

## Commercial Building

41-43 Cuba Street



Photo: *Charles Collins, 2015*

### Summary of heritage significance

- No. 41-43 Cuba Street is notable for its inventive and ornate Edwardian Classical façade.
- The building was designed by John Swan, one of Wellington's best known architects in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The building is one of several ornate Edwardian buildings in lower Cuba Street that make a strong contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.
- It has strong associations with the family of Martin Kennedy, a successful Wellington businessman and prominent Catholic layman.
- The building's façade remains relatively unaltered and contributes to the sense of place and continuity in lower Cuba Street.

District Plan:	Map 16, Symbol 73
Legal Description:	Lot 6, DP845
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Not listed.
Archaeological Site:	Central City NZAA R27/270
Other Names:	Hede Café, Last Footwear Company Building, the Kennedy Building
Key physical dates:	Built 1903
Architect / Builder:	John Swan
Former uses:	Warehouse/Store, Office and depot, Commercial, Restaurant
Current uses:	Commercial, restaurant (?)
Earthquake Prone Status:	Section 124 notice served 30/03/2010 (SR160375) Notice Exp 29/03/2025

Extent:



WWC Cityview, 2012

## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

Martin Kennedy constructed this building in 1903 on land purchased under his wife's name in 1900.<sup>1</sup> Martin Kennedy was a Wellington merchant; pioneer of the mining industry on the West Coast, Catholic layman, good friend of Mother Aubert and for many years a director of the Bank of New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> The property remained an investment for the Kennedy family for the next 75 years. Upon Mark Kennedy's death in 1918 the property passed to the executors of her will – daughters Anastasia and Agnes Kennedy, barrister Charles Skerret and merchant Albert Corrogan.<sup>3</sup> The property remained in the hands of various executors as family members passed until 1962 when it was taken over by the Martin Kennedy Endowment Trust Board, who finally relinquished ownership in 1978.<sup>4</sup>

The building was originally constructed as a warehouse/store on all three levels.<sup>5</sup> The first tenant to use the warehouse space was State the Coal Company, who used it as an office and depot. This dusty enterprise drew complaints from its neighbours.<sup>6</sup> Throughout this period and until at least 1916 the building was also home to the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, which had been established in the 1890s as a forum for the consultation and combined action of unions in the Wellington district.

An assortment of other tenants included Fullers Theatres and Vaudeville Ltd who occupied room in the building between 1920 and 1925.<sup>7</sup> Theatre owner, impresario and entrepreneur John Fuller and Sons had established permanent vaudeville theatres in Wellington and three other centres of New Zealand in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>8</sup> By 1911, Fuller's son Benjamin Fuller had taken over as director and continued to oversee the business's success.<sup>9</sup> Other long-standing occupants in the building included James Stewart Electrical from 1930 to 1945, Sutherland & Rankine, motor engineers and garage from 1930 to 1940 and NZ Lamps Ltd who had the longest occupancy of the building from 1950 to 1985.<sup>10</sup>

Costas and Maria Zadimas brought the building from the Kennedy Trust Endowment Board in 1978. There were then a succession of owners until 2000 when the building was brought by Yin Bong Wong and Noon Yong Wong. It remains in their ownership today.<sup>11</sup> The ground floor is still in commercial use as a shoe shop, with a restaurant and bar on the first floor and offices on the floor above that.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Land Title Service, CT WN 93/27

<sup>2</sup> H. Laracy. "Kennedy, Martin – Biography", from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated September 1, 2010, accessed June 16, 2012, [www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3k9/1](http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3k9/1)

<sup>3</sup> Land Title Service, CT WN93/21

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Wellington City Council. "Last Footwear Company Building", *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA 3.

<sup>6</sup> "Parliamentary: State Coal Depot", *Grey River Argus*, 29 June 1910, Page 1.

