

Commercial Building

216 Cuba Street



Image: *Charles Collins, 2014*

Summary of heritage significance

- Designed by Young and Fearn and built in 1922, this two-storey Stripped Classical masonry building is representative of the architecture and history found in Cuba Street.
- The building contributes to the townscape, and the sense of place and continuity of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 90
Legal Description:	<i>Pt Lot 2 DP 5170</i>
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Historic Place Category 2, Register Number 5357
Archaeological Site:	Central City NZAA R27/270
Other Names:	Arctech Studios, Flowers Manuela, Promotus House
Key physical dates:	1922
Architect / Builder:	WG Young & SW Fearn
Former uses:	Shop and dwelling
Current uses:	Shop and office
Earthquake Prone Status:	S124 served, expires 28/03/2026 (SR 163381)

Extent: Cityview GIS 2012



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

This building was designed as a shop and dwelling for Marmaduke Sedgwick by the architectural firm Young and Fearn. Sedgwick was a storekeeper who resided in Karori.¹

The plans were drawn up in November 1920 and a permit issued in December of the same year. However, the work was put on hold and a second permit was issued in February 1922. The building was finished by August 1922 as Sedgwick advertised: “to let, above new shop, 216 Cuba St, two rooms, suitable for offices workrooms or private flat.”² By 1923 the ground floor shop was occupied by the “London Pie Shop” and the “Standard Loan Company” was on the first floor.³ In the 1930s the first floor returned to residential use.⁴

The London Pie Shop remained in the building until 1955, with James Monro, the proprietor of the business, buying the building in 1944. In 1955 the building was purchased by the Viatos family, confectioners, and became the “Zelandia Confectionery Company.” Following this street directories indicate that there have been numerous tenants including a drycleaners, office supplies, a secretarial service and a seminar company. In 1997 the building was sold to William George Barrett, who remains the present owner (2012).

The building is currently (2012) occupied by Flowers Manuela on the ground floor, who have been there since at least 2003. On the first floor is the office of Martin Taylor, Barrister, who has been there since at least 2008.

The building has been subject to various alterations since it was constructed, particularly to the shop front, which has been altered so heavily as to no longer reflect the plan detailing of the storey above. The current shop front is likely to date from 1967 when the building suffered fire damage and the shop front had to be replaced. The appearance of the building has also been affected by alterations to the fenestration of the first floor windows.

