

Turnbull & Jones Warehouse (Former)

21-23 Blair Street

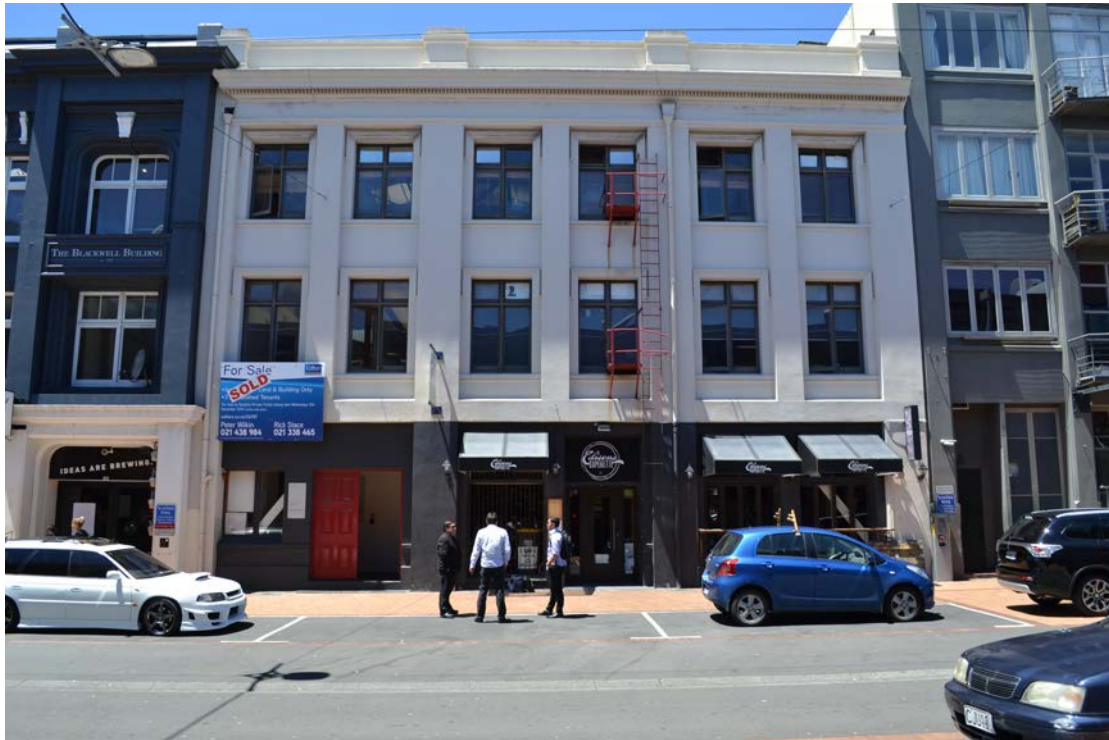


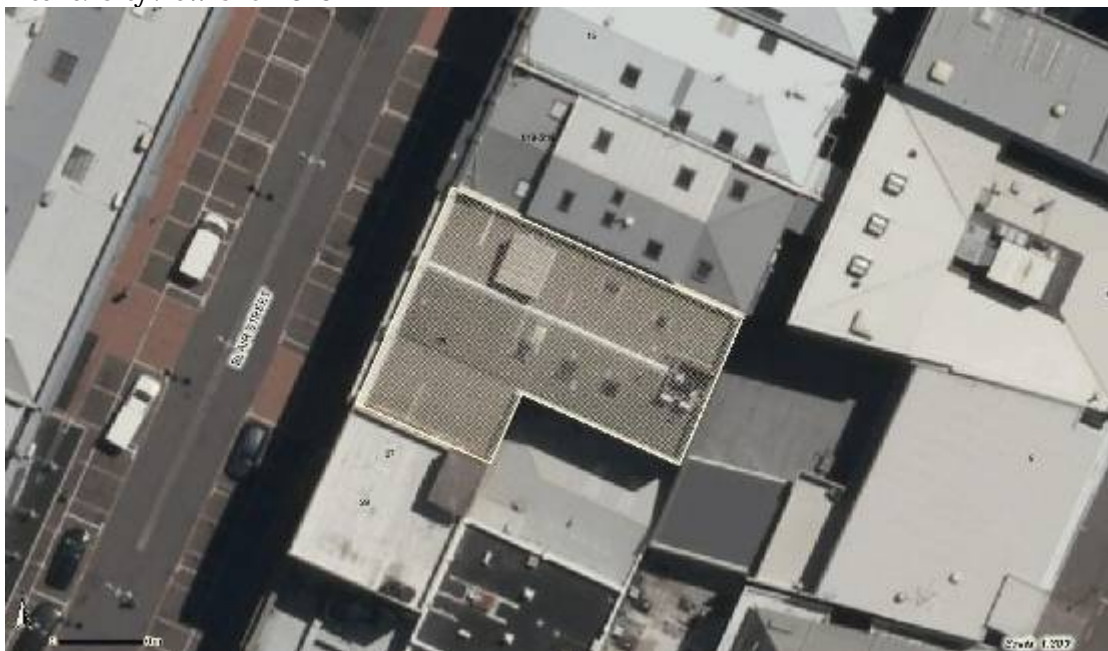
Image: *Charles Collins* - 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- 21-23 Blair Street has architectural value as a good representative example of an Edwardian Stripped Classical style utilitarian warehouse.
- This building has an important townscape role as an element of the Blair/Allen Street precinct of 19th and early 20th century masonry warehouses.
- The building has historical value as one of a group of buildings constructed over a short period of time in the early 20th century in one place - Blair and Allen Streets - to bring Wellington's produce markets together. That activity continued for over 80 years before it gave way to the expansion of the bar and restaurant district of Courtenay Place in the early 1990s.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 26/4
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 55915
Heritage Area:	Courtenay Place Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City R27/270
Key physical dates:	Built: 1906
Architect / Builder:	Architect unknown. Builder: J. Trevor and Son.
Former uses:	Commercial - warehouse
Current uses:	Commercial – restaurant
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 184518