<sup>7</sup> Wellington City Council, Section 32 Report - Cuba Street Heritage Area spreadsheet (blocks 1-3). unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006

<sup>8</sup> A.H. McLintock "Fuller, Sir Benjamin John", from *Te Ara – the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, originally published in 1966, updated April 23, 2009, accessed June 16, 2010, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/fuller-sir-benjamin-john/1>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

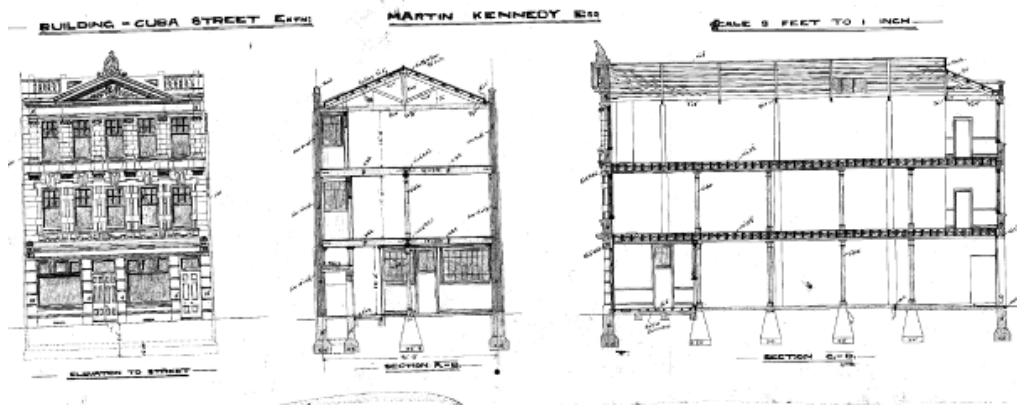
<sup>10</sup> Land Title Service, CT WN93/21

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

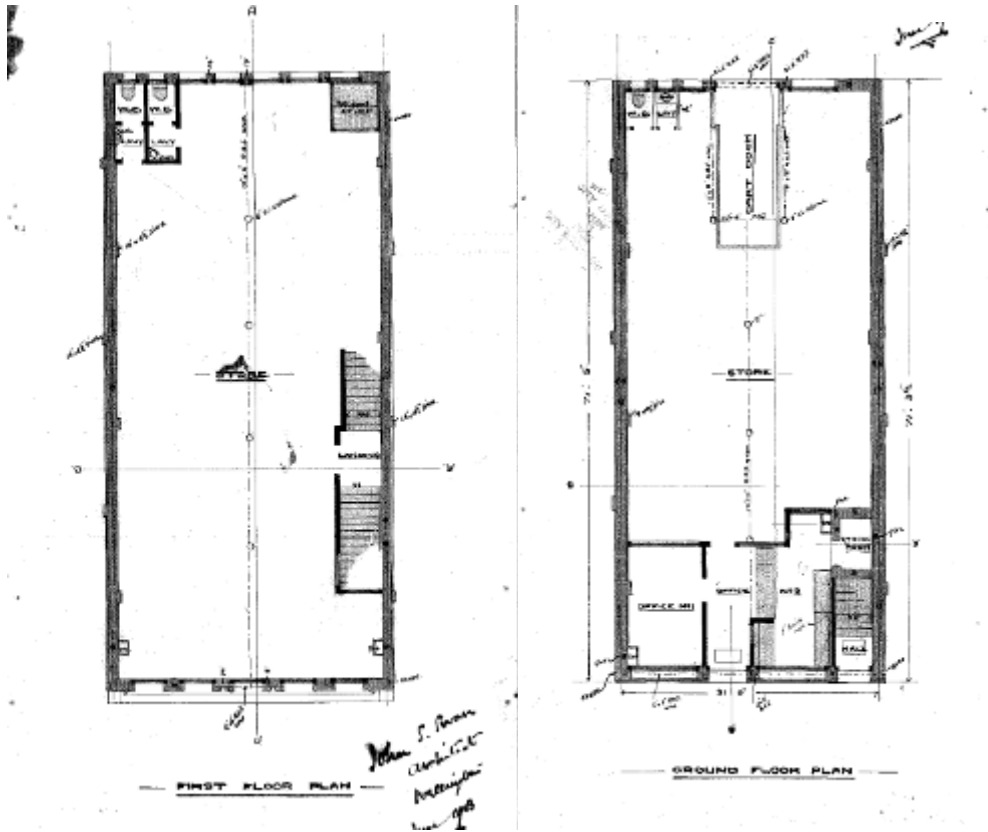
<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



