

## Building

270-272 Cuba Street

(Relocated from 289-291 Cuba Street as part of Inner City Bypass Project c.2005-06)



270-272 Cuba Street (*Charles Collins, 2014*)

### Summary of heritage significance

- Designed by prominent Wellington architect Thomas Turnbull in 1900, this two-storey Edwardian shop and dwelling building retains a reasonable level of architectural authenticity, despite being relocated and restored in 2005.
- The building has historic value as a representative example of a commercial mixed use investment property built during the growth and development of Cuba Street in the Edwardian period.
- 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.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 93/2
Legal Description:	Lot 4 DP 414239 <i>Heritage Covenants to NZHPT on title</i>
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category 2, reference 5353
Archaeological Site:	Central City NZAA R27/270
Other Names:	289-291 Cuba Street
Key physical dates:	1900: built 2005: relocated and restored
Architect / Builder:	Thomas Turnbull
Former uses:	Shop/dwelling
Current uses:	Commercial (café & hairdresser)
Earthquake Prone Status:	Outside EQ Policy, 30/01/13 (SR 268794)

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



The original location of 289-291 Cuba Street is circled in yellow, on what was once the corner of Cuba and Arthur Streets and is now Karo Drive. The present location of the building, 270-272 Cuba Street, is circled in red.

## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

This building was designed by architect Thomas Turnbull and was built on the corner of Cuba and Arthur Streets for James MacKay in 1900. This was shortly after Mackay had purchased the property from the Wellington Trust and Loan Investment Company.<sup>1</sup> The building was designed as two dwellings, each with a shop facing onto Cuba Street. Behind each shop was a living room and washhouse, with stairs leading up to bedrooms on the first floor. Tenants over the years have included a draper, fishmonger, grocer, butcher and dressmaker.<sup>2</sup>

Due to the Inner City Bypass project and the creation of Karo Drive, in 2005 the building was relocated to the opposite side of Cuba Street, and north 15 metres.<sup>3</sup> The building was moved in two parts, with the first half of the building (291) relocated across the street in July 2005, and the second half (289) in August 2005. The restoration work on the building was completed by April 2006.

The building now forms the southern side of the new “Tonks Grove”, and joins the northern side of 274 Cuba Street.<sup>4</sup> This small one-roomed shop was originally at 272 Cuba, and was shifted 3 metres north along Cuba Street to its present site in 2005.<sup>5</sup>

The building remained empty for several years after it was restored. In 2011 a hairdressing salon, *The Powder Room*, moved into no. 270. In 2012 the café *Arthurs* moved into no. 272.

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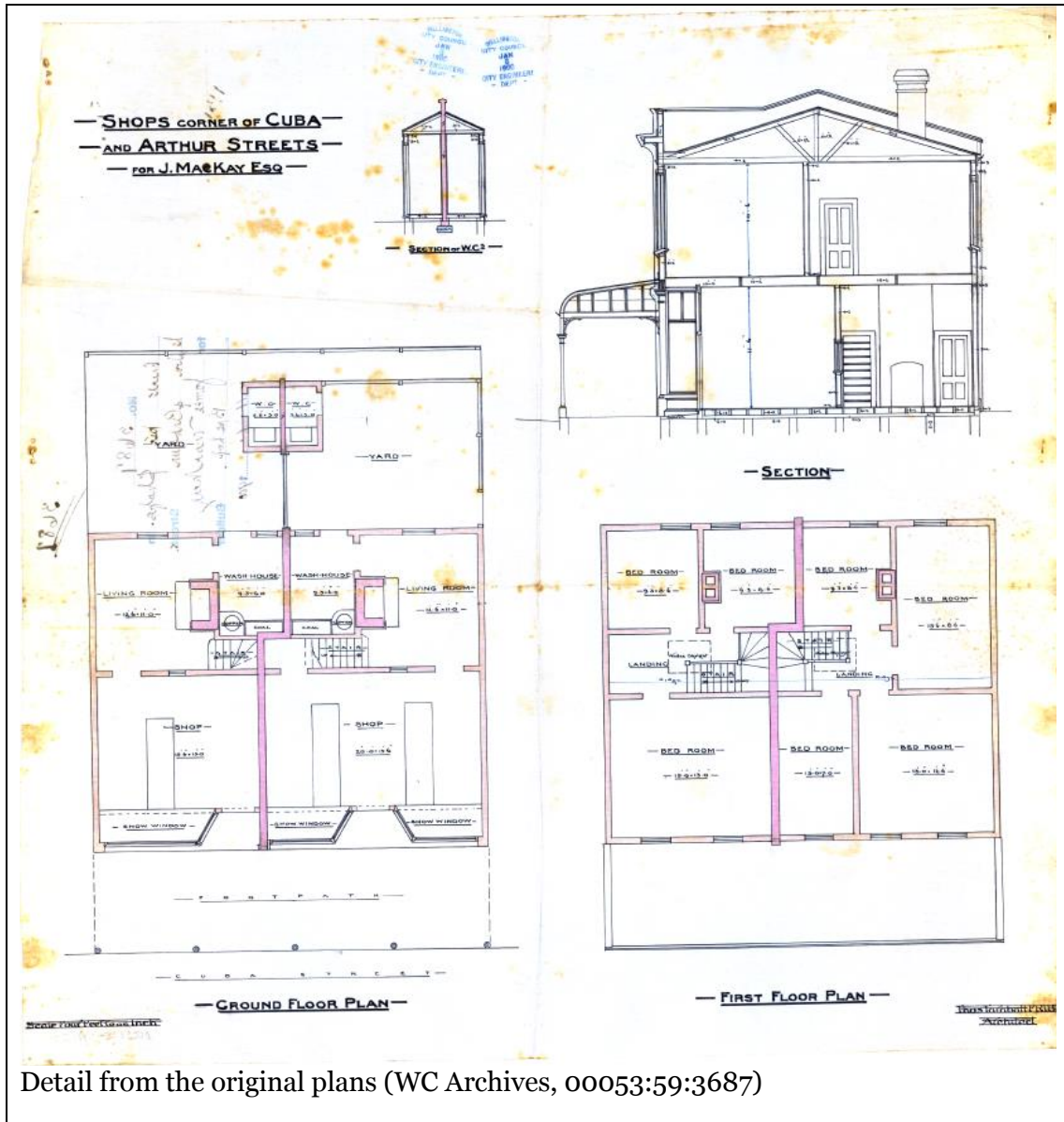
<sup>1</sup> Wellington City Council, “289-291 Cuba Street,” *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA 39.

