

Commercial building

30-36 Courtenay Place



(Image: *Charles Collins* – 2014)

Summary of heritage significance

- Built in 1900, 30 – 36 Courtenay Place is a two storey building with a mix of Classical and Art Deco detailing and ornamentation. The building has been much altered but the notable features of the current façade are the deep set, well articulated Classical sash windows and the sculptural Art Deco pilasters both at first floor level.
- The building has representative historical value for its association with the historic development of both the Allen and Blair Street Precinct and Courtenay Place during the early twentieth century.
- The building is part of and contributes to the Courtenay Place Heritage Area, a unique collection of historic buildings of a similar age, style and use.

District Plan:	Map 16 reference 10/9
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 17163
Heritage Area:	Courtenay Place Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	No
Archaeological Site:	Māori site of significance Central City NZAA R27/270
Other Names:	Rod's Block JET Bar Corner Courtenay Place and Allen Street
Key physical dates:	1900
Architect / Builder:	Architect: Thomas Stoddart Lambert
Former uses:	Commercial
Current uses:	Restaurant/Bar
Earthquake Prone Status:	124 served – expires 22/11/2025 SR 167328

Extent: Cityview 2012



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

Formerly a slum area, the district surrounding Allen and Blair Streets was redeveloped from 1898-1904 after the land came under the control of the Harbour Board. With preparations to install the new electric tram network in hand and the Te Aro railway station located nearby, the Harbour Board decided to turn the area into a market. The area's fortunes soon rose with the construction of warehouses along the lengths of Allen and Blair Streets.¹

The building on the corner of Allen Street and Courtenay Place was built in 1900 and originally known as Rod's Block, after its owner John Rod Esq. of Johnsonville. Designed by architect Thomas Stoddart Lambert, the building was originally built as a three storey high mixed use commercial and residential development with a traditional Classical scheme of ornamentation including parapet entablature, external cornices, and decorative Classical pilasters. The ground floor was divided into four shops, each opening into Courtenay Place, and there were 'four well-appointed' two storey residences on the floors above. The corner unit boasted a handsome oval staircase, while the yard behind had stairs down to the basement level, and stabling for horses. The structure was masonry with cast iron reinforcing beams and timber floors.

There are permit records for four alterations carried out in 1929 and 1930, including a new butcher's shop opening from Allen Street designed by E. C. R. Anderson, architect, and the addition of a verandah. The top floor was removed in 1943, presumably as a result of damage caused by the 1942 Wellington / Wairarapa earthquake.² The replacement of the Classical external ornamentation with a simplified, almost Art Deco, decorative scheme appears to date from this period.

The building has been let to various commercial tenants over the past 100 years and the retail units have been occupied by butchers, as a confectioners and tea-rooms, as an antiques shop, and in more recent years as a bar and restaurant.³

¹ Wellington City Council, 'Allen and Blair Streets,' *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings* (Wellington City Council, 2001), ALLEN & BLAIR.

² B22598

³ History taken from: Wellington City Council, '30-36 Courtenay Place,' *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings* (Wellington City Council, 2001), COURT9.



Courtenay Place, Wellington, 1939. Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972: Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/2-048355-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.



Rooftops of Courtenay Place, Wellington, looking towards houses in Mount Victoria, 1909. Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972: Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/2-048241-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

1.2 Timeline of modifications

1900	Shop and stable	00053:66:4090
1916	Alterations to premises	00053:188:10343
1929	Alter and construct shop front	00056:73:B7032
1930	Suspended verandah	00056:100:B9239
	Convert shop to butchers premise	00056:109:B10000
	Extended portion of premises	00056:111:B10099
1936	Partitions	00056:173:B15251
	Partitions	00056:174:B15341
1943	Reinstate premises remove top floor	B22598
1957	Shop front alterations	00058:25:C1256

1958	Alterations to shop front	00058:58:C2889
1963	Building alterations to shop	00058:316:C13700
1966	Shop alterations	00058:483:C20796
1971	Alterations – café	00058:720:C32673
1989	Business additions and alterations	00059:260:D11723
1993	Partitioning	00060:79:2973
2001	Upgrade – ground floor	00078:805:77937
2002	Refurbishment after fire	00078:1077:91234
2005	Remodelling of façade	00078:1414:127199
2006	Additions and alterations	00078:2289:147862

