherproofing. This will enable the Homestead to be fully renovated and utilised as a residence and bed and breakfast operation.

#### About Us

The Central Otago Heritage Trust, established in 2008, comprises member groups within the local heritage community. The role of the Trust is to represent the collective interests of these groups in protecting, preserving and celebrating our unique heritage. The Trust is governed by trustees nominated and elected by members. Our trustees are David Ritchie (Chair), Russell Garbutt, Lynda Gray, Warwick Hawker, John Kerr, Ross Naylor, Kristy Rusher & Graye Shattky. Ann Rodgers is our CODC Liaison and Maggie Hope is our Heritage Coordinator. A list of our member organisations is included in Appendix Two.

#### Central Otago Heritage Trust (COHT) Position

COHT has reviewed the resource consent application. In March 2023 Trustees visited the site to understand and visualize the Applicants intentions.

1. It was immediately obvious on inspection, that **the exterior was intended be plastered** (see Figure 1)  
Evidence included:

- Gaps around the joinery where plaster would have made the building airtight.
- Rough, open bricks on the parapet where Union Jack plastered inserts were envisaged.
- The use of rough/chipped bricks on the exterior walls which would have been concealed by plaster.
- In contrast, smooth well-formed bricks were placed where no plastering was envisaged.



Figure 1:  
Rough bricks and gaps around joinery where plastering was originally anticipated.

Smooth bricks where  
plastering was not anticipated.

2. The original owner of the homestead was the Central Otago pastoral entrepreneur Stephen Spain. Spain commissioned English-born architect Edmund Anscombe to design the homestead. Anscombe's original drawings show the intention to plaster the exterior walls (as shown in Appendix One). **The applicants are proposing to, fairly accurately, reflect this original historic intent.**
3. The plastering was not completed due to financial pressures. As noted in the Heritage New Zealand 'Earnsclough Station Homestead Research Report' dated 1997, the Spain family came under financial pressure in the 1920s due to the collapse of the rabbiting industry, poor lambing seasons and an overcommitment in investments. **The applicants desire to plaster the exterior completes Spain's original intention and honours the architectural premise.**
4. The Mapei FRG plastering system will increase the seismic strengthening, avoiding the need for disruptive interior strengthening which would result in significant internal alterations to heritage features.
5. District Plan Policy 14.4.2 promotes the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, as a way to conserve their value. **The best way to conserve a Heritage building is to have it occupied and used.** The Homestead has been vacant since 2016, with degradation evident on the exterior and interior of the building. The Applicants plan to live in the Homestead and offer rooms as a luxury Bed and Breakfast enterprise. This will ensure that the Homestead is renovated and maintained to a high standard.
6. Heritage New Zealand (HNZPT) recommends that a representative area of the Homestead building remains unrendered to allow the earlier history of the building to be expressed. The application states that the laundry block will remain unrendered to enable future interpretation of the original finish of the Homestead (Figure 2). **COHT also supports this approach. We also recommend that the Anscombe drawings form a display within the homestead along with a photographic record of the unfinished building.**
7. The family back story of the homestead could also be promoted. Central Otago Heritage Trusts offers our services in undertaking oral histories with descendants of the Spain family.



*Figure 2: Proposed southern elevation, demonstrating the area of repointed brick.*

8. The proposed colour of the external render is 'half sour dough' and was selected by the Applicants as a result of reviewing the colour palette of heritage buildings in Clyde, Alexandra and Ophir i.e., the colour is appropriate for a Central Otago heritage building. The proposed colour exceeds the permitted 38% LRV as stipulated in the District Plan. **COHT considers any adverse landscape/visual effects from the LRV breach to be minimal due to the Homestead's discrete location, limited visibility from Earnsclough Road and the presence of established on-site vegetation.**

