

## Warehouse (Former)

9-11 Blair Street



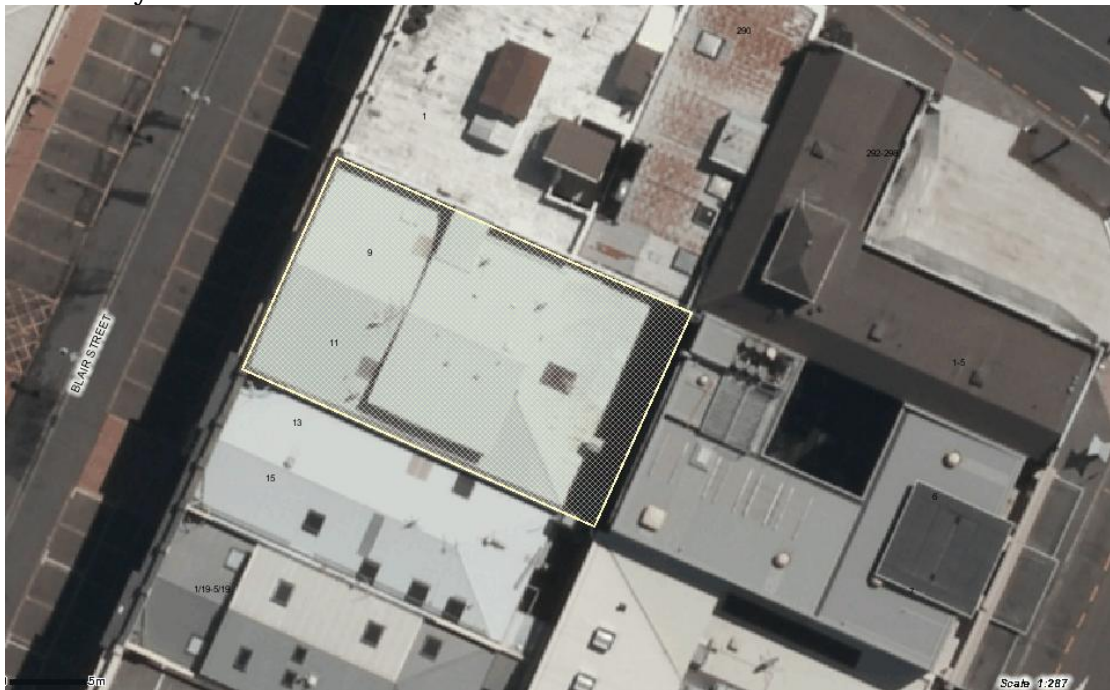
Image: Charles Collins - 2015

### Summary of heritage significance

- The building at 9-11 Blair Street is a good example of a simplified Stripped Classical warehouse building with some Classical ornamental features. The building is notable for its near-original street façade (with the exception of the modern ground floor fenestration).
- This building has an important townscape role as an element of the Blair/Allen Street precinct. The style, scale, and features of this building all provide visual interest and contribute to the precinct.
- This building is associated with the markets in Wellington, which were held in the Allen and Blair Street precinct for over 50 years. It is related to the commercial and economic development in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 26/2
Legal Description:	Lot 22 SP 1302
Heritage Area:	Courtenay Place Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	N/A
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City R27/270
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: 1908
Architect / Builder:	Unknown
Former uses:	Commercial – Warehouse
Current uses:	Commercial – Restaurants
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 187913