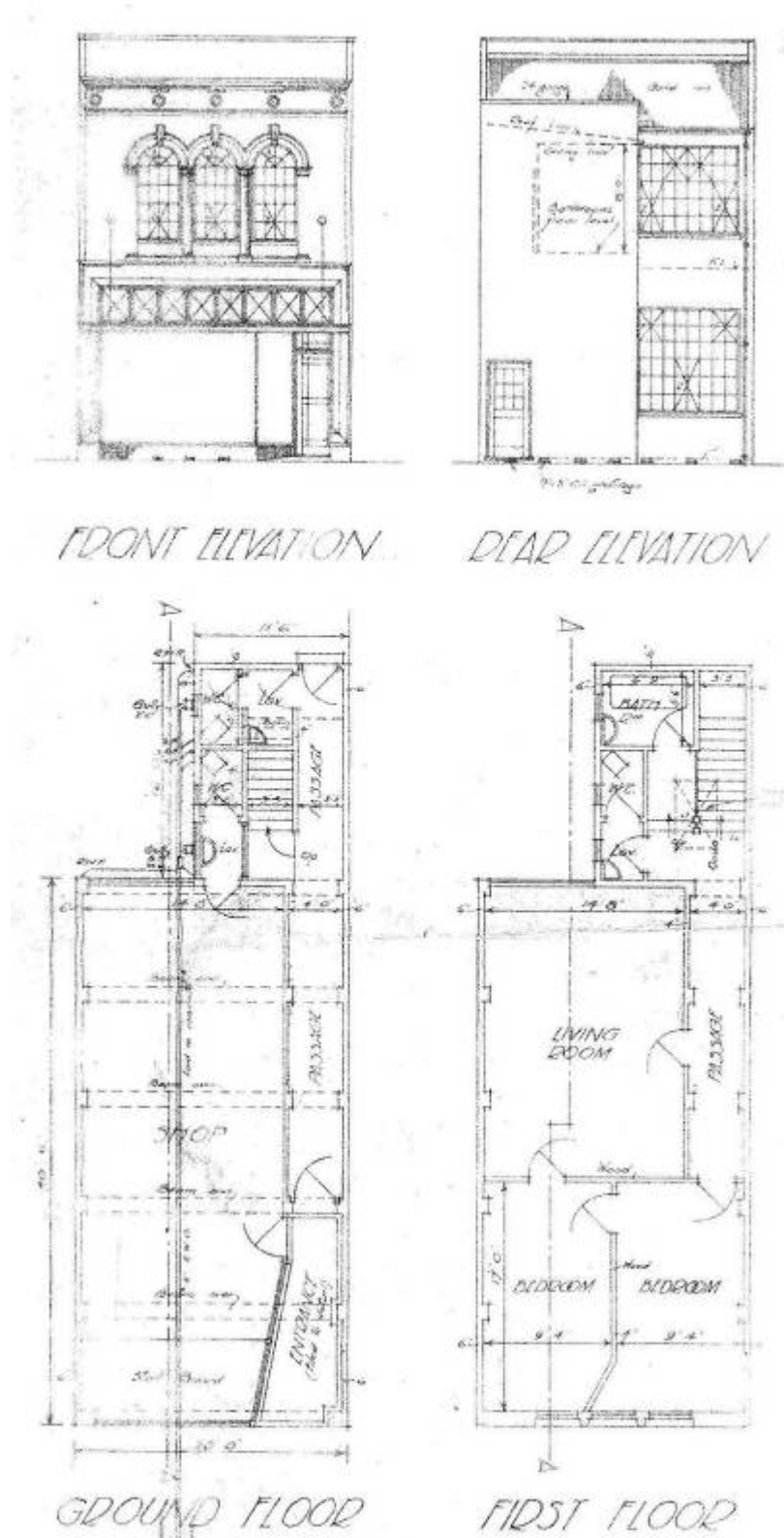
¹ Land Title Service, CT280/16

² *Evening Post*, Volume CIV, Issue 50, 28 August 1922, Page 3

³ *Evening Post*, Volume CV, Issue 78, 2 April 1923, Page 1

⁴ *Evening Post*, Issue 103, 2 May 1936, Page 2

1.2 Timeline of modifications



Detail from the original plans (WC Archives, 00053:212:11720)

- 1920 First permit issued
- 1922 Building constructed (00053:212:11720)
- 1946 Alterations (00056:315:B24714)

- 1950 Retaining wall (00056:379:B29154)
 1962 New shop front (00058:220:C9963)
 1964 Boiler room (00058:336:C14423)
 1967 Reinstate building after fire damage, new shop front (00058:526:C25436)
 1978 Additions and alterations (00058:1182:C50800)

1.3 Ownership history

- 1919-1940 Marmaduke Sedgwick, storekeeper (CT280/16 - due to default on mortgage order made by Court of Review affecting building that year)
 1943-1944 Crown (CT280/16 - due to prior default)
 1944-1945 James Monro, pastry cook (CT280/16)
 1944-1955 James Monro, London Pastry cooks Limited (CT280/16 & 608/29)
 1955-1997 Gerassimos Viatos, confectioner, and Anna Viatos (and successive family members) (CT608/29)
 1997-present William George Barrett, education officer (CT608/29)⁵

1.4 Architects

Young and Fearn

Stanley W Fearn and William Gray Young were contemporaries who practiced for a time as partners together with Austin Quick prior to the First World War. The three men all volunteered for military service, but Young was judged unfit. Young continued his mainly residential practice until Fearn rejoined him in 1919. However after two years the partnership dissolved.⁶

Fearn, Stanley W.

Fearn (1887-1976) was a British-born, Wellington based architect who had a long career spanning a large part of the 20th century and incorporating a wide range of styles. He was still working as late as the 1960s. Fearn's work is distinguished for his houses in the English Vernacular style. Most of his work was domestic but he designed a range of buildings, both in the capital, where he designed over 70 buildings, and further afield. In Wellington he is best known for the William Booth Memorial Training College in Aro Street (1913), which he designed with Austen Quick. This building won the first ever gold medal of the NZ Institute of Architects in 1927. His other Wellington buildings included Cambridge Pharmacy (1932) and the Dominion Arcade (1959). Among his houses was the Frederic Wallis House, Lower Hutt (1927), the grand country house Rototawai, near Featherston (1929), as well as houses in Hobson Street, Thorndon. He was involved in the rebuilding of Napier and Hastings after the Hawkes Bay earthquake and among his surviving designs is the former Bestall's Building, Napier (1932). His son Detmar was also an architect.⁷

⁵ Wellington City Council, *Cuba Street Heritage Area spreadsheet (block 5)*. (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006).