**Conclusion**

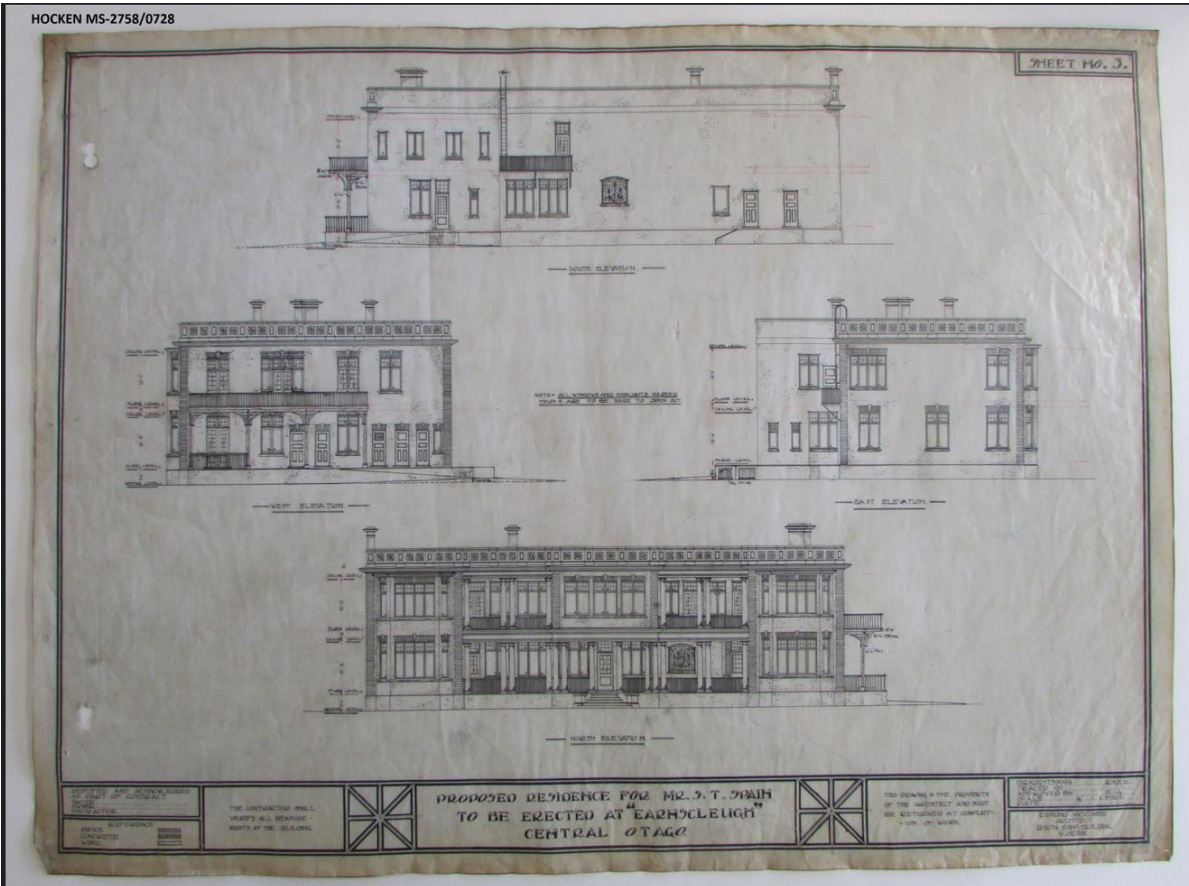
COHT strongly supports the proposal by Marco Creemers and Ryan Sanders to protect and renovate the Earnscliffe Homestead. The proposed innovative rendering system provides seismic strengthening while being true to the original historic design and colour. This approach also offers superior weatherproofing and is far more cost-effective than trying to keep an unfinished brick façade. By granting this resource consent, CODC will help ensure that an important and unusual local heritage building is both protected and used for generations to come. The restoration and adaptive reuse will also contribute to the economic development of the Central Otago region and make a very positive contribution to the preservation of Central Otago heritage values.

