

Bristol Hotel

127-129 Cuba Street



Photo: Charles Collins, 2014

Summary of heritage significance

- This building, now known as the Hotel Bristol, is of architectural value as a good representative example of Edwardian Classicism. It is notable for its well-proportioned and carefully composed Classical street facade.
- This building has significant townscape value for the visual interest that it adds to the Cuba Streetscape and as a part of the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It is a good example of an Edwardian commercial building and contributes to the scale and ambience of the area.
- The building has historic value for its association with the strong growth and development of Cuba Street during the Edwardian period, which resulted in the building of many fine commercial buildings.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 78/4
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 82562
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 3629
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: 1909
Architect / Builder:	James Gardiner
Former uses:	Commercial – Hotel
Current uses:	Commercial – Bar/restaurant
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 167869

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

127 – 129 Cuba Street is a three storey Edwardian Classical building that was built for C.T. London in 1908 – 09.¹ Although the building remained in the London family until the mid-1990s, it appears to have been leased by the nearby Hotel Bristol² as a northern annexe from c.1910 – 1955. The name Hotel Bristol appears on the parapet pediment and, with the demolition of the major part of the hotel in the c.1960s – 70s, the annexe appears to have inherited the main hotel's name.

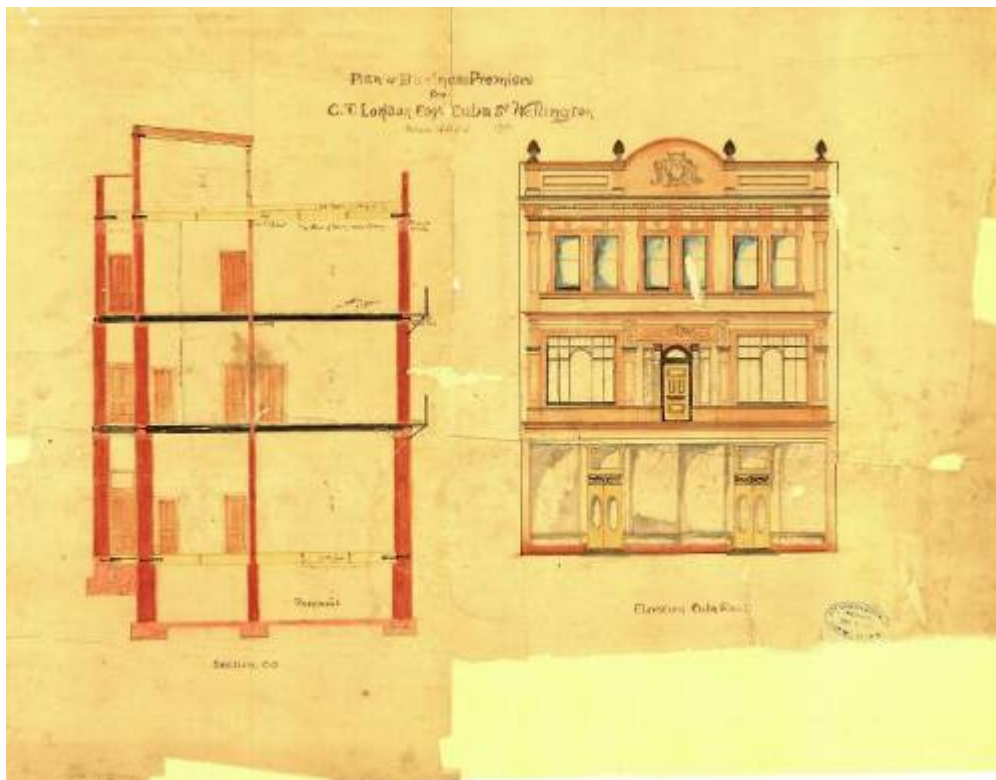
The ground floor of No. 127 – 129 Cuba Street was designed with two shops and the northernmost shop had access to a large warehouse at the front of the first floor. The remainder of the first floor and the entire second floor was partitioned into hotel bedrooms, bathrooms and ancillary spaces for the Hotel Bristol. A 'covered gangway to the Bristol' is shown on the original drawings and cuts across the rear of the adjacent building at No.131 Cuba Street. An amended drawing shows the first floor warehouse subdivided into three large rooms, and was presumably converted into reception, sitting or dining rooms for the hotel at an early date – possibly during the construction of the building.

The façade of the building shows a number of alterations from the original plans, such as the removal of the fire escape from the second floor balcony in 2008, and the replacement of the cast iron railing on the second floor balcony with a solid railing in 2001. The building has also undergone seismic strengthening in 2010. There have also been a number of internal alterations to accommodate the mixed use of the building, with the bar on the ground floor as well as a mezzanine (131-133), retail on the ground floor (127-129) and residential space on the upper floors.

¹ WCC Archives ref 00053_149_8293

² See Stones Directories for 1910 - 1955

1.2 Timeline of modifications



- 1909 127-129 Cuba Street, two shops, showroom and storeroom (00053:149:8293)
Hotel Bristol and 127-190 shops: 8293 - construction
- 1926 127-129 Cuba Street, shop front alterations (00056:15:B1447)
- 1928 127-129 Cuba Street, shop front alterations (00056:63:B6091)
- 1931 B10873 - new verandah
B11303 - dangerous goods store
- 1932 127-129 Cuba Street, building alterations (00056:130:B11825)
- 1933 B12321 - alterations and renovations
B12780 - reinstate fire damage
- 1949 B28734 - fire escapes
- 1953 127-129 Cuba Street, shop front alterations (00056:469:B35496)
- 1954 127-129 Cuba Street, Verandah (00056:477:B35977)
B35977 - new verandah 1954
- 1956 127-129 Cuba Street, shop front (00056:549:B40363)
- 1958 127-129 Cuba Street, building alterations (00058:73:C3632)
- 1964 C14811 - internal alterations
- 1966 127-129 Cuba Street, building alterations – shop (00058:437:C18728)
- 1967 127-129 Cuba Street, building alterations – shop (00058:511:C22049)
- 1967 127-129 Cuba Street, building alterations – shop (00058:515:C22195)
- 1980 127-129 Cuba Street, alter kitchen - 2nd floor (00058:1256:C53344)
- 1995 SR12467 - seismic strengthening
SR14006 - convert to bar

1.3 Occupation history³

Hotel Bristol (Stones1910-11, 1915-16, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, Wises1950-51, 1955). Called London Chambers in Wises1961-62 and tenanted by various small businesses (same for shops on Cuba St).