1.3 Ownership history

1899	John Rod
1901	Thomas Young
1903	Percy Edward Palmes
1920	Buildings Limited
1957	Andrew Collins George Panagi Papageorge
1963	Kipros Investments Limited
1984	Elefteria Zayos Nick Apostolakis Katarena Apostolakis
1991	Angelos and Vasiliki Argus
2002	Simon Philip Mark Vasiliki Argus Elefteria Zavos

1.4 Occupation history

1905	John and James, butchers
1935	Ground floor: Confectioner and tea rooms First floor: Courtenay Chambers Limited Second floor: Wright Radio Co.
1950	Paramount Butchery
1990	Antiques and Curios
2012	Mishmosh Bar

1.5 Architect

Thomas Stoddart Lambert (1840-1915) served articles and studied in Edinburgh before coming to Christchurch in 1874 where he worked for three years in Frederick Strouts' office. He established an independent practice in 1877 and rapidly gained a reputation as a sensible and economical architect. He designed a variety of structures including churches, warehouses, business premises and schools (serving as Education Board architect for four years). He was the architect for Christchurch's second Theatre Royal in 1876 gaining valuable experience for his commission to design the Tuam Street Hall five years later. The Odeon is now one of only few surviving examples of his many prominent inner city buildings. The Synagogue, 1880, Canterbury Farmers' Association Building, 1882, United Services Hotel, 1883, and Young Men's Christian Association Building, 1884, have all been demolished. In

1893 he moved from Christchurch and continued his practice in Dunedin and then Wellington.⁴

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

30-36 Courtenay Place is a much altered Victorian Classical building. Although it was once a three storey building with Classical ornamentation the building has been reduced in size to a simplified two storey building with Art Deco overtones.

The ground floor shop-fronts are modern and have little aesthetic or heritage value. The façade above verandah level comprises a simple parapet, deeply set Classically proportioned and detailed sash windows, and sculptural pilasters with unusual Art Deco “capitals” on which most (but not all) of the verandah supports are fixed. The other interesting feature of this building is the curved corner at the Courtenay Place, Allen Street intersection.

2.2 Materials

- Rendered masonry
- Timber sash windows
- Timber roof structure with lightweight metal roofing

2.3 Setting

30 – 36 Courtenay Place is situated on the corner of Allen Street and Courtenay Place. To the north, along Allen Street, are former warehouse buildings which are consistent in style and age. The architectural style of the Rod’s Block building is in keeping with this. On the Courtenay Place side, the building is part of a collection of buildings situated on the block between Allen and Blair Streets which are of a similar height and age.

3.0 Sources

New Zealand Historic Places Trust. ‘Professional Biographies.’ Accessed 5 September 2012.

[http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Lambert,+T+S+\(1840-1915\)](http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Lambert,+T+S+(1840-1915)).

Wellington City Council. ‘Allen and Blair Streets.’ *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 2001. ALLEN & BLAIR.

Wellington City Council. ‘30-36 Courtenay Place.’ *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 2001. COURT9.

⁴ New Zealand Historic Places Trust, ‘Professional Biographies,’ accessed 5 September 2012, [http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Lambert,+T+S+\(1840-1915\)](http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Lambert,+T+S+(1840-1915)).

Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?

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Townscape: Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?

The building has townscape value as it not only marks the corner of Allen Street and Courtenay Place, but its style is in keeping with that exhibited by adjoining buildings on both streets.

Group: Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?

The building is part of an important collection of buildings that comprise the Courtenay Place Heritage Area. Although most of the buildings were constructed in the first half of the 20th century, there are significant differences in age and style among some of the buildings.

Historic Value:

Association: Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?

Association: Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?

The building is associated with the historical development of the Allen and Blair Street Precincts that took place between 1898 and 1904.

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?

It is known that there has been pre-1900 human activity on the site. Te Aro Pa was located nearby therefore the site will have archaeological significance to Māori.
Central City NZAA R27/270

Educational: Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?

Technological: Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:

Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?

Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

The building is part of the Courtenay Place heritage area which, because of its unique collection of heritage buildings, contributes to both a local Wellington and greater New Zealand identity.

Sentiment/Connection: *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

Authentic: *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

Because the building is part of a unique collection of heritage buildings it is important on both a local and national level.

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory	Y	
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
WCC Records – building file	Y	
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		