David Ritchie  
Chair- Central Otago Heritage Trust

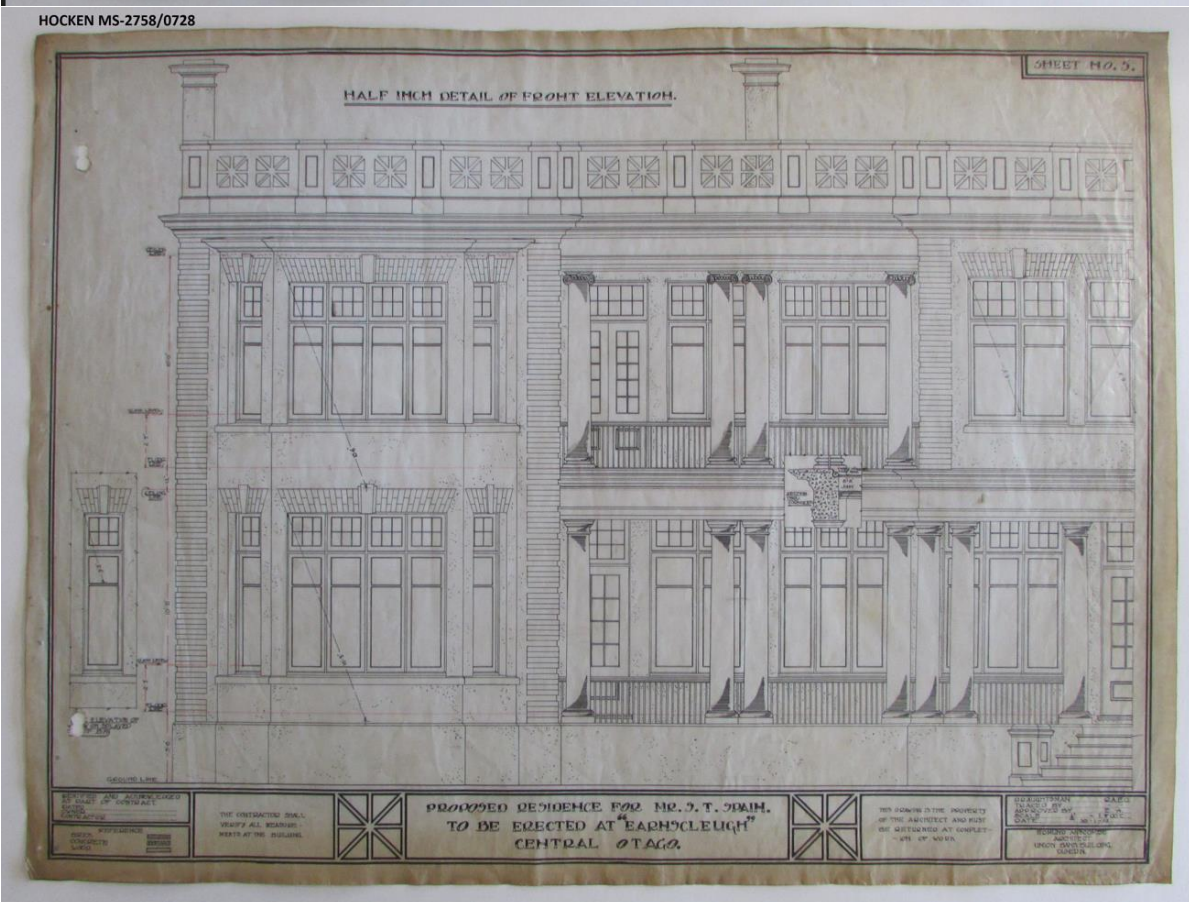


# Appendix One: Original Architect Plans for Earnsleugh Homestead

HOCKEN MS-2758/0728



HOCKEN MS-2758/0728



(Source Hocken Library, Dunedin)

## Appendix Two: Central Otago Heritage Trust Members

- Aukaha (*formerly Kai Tahu ki Otago*)
- Alexandra Miners Village & Riverside Park Trust
- Bodeker Scientific
- Central Lakes Trust
- Central Otago District Council
- Central Otago Environmental Society
- Central Stories Museum and Art Gallery
- Otago Central Rail Trail Trust
- Clyde Historical Museums
- Cromwell Districts and Community Trust
- Cromwell Museum
- Drybread Cemetery Trust
- Department of Conservation Central Otago Area Office
- Goldfields Mining Centre
- Heritage New Zealand Pohere Taonga
- Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust
- Otago Museum
- Promote Dunstan
- St Bathans Heritage Environment Preservation Trust
- Teviot Valley District Museum
- Vallance Cottage Working Group