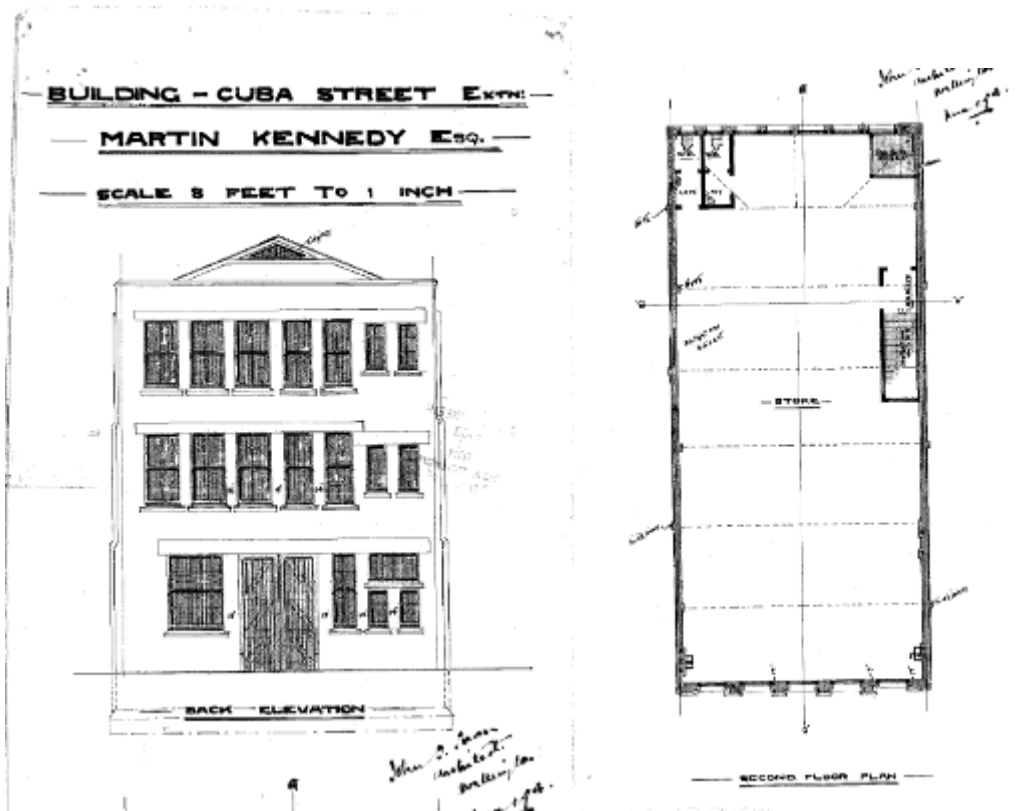
Original Plans 1903 – Enlargement of the Front Elevation  
(00053:97:5510)



Original plans 1903 showing the Front Elevation and Sections, 1903.  
(00053:97:5510)



Original plans showing plans of the first and second floors, 1903.  
(00053:97:5510)



Original plans, rear elevation and second floor, 1903.  
(00053:97:5510)

## 1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1900 Land purchased by Mary Kennedy. <sup>13</sup>
- 1903 Building constructed to a design by John Sydney Swan. (00053:97:5510)
- 1927 Shop front altered and erected verandah. ( 00056:25:B2504)
- 1953 Alterations. (00056:459:B34839)
- 1955 Fire escape. (00056:505:B37825)
- 1961 Show room alterations. (00058:171:C7992)
- 1965 Building alterations. (00058:388:C16604)
- 1974 Building alterations. (00058:898:C39849)
- 1980 Restaurant alterations to first floor. (00058:1277:C54165)
- 1984 Door awning. (00058:0:C66411)
- 1985 Alterations. 00058:0:C67051)
- 1994 Restaurant fit-out. (00061:9:10269)
- 1995 Seismic upgrade and second floor converted to apartments.  
(00061:9:10269, 00061:78:12379 and 00061:78:12379)
- 1996 Restaurant alterations - fire doors. (00078:24:23376)
- 2001 New glazing over courtyard on level 3. (00078:1020:83546)

<sup>13</sup> Land Title Service, CT WN93/21



### 1.3 Occupation history

Westport & Greymouth Coal & Produce Co Ltd (Stones1905), NZ State Coalmines (41) (Stones1910-11, 1915-16, 1920, 1925, ), Trades and Labour Council (43) (Stones1905, 1910-11, 1915-16), Fullers' Theatres & Vaudeville Ltd (Stones1920, 1925), James Stewart Electrical (41) (Stones1930,1935, 1940, 1945), Sutherland & Rankine, motor engineers & garage (Stones1930, 1935, 1940), NZ Lamps Ltd (41) (Wises1950-51, 1955, 1961-62, 1967-68, 1971-72, 1975, 1980, 1985). Only 43 listed 1990 (Payless Shoes).<sup>14</sup>