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



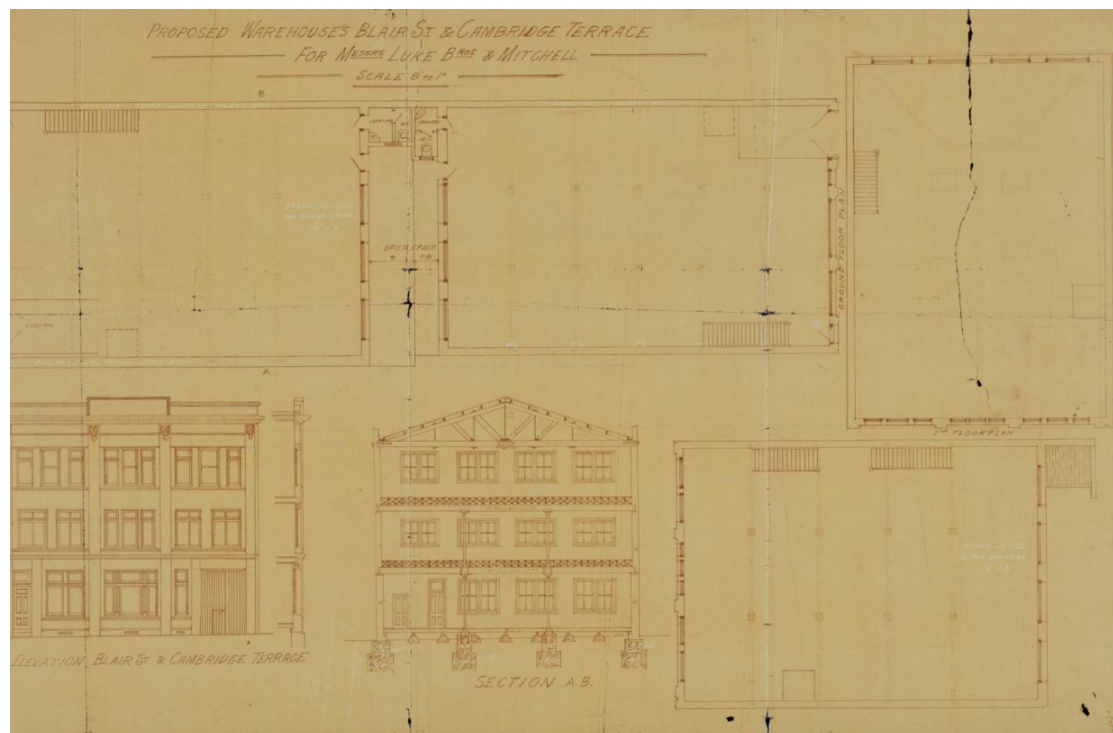
## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

The Blair Street Area has a varied history. This area was once swampland, but with the arrival of the New Zealand Company came plans for the design of a new settlement. This area was transformed dramatically by the 1855 earthquake, making it habitable land. The land occupied by the building was part of a slum area of Te Aro taken over by the Wellington Harbour Board in 1898. The Board acquired responsibility for the area as part of a land swap with the Wellington City Council – the outcome of legislation to allow further reclamation of Wellington Harbour. The Board was handed the job of removing the insanitary dwellings, building culverts and new roads and selling the land. It took the council some time to remove all the occupants and demolish their houses and it was not until 1903 that the land could be properly drained. The original layout of the block was then redesigned; Allen Street was widened and extended to join Victoria Street, which is now Wakefield Street and Blair Street was formed parallel to Allen Street.<sup>1</sup>

There is little known about the history of this building. According to the original plans it was constructed for Luke Bros and Mitchell, Engineers, Boiler Makers, Brass and Iron Founders, by local building firm Luke and Cooper for an estimated £6000.<sup>2</sup> This building was one of two warehouses constructed for Luke Bros and Mitchell, the other backing onto this one with a frontage at 6-7 Cambridge Terrace which is known as 'Rolle House' (WCC ref 16/51.1). The two buildings were separated by an open courtyard space.

### 1.2 Timeline of modifications



<sup>1</sup> Michael Kelly and Russell Murray, *Courtenay Place Heritage Area Report*, Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> WCA 00053: 143: 7953

## WCA 00053: 143: 7953

1908	Blair Street and Cambridge Terrace [9-11 Blair Street, 6-7 Cambridge Terrace], warehouses (00053:143:7953)
1987	refurbishment of existing office block and warehouse (00059:96:D6365) (New mezzanine floor, roof addition, shop front alts (1987) – SR D6365)
1993	9-11 Blair Street, alterations (00060:17:669) (Convert two upper floors into residential use (1993) – SR 669; Earthquake upgrading (1993) - SR 573)
1995	9-11 Blair Street, alteration, PIM Only (00061:58:11731) 9-11 Blair Street, restaurant alterations (00061:74:12218) (Alts including shop front alts (1995) – SR 11731; Street elevation alts, restaurant alts (1995) - SR 12218)
1999	9-11 Blair Street, seismic strengthening of existing building (00078:270:55657) (Seismic Strengthening (1999) – SR 55657)