<sup>2</sup> NZ Transport Agency, “289-291 Cuba Street,” *Wellington Inner City Bypass*, accessed January 14 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/289-Cuba.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> District Plan: map 16, reference 92/1

<sup>5</sup> NZ Transport Agency, “272 Cuba Street,” *Wellington Inner City Bypass*, accessed January 14 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/272-Cuba.html>



Detail from the original plans (WC Archives, 00053:59:3687)

## 1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1900 Built (WC Archives, 00053:59:3687)
- 1980 Alterations & additions (WC Archives, 00058:1253:C53233)
- 2005 (July) New concrete foundations constructed (new site, 270-272 Cuba St)<sup>6</sup>
- 2005 (July) First half of the building (291) relocated across the street
- 2005 (Aug) Party wall constructed
- 2005 (Aug) Second half of building (289) relocated across the street
- 2005 (Aug) Restoration works commenced
- 2006 (April) Restoration works completed

<sup>6</sup> NZ Transport Agency, "289-291 Cuba Street,"

### 1.3 Architect

#### Thomas Turnbull

Thomas Turnbull (1824-1907) was born in Scotland and trained under David Bryce, Her Majesty's Architect for Scotland.<sup>7</sup> Turnbull moved to Melbourne in 1851 and then to San Francisco circa 1860 where he became interested in earthquake resistant design, particularly for brick masonry buildings. He arrived in New Zealand in 1871, established a thriving business of which his son William (1868-1941) became a partner in 1891.<sup>8</sup> Thomas Turnbull is noted for the significant part he played in the transformation of the Wellington CBD from a town of two storey timber buildings to a city of "substantial masonry buildings."<sup>9</sup>

Thomas Turnbull was a prolific architect and the many buildings that he designed include:

- St Peter's Church, Willis Street(1879)
- St John's Church, Willis Street (1885)
- Former National Mutual Building (1883-84)

#### Thomas Turnbull & Son

From 1891 – 1907 both Thomas and William Turnbull were in partnership. Buildings include:

- Dairy, 58 Ghuznee Street (1897)
- General Assembly Library (1899)
- Fletcher's Building 2-6 Willis St (1900)
- Former Bank of New Zealand Head Office (1901)
- McGuire Building, 168-174 Cuba St (1901)
- Dr Henry Pollen's House, Boulcott Street (1902) - French Renaissance style
- Masonic Hotel, 97-99 Cuba Street (demolished in 1970s) (1903)
- Antrim House, Wellington (1905)
- Wellington Workingmen's Club Building, 107 Cuba Street (Building 1: 1904)

William Turnbull continued in practice after the death of his father in 1907 and retained the name of Thomas Turnbull and Son. William Turnbull was also a skilful designer and responsible for many of Wellington's "best and most convincing revivalist buildings"<sup>10</sup> and these include:

- Dr McGavin's house and surgery cnr Willis and Ghuznee Street (1907) – half-timbered Tudor style
- Whitcoulls Building 312-316 Lambton Quay (1907-8)
- Wellington Workingmen's Club Building, 107 Cuba Street (Building 2: 1908)
- Kirkcaldie and Stains Department Store Façade 165-169 Lambton Quay (1909)

<sup>7</sup>Historic Places Trust, "Turnbull, Thomas - Architect", *Professional Biographies*, accessed September 25, 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+Thomas>

<sup>8</sup> Historic Places Trust, "Turnbull, William (1868-1914) - Architect", *Professional Biographies*, accessed September 25, 2012, [http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+William+\(1868-1941\)](http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+William+(1868-1941))

<sup>9</sup> Cochran, Chris, *Turnbull House Conservation Plan* (Wellington: Department of Conservation, 1991), 19.

<sup>10</sup> Cochran, *Turnbull House Conservation Plan*, 21

- House for A Blacklock, 60 Tinakori Road (1910)
- Woolstore, 268 Thorndon Quay (1910)
- BNZ Te Aro Branch, cnr Manners and Cuba Streets (1912)
- Turnbull House, Bowen Street (1916) – Scottish Baronial style
- Northland Fire Station (1930)
- Free Ambulance