In 1980 alterations were made to the 1st floor and a restaurant opened, today occupied by the Hede Café - a Japanese restaurant and bar.<sup>15</sup>

### 1.4 Architect

John Sydney Swan

Swan (1874-1936) practised architecture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He formed part of the last group of architects to follow the traditional Gothic and Classical styles. He was articled to Frederick de Jersey Clere, working with Clere on many major designs such as the Wellington Rowing Club building (then known as the Naval Artillery Boat Shed, 1894) as well as smaller provincial buildings such as the Church of the Good Shepherd, Tinui. The firm was known as Clere, Fitzgerald and Richmond and was one of the most prominent architectural practices in Wellington. From 1901 to 1906 Swan was in partnership with Clere, practising on his own account from 1907. The first major design produced by Swan in this new practice was the Karori Crematorium (1907) which served to establish his architectural identity separate from Clere. During his long and varied career Swan produced a large and wide range of work, including a number of banks for the National Bank such as the head office building in Wellington (1907), educational buildings for the Wellington Technical College with William Gray Young (1922), and a number of major buildings for the Catholic Church including St Gerard's Church, Mt Victoria (1910), Sacred Heart Convent (later Erskine College), Island Bay (1909), and Wanganui Convent (1912). He was an architect of imagination as evidenced by the design of his own house 'The Moorings', Glenbervie Terrace (1905).<sup>16</sup>

## 2.0 Physical description

### 2.1 Architecture

This functional, three storey building has an ornate Edwardian Classical façade. It is embellished on the first floor with six rusticated pillars between deeply recessed windows. The windows have exaggerated swags as keystone. On the second floor there are six attached and rusticated Ionic columns, again emphasised as a colonnade by the recessed windows, while an entablature and pediment finish the composition. It is an inventive and decorative façade.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Wellington City Council, *Cuba Street Heritage Area spreadsheet (blocks 1-3)*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> "41-43 Cuba Street - restaurant alterations (1st floor)", 1980, 00058:1277:C54165, Wellington City Archives.

<sup>16</sup> Historic Places Trust, "John Sydney Swan", Professional Biographies accessed June 2012 <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=209>

<sup>17</sup> Wellington City Council, "Last Footwear Company Building"

## 2.2 Materials

Load-bearing brick masonry with circular cast-iron columns supporting steel beams and timber floor joists. Timber trusses span the full width of the building.<sup>18</sup>

## 2.3 Setting

The Commercial Building is located on the eastern side of Block 1 of the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It sits between the Kennedy Building (1905) to the north and Arco House (1908) to the south.

This first or northern block of Cuba Street is also the tallest, with buildings between three and eight stories high (the median height is expressed by the five storey James Smiths building). Although the street is widest in this block, the proportions of the tall buildings create a strong sense of enclosure to the street, in contrast to the more open aspect of the other parts of the street. Most of the buildings in this block have attached verandahs, some original, which come in a variety of styles, do not conform to any continuous elevation line, and contribute to a general visual untidiness in the lower part of the streetscape.

The northern view down the street, which once extended to the harbour and provided an important visual link between this commercial area and the waterfront, is blocked by the Michael Fowler Centre. The southern view appears open and expansive due to the much lower scale of the buildings beyond and the large open area and low-rise buildings at the immediate conjunction of Manners Mall and Cuba Street.

The character of the block is perhaps best illustrated by James Smiths building where the Art Deco façade turns around the corner from Manners Street and meets into a strong 50s modernist box along Cuba Street. The other buildings in this block are a heterogeneous mix of ages, types and styles which assemble to create a varied and interesting streetscape. The overall heritage and streetscape value of the block is reasonably high as many prominent Edwardian commercial buildings – Columbia Hotel, Kennedy building, T.G. McCarthy Trust and others – remain to reinforce the line of the street wall and provide a high level of detail and visual variety to that street wall. Some of the modern buildings make a positive contribution to the street wall, including the former MED building and James Smiths.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Adapted from Michael Kelly and Russell Murray, *Cuba Street Heritage Area Report*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).