**1.3 Occupation history**

Not Assessed

**1.4 Architect**

**Unknown**

**2.0 Physical description****2.1 Architecture**

The building at 9-11 Blair Street is a good example of a simplified Stripped Classical warehouse building with some Classical ornamental features. The building is particularly notable for the lack of intrusive alterations to its street façade (with the notable exception of the modern, ground floor fenestration). It is a well proportioned building of three storeys, made up of three bays divided by a Classical framework of tall pilasters. The central bay has three windows at both the second and third storey, while the two flanking bays are made up of two windows at second floor level and three windows at the third floor level. The façade is topped by a cornice and stepped parapet.

The ground floor openings have been significantly altered from their original forms, but façade on the two floors above appear to match the original drawings. The façade is a strict geometric grid of groups of two and three windows, all set within a Classical framework of tall pilasters, cornice, and a stepped parapet.<sup>3</sup>

The building is notable for the unusual arrangements of small and large opening lights on the second floor windows. This appears to be an original feature and is shown on the architect's drawings.

The structure, as shown on the drawings, consists of concrete foundations supporting masonry walls, with concrete bands at floor and parapet levels. The floors are framed in timber and supported in cast iron columns, while heavy timber roof trusses with steel tie rods span the full width of the building.

<sup>3</sup> Wellington City Council. 'Allen and Blair Streets', *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings – Precincts* (Wellington City Council 2001), AL&BL 12.

## **2.2 Materials**

Concrete foundations

Masonry walls with concrete bands at floor and parapet levels.

Timber floors supported by cast iron columns

Timber roof trusses with steel tie rods

## **2.3 Setting**

This building is located in the Courtenay Place heritage area on Blair Street. It is a precinct of warehouses that are consistent in building type and age. There is a diversity of styles but they relate well to one another in opening form, scale, decoration, and underlying classicism. This consistency, diversity, and homogeneity of building facades provide interest and character in the precinct.

## **3.0 Sources**

Kelly, Michael, and Russell Murray. *Courtenay Place Heritage Area Report*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings – Precincts*. Wellington City Council 2001.

Wellington City Council. *Courtenay Place Heritage Area spreadsheet (Part 3)*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

### **Wellington City Archive**

00053:143:7953

00059:96:D6365

00060:17:669

00061:58:11731

00061:74:12218

00078:270:55657

SR D6365

SR 669

SR 573

SR 11731

SR 12218

SR 55657

### **Land Information New Zealand – Certificate of Titles**

CTWN126/90

CTWN318/112

CTWN5C/142

## 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?*

The building at 9-11 Blair Street is a good example of a simplified Stripped Classical warehouse building with some Classical ornamental features. The building is notable for its near-original street façade (with the exception of the modern ground floor fenestration).

**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?*

This building has an important townscape role as an element of the Blair/Allen Street precinct of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century masonry warehouses.

**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?*

This building is one of two identical back-to-back warehouses that were designed for a local engineering company, and which are both located within the heritage area.

#### **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?*

This building is associated with the markets in Wellington, which were held in the Allen and Blair Street precinct for over 50 years. It is related to the commercial and economic development in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Scientific Value:**

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

This building is included in the NZAA Central City archaeological area 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?*

There is some technical interest in the use of cast iron as a structural element. This material is rarely used in modern constructions due to the unpredictable nature of the process and its predisposition towards being brittle or cracking.

#### **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 a collection of historic buildings which contribute to the sense of place in the Courtenay Place Heritage Area. More specifically, the collection of buildings that form the Blair and Allen Street precinct is a coherent streetscape well understood and appreciated by the local community.

**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?*

This building is a good representative of a warehouse building influenced by the Classical architectural style.

**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?*

This building retains a significant amount of original exterior fabric and retains authenticity of design and material, together with a high level of authenticity of setting. The interior has been significantly altered and the connection to its twin on Cambridge Terrace has been mostly lost.

**Local/Regional/National/International**

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

The building is of local importance as its architecture and history contributes to the overall historic and stylistic value of the Allen and Blair Street Precinct.

## 4.0 Appendix

### Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
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)		

### Background research

*Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:*

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*