⁶ Michael Fowler, "Young, William Gray – Biography", from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated January 17, 2012, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/4y3/1>

⁷ Historic Places Trust, "Stanley Fearn", Accessed: August 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=71>

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

This two-storey 1922 commercial building is executed in a moderately pared-back Classical style. It has a distinctive assembly of three round-headed windows in the centre of the upper façade, with stringing around the lower section of this hinting at the original detail of the lower façade, which was modernised in 1967.⁸

2.2 Materials

The original plans specify:

Reinforced concrete foundations, floors, walls and stairs.

Totara: ground floor joists, sleepers, plates, door frames and doors ()

Rimu: ceiling joists, roof timbers, other framing

Matai: floor boards

Red pine: skirting architraves and other joinery

2.3 Setting

The building sits among modern masonry buildings of varying scales and architecture on Cuba Street between Vivian Street and Abel Smith Street.

The building is somewhat dwarfed to the immediate north by Booth House (1989), a modern five-storey building that detracts from the quality of the streetscape with its overbearing scale, set-back arcade from the street edge and over-scaled detailing.

To the south of no. 216 is the Wellington Trawlers complex, which includes a small modern single-storey street-front shop and a parking area and several other unremarkable modern commercial buildings set back from the street front. This creates a large and unsightly gap in the street wall on the south side of no. 216.

More widely, the predominant building uses are commercial and residential, a mix characteristic of Cuba Street since the early days. Although the disposition of these uses has significantly changed over the years, they are expressed in a diverse range of building types and eras.⁹

⁸ Michael Kelly and Russell Murray, *Cuba Street Heritage Area Report* (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006), 42.

⁹ Ibid

3.0 Sources

Wellington City Council. *Cuba Street Heritage Area spreadsheet (block 5)*.
Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

Fowler, Michael, "Young, William Gray – Biography", from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated January 17, 2012, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/4y3/1>

Historic Places Trust. "Stanley Fearn." Accessed: August 2012.
<http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=71>

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

CT280/16, Land Information New Zealand

Newspapers

Evening Post, Volume CIV, Issue 50, 28 August 1922, Page 3

Evening Post, Volume CV, Issue 78, 2 April 1923, Page 1

Evening Post, Issue 103, 2 May 1936, Page 2

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?*

216 Cuba Street is a good representative example of a small two storey shop/residence. The building is one of the southern-most masonry shop/residences constructed on Cuba Street, and is notable for its well proportioned façade and restrained palette of Classical ornamentation.

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 scale, materials and style of this building contribute to the townscape of 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?*

This building is part of a group of historic commercial buildings on Cuba Street which contribute to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Historic Value:

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

This building has historic value for its association with the designers, notable Wellington architects William Gray Young and Stanley W Fearn.

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

The building has an association with the development and changes to the retail trade in Cuba Street.

Scientific Value:

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

The building is located in the Central City archaeological site, reference 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?*

This building is part of a group of historic 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?*

The building is representative of the architecture and history found in Cuba Street.

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?

This building is of local importance, as it contributes to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

5.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file	N	DOESN'T EXIST
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)	N	DOESN'T EXIST
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 Cyclopaedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*

Paperspast – search on “216 Cuba”

1922 (August) “To let, above new shop, 216 Cuba St, two rooms, suitable for offices workrooms or private flat. Apply PO Box 10, Karori¹⁰

1922 (November) J Mann – “goods left at my shop”¹¹

1922 (November) Auction of household goods¹² Mann and Rubin

1923 (April) “Standard Loan Co” – 216 Cuba, over London Pie shop¹³

1923 (1 September) “London Pie Shop” for quick sale – due to illness – no name – 216 Cuba.¹⁴

London Pie shop – Courtenay Place, Petone

1936 large partly furnished bedroom to let, side entrance, upstairs London Pie Shop¹⁵

1943 still London Pie Shop – Cuba (no number)

¹⁰ Evening Post, Volume CIV, Issue 50, 28 August 1922, Page 3

¹¹ Evening Post, Volume CIV, Issue 121, 18 November 1922, Page 3

¹² Evening Post, Volume CIV, Issue 121, 18 November 1922, Page 10

¹³ Evening Post, Volume CV, Issue 78, 2 April 1923, Page 1

¹⁴ Evening Post, Volume CVI, Issue 54, 1 September 1923, Page 3

¹⁵ Evening Post, Issue 103, 2 May 1936, Page 2