### 3.0 Sources

“The Community Archive”, Accessed: June 16, 2012,  
<http://thecommunityarchive.org.nz/node/73196/description>

CT WN11/179, Land Information New Zealand

CT WN 93/21, Land Information New Zealand

Historic Places Trust, Professional Biographies, Accessed: June 2012  
<http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=209>

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

Laracy, H. “Kennedy, Martin – Biography”. In the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated September 1, 2010. Accessed June 16, 2012. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3k9/1>

McLintock, A.H., “Fuller, Sir Benjamin John”, *Te Ara – the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, originally published in 1966, updated April 23, 2009, accessed June 16, 2010, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/fuller-sir-benjamin-john/1>

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

#### Wellington City Archives

“Cuba Street extension [41-43 Cuba Street], brick building”, 09 Jul 1903, 00053:97:5510, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, alterations to premises”, 10 Jan 1927, 00056:25:B2504, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, alterations”, 03 Aug 1953, 00056:459:B34839, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, fire escape”, 29 Apr 1955, 00056:505:B37825, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, show room alterations”, 03 Feb 1961, 00058:171:C7992, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, building alterations”, 13 Mar 1965, 00058:388:C16604, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, building alterations”, 11 Feb 1974, 00058:898:C39849, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, restaurant alterations (1st floor)”, 10 Jul 1980, 00058:1277:C54165, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, door awning”, 1984, 00058:0:C66411, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, alterations, level 1”, 1985, 00058:0:C67051, Wellington City Archives.

“41-43 Cuba Street, sign”, 1987, 00059:167:D8482, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, level 1, restaurant fit-out”, 1994, 00060:155:5665, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, sign”, 11 Aug 1994, 00060:176:6376, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, seismic upgrade”, 1995, 00061:9:10269, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, level 2, apartment alteration”, 19 Apr 1995, 00061:78:12379, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, restaurant alterations - fire doors”, 1996, 00078:24:23376, Wellington City Archives.

“41 Cuba Street, level 3, new glazing over courtyard”, 2001, 00078:1020:83546, Wellington City Archives.

### **Newspapers**

“Parliamentary: State Coal Depot”, *Grey River Argus*, 29 June 1910.

## 4.0 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?*

No. 41-43 Cuba Street is notable for its inventive and ornate Edwardian Classical façade.

**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 is one of several ornate Edwardian buildings in Block 1 of the Cuba Street Heritage Area and makes a strong contribution to the townscape value of lower Cuba Street.

**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?*

#### **Historic Value:**

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

The building was designed by noted Wellington architect John Sydney Swan.

The building has a close association with the Kennedys, an early Wellington family.

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

The building is associated with the development of commerce in Cuba Street in the Edwardian era partly due to the introduction of electric trams to the city centre.

#### **Scientific Value:**

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

There was pre-1900 human activity on this site. Although some of the sites have been altered by rebuilding or landscaping or subdivisional change, there is archaeological value in the immediate surrounds.

**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 was part of Wellington's early commercial centre and the façade has remained on site, relatively unaltered for the past 100 years. It contributes to the sense of place and continuity in Lower Cuba Street.

***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?

The building is a good representative example of inner-city Edwardian commercial Classical architecture.

***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?

The building façade above verandah level has had few intrusive modern alterations and retains much of the original building fabric.

***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 for its contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

## 5.0 Appendix

### Background research

#### STATE COAL DEPOT.

(Our Correspondent).

WELLINGTON, June 27

There is to be an interesting sequel to the long standing complaint by the Farmers Distributing Company against the State Coal Depot over the damage done to business premises, held under lease by the company in lower Cuba Street, Wellington, as a result of the dust nuisance arising from the operation in the department's depots next door. It will be recalled that the company sued the department in connection with the nuisance, and were awarded damages, but the Crown Suits Act was then invoked by the department to prevent the company from obtaining an injunction and further damages. Then a petition was presented to the House asking that the Act should be waived. In the case of the company, or that the dispute should be settled by arbitration, but the proposal was out voted by 29 votes to 25. When the State Coal Department's estimates came up for discussion later it was, however, decided by 30 votes to 28, on the motion of Mr Field, that one of the items should be reduced by £1 as an indication that the Act should be waived, or the case referred to arbitration. It has now been decided by the Government that the premises, which now form the depot in lower Cuba street, should be given up, and a new depot opened on a section of land belonging to the Crown near the Railway Wharf.

The Hon. R. McKenzie, (Minister for Mines), says the new depot will be equipped with improved appliances for screening and handling the coal.

#### FURTHER PROSPECTING.

After a further conference has been held between the Hon R. McKenzie (Minister for Mines) and Dr. Bell (Government Geologist) it is probable that a number of men will be put on prospecting work in connection with the important find of coal in the Waimarino district.