Gurney Electrical Company Ltd (Wises1961-62, 1967-68, 1971-72),

He & She Fashions Ltd (Wises1971-2, 1975),

Catts-Patterson, photographic studio (Wises1971-72, 1980),

Anna Louise Fashions Ltd (Wises1980), not listed 1985 or 1990.

Shops on Cuba St (127-131):

127: John Farquhar, boot importer (Stones1910-11, 1915-16, 1920)

The Hat Box, milliners (Stones1935, 1940)

Joyce Frocks & Graceline Lingerie (Stones1945, Wises1950-51, 1955, 1961-62)

129: Joseph Shand, bookseller (Stones1910-11, 1915-16, 1920, 1925)

Halse Home Furnishing (Stones1935, 1940, 1945, Wises1950-51, 1955, 1961-62)

131: Gardiner & Hardie, herbalists (Stones1910-11, 1915-16)

Marble Bar Ltd, refreshment caterers (Stones1920, 1925)

Bruce Adams, cake specialist (Stones1930)

Burlington Ltd, tea rooms (Stones1935)

Sims Hardware (Stones1940, 1945, Wises1950-51, 1955, 1961-62)

133: this was demolished in 1982.

The hotel was also tenanted by an number of small businesses on the Cuba Street from c.1961-62. Tenants include: Ninon Modes Ltd, women's fashion (Wises1961-62), Winkler & Eisenhofer, architects (Wises1961-62), Slumber Centre, bedding specialists (Wises1967-68), Mayfair Salon, frock specialists ((Wises1961-62, 1967-68, 1971-72, 1975), New Zealand Theatre Federation (Wises1975, 1980, 1985, 1990), Chicago Man Shop (Wises1980, 1985, 1990)

1.4 Architect

James Gardiner⁴

³ Ibid

⁴ See permit 00053_149_8293

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture⁵

The building known as the Hotel Bristol is an Edwardian Classical commercial building. It is a three storey building with shops at the ground floor and small offices above. The façade is symmetrical and strongly moulded, but not overly elaborate, particularly in comparison to neighbouring buildings. Wide window bays on the first floor allow plenty of daylight into the (former) dining room and sitting room beyond. On the second floor, six double hung flat headed windows are recessed into slender aedicules, with a prominent keystone above. A central balcony on the second floor is supported on heavy consoles. A segmented pediment caps the building; the name “Hotel Bristol” and a crest have been moulded into the centre. The sound, unpretentious façade contributes to the character of the middle Cuba Street precinct.

The construction is in load bearing brick masonry on concrete foundations, with concrete floors supported by iron columns and steel joists, and timber roof trusses and a malthoid roof.

The modern timber balustrade to the third floor balcony is a disparate modern intervention that is out of keeping with the formal pretensions of this grand Classical building.

2.2 Materials

- Load Bearing Brick Masonry
- Concrete foundations
- Concrete floors
- Iron Columns
- Steel joists
- Timber roof trusses
- Malthoid roof

2.3 Setting

This building forms a coherent visual link to its more flamboyant immediate neighbour, the Barber’s Building. The façade and scale of the building contribute positively to the streetscape of Cuba Street. This building is sited in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and makes a positive contribution to the significant collection of heritage buildings that form the Cuba Street Heritage Area. The scale, materials and style of this building contribute to the townscape of Cuba Street.

⁵ Wellington City Council, “129-129 Cuba Street”, *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory: Non Residential Precincts 2001*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA15.

Sources

Kelly, Michael, and Russell Murray. *Cuba Street 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*. Wellington City Council, 2001.

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

Wellington City Archive

3.0 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?

This building, now known as the Hotel Bristol, is of architectural value as a good representative example of Edwardian Classicism. It is notable for its well-proportioned and carefully composed Classical street facade.

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 significant townscape value for the visual interest that it adds to the Cuba Streetscape and as a part of the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It is a good example of an Edwardian commercial building and contributes to the scale and ambience of the area.

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 sited in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and makes a positive contribution to the significant collection of heritage buildings that form the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It can be read as one of a pair of buildings that have common cornice lines, floor levels, and deeply modelled facades with the Barber's Building.

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 has historic value for its association with the strong growth and development of Cuba Street during the Edwardian period, which resulted in the building of many fine commercial buildings.

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 R2/270, is in an area known to have had pre 1900 human activity, and known to have sites of significance to Maori. The likelihood of archaeological materials being present is likely.

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?

This building is part of a group of Edwardian commercial buildings on Cuba Street which contribute to the sense of place and continuity of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

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 Classical commercial building

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 exterior of this building retains significant amounts of original material and has had few modifications that impact upon it negatively, the interiors have been modified several times do are of less value. This building has authenticity and integrity, of materials, design, workmanship, and setting.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

This building is of local importance for its contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It is a representative building that retains economic and functional uses as well as retaining a significant amount of original material and authenticity.

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*