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



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 Between 1904 and 1906 a variety of warehouse buildings were constructed along both sides of Allen and Blair Streets. These warehouses were used for storage and auctions. They were two or three stories high with a variety of street facades, some more ornate than others. In many of the stores markets and auctions were held on the ground floor with offices on the floors above.² Allen and Blair Streets bustled with vendors, merchants and numerous vehicles loading and unloading produce and other marketable goods.

Permits show that this building was constructed in 1906 by Trevor and Sons for their own use at an estimated cost of £1800. The original plan drawings are not signed by any architect, so it is possible that the design was drawn by Trevor and Sons themselves. The firm of Trevor and Sons became Trevor Bros in 1912 following the retirement of Mr. James Trevor.³ In 1913 the Trevor Bros leased the building to the firm of Turnbull and Jones Ltd., electrical engineers and contractors. In 1928 Turnbull and Jones had a number of alterations designed by architectural firm Atkins and Mitchell. This involved the construction of a new entrance at the northern end of the building with a canopy over it (which has subsequently been removed), as well as alterations to the stairs and lift. The ground floor has been adapted for use as restaurants/bars, and the top floors have been modified for use as offices.

In 2000 the building underwent seismic strengthening and received funding from the Wellington City Council Earthquake risk building fund. Since this time it has been modified as a series of different bars and restaurants, the most recent incarnation being Edison's Superette.

1.2 Timeline of modifications (original plans could not be accessed)

1906	17-23 Blair Street [21 Blair Street], warehouse (00053:127:7113)
1928	19-23 Blair Street [21 Blair Street], alterations (00056:67:B6415)
1987	21-23 Blair Street, office partitioning (00059:66:D5422)
2000	21-23 Blair Street, seismic upgrade and fitout, level 2 (00078:633:67079)

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

² Wellington City Council, "Courtenay Arms", *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), AL&BL8.

³ 'Obituary', *Evening Post*, Volume LXXXIX, Issue 112, 13 May 1915, Page 8.

1.3 Occupation history⁴

1965-66	44: Vanvi Ltd, electrical suppliers' retail (Wises 1965-66)
1971-72	New Royal Restaurant (Wises 1971-72)
1980	no. 44 is listed as Gas Company Building Tenants Alliance Textiles and New Royal Restaurant.
1985	Hatters (Wises 1985)
1990	Open All Hours (Wises 1990)
1997	Illy Café
2002	Amba
2004	The Last Supper Club
2007	Lagerfield Bar/restaurant
2011	Edison's Superette

1.4 Architect

Original architect unknown

1928 Alterations: Atkins and Mitchell

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

This building is a typical warehouse of the period influenced by the Stripped Classical style. It is three storeys of load bearing brick masonry, with timber floors supported on a post and beam structure. Trusses span two thirds of the width of the building. The front façade has a plain geometric pattern of square headed windows, and the only decoration is the simple hoods over the windows and a moulded cornice. Four pilasters continue up through the cornice to give a stepped profile to the parapet.⁵

2.2 Materials

Load bearing brick masonry, timber, concrete.

2.3 Setting

This building is flanked on the left by a three storey warehouse influenced by the Beaux Arts style which is made up of two buildings that mirror one another. To the right is a four storey utilitarian warehouse constructed in 1923, which has been through a number of alterations including the installation of new balconies and modern fenestrations.

This building is found 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.

⁴ Wellington City Council, *Courtenay Place Heritage Area spreadsheet (blocks 1-3)*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).

⁵ Wellington City Council, "AB&BL13," *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings-Precincts*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), AB&BL13.

3.0 Sources

Wellington City Council. *Courtenay Place Heritage Area spreadsheet (blocks 1-3)*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

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

Papers Past

Evening Post. Volume LXXXIX, Issue 112. 13 May 1915. Page 8.

Wellington City Archive

00053:127:7113
00056:67:B6415
00059:66:D5422
00078:633:67079

Land Information New Zealand

CT WN25B/61
CT WN5C/145
CT WN318/112
CT WN126/90

Stones and Wises Wellington Directories

Wises 1965-66
Wises 1971-72
Wises 1985
Wises 1990

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?*

21-23 Blair Street has architectural value as a good representative example of an Edwardian Stripped Classical style utilitarian warehouse.

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 19th and early 20th 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?*

The building contributes to the Courtenay Place Heritage Area, which is made up of a group of late 19th – early 20th century commercial buildings, and features the distinctive Blair and Allen Street warehouse precinct.

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 commercial and economic development of the Allen and Blair Street precinct and more widely the development of Wellington.

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.

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 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 that is 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 example of an Edwardian warehouse that is typical of the Allen/Blair Street warehouse area.

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 some authenticity of design, craftsmanship, and materials with a high level of authenticity of setting.

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 aesthetic 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*