**Research checklist (desktop)**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1995 Heritage Inventory	Y	
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	Y	
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	Y	
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website	N	
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

**WCC Permits**

00053:9 7:5510	Cuba Street extension [41-43 Cuba Street], brick building	Applicant: J H Fairhurst. Owner: Martin Kennedy. Architect: John S Swan.	Building Permit/Consent	09 Jul 1903
00056:2 5:B2504	41-43 Cuba Street, alterations to premises	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: Kennedy Estate. Builder: Fletcher Construction Co. Application value: £600. Note: shop front alterations and verandah.	Building Permit/Consent	10 Jan 1927
00056:4 59:B348 39	41-43 Cuba Street, alterations	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: Kennedy Estate. Builder: AV Swanson. Application value: £2190	Building Permit/Consent	03 Aug 1953
00056:5 05:B378 25	41-43 Cuba Street, fire escape	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: Martin Kennedy Estate. Builder: H M Andrews. Application value: £300	Building Permit/Consent	29 Apr 1955

00058:1 71:C799 2	41-43 Cuba Street, show room alterations	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: Ponce DeLyon Models. Builder: V Kielich. Application value: £1800	Building Permit/Conse nt	03 Feb 1961
00058:3 88:C166 04	41-43 Cuba Street, building alterations	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: New Zealand Lamps. Builder: Young Bros Limited. Application value: £1000. Note: Shopfront alts.	Building Permit/Conse nt	13 Mar 1965
00058:8 98:C398 49	41-43 Cuba Street, building alterations	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: Airline Benity Lounges Limited. Builder: CD Loveking. Application value: \$3000	Building Permit/Conse nt	11 Feb 1974
00058:1 277:C54 165	41-43 Cuba Street, restaurant alterations (1st floor)	Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Owner: K Vitale. Builder: K Vitale. Application value: \$4000	Building Permit/Conse nt	10 Jul 1980
00058:0 :C66411	41-43 Cuba Street, door awning	Owner: M Vitale. Applicant: Venlux Industries Limited. Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Application value: \$400.	Building Permit/Conse nt Microfiche	1984
00058:0 :C67051	41-43 Cuba Street, alterations , level 1	Owner: C M Stewart. Applicant: C M Stewart. Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845 and 846. Application value: \$4,050.	Building Permit/Conse nt Microfiche	1985
00059:1 67:D848 2	41-43 Cuba Street, sign		Building Permit/Conse nt	1987
00060:1 55:5665	41 Cuba Street, level 1, restaurant fit-out	Owner: Istana Malaysia. Applicant: Sean Rielly. Legal description: Lot 6 DP 845. Application value: \$8,000.	Building Permit/Conse nt	1994
00060:1 76:6376	41 Cuba Street, sign		Building Permit/Conse nt	11 Aug 1994
00061:9 :10269	41 Cuba Street, seismic upgrade	Owner: Legend Holdings. Designer: Dunning Thornton. Builder: R.B. Steel. Application value: \$40,000. Legal Desc: Lot 6 DP 845	Building Permit/Conse nt	1995



00061:7 8:12379	41 Cuba Street, level 2, apartment alteration	Owner: J and M Hatrick. Designer: Barbara Webster. Legal Description: Lot 6 DP 845. Application Value: \$80,000.	Building Permit/Consent	19 Apr 1995
00078:2 4:23376	41 Cuba Street, restaurant alterations - fire doors	Owner: Danny Arulandu. Applicant: Danny Arulandu. Legal Description: Lot 6 DP 845. Application Value: \$1,000.	Building Permit/Consent	1996
00078:1 020:835 46	41 Cuba Street, level 3, new glazing over courtyard		Building Permit/Consent	2001

**COAL, COAL, COAL,  
AND  
PRODUCE,**

**WESTPORT AND GREYMOUTH COAL  
AND PRODUCE COMPANY  
(LIMITED),**  
(Late Westport Coal Company),  
**LOWER CUBA-STREET,  
Five Doors from Winder's.**

**L**ARGE Stocks of Coal and Firewood  
always on hand. Best Westport,  
Newcastle, East Greta, and Greymouth  
Nuts, Oats, Chaff, Bran, Wheat, Pollard,  
Hay and Straw at lowest rates.  
Telephone No. 222.  
**W. C. GASQUOINE,**  
Manager.

Evening Post, Volume LXVII, Issue 3, 5 January 1904, Page 7



Sir Benjamin John Fuller<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Auckland Star, Volume LXIX, Issue 120, 24 May 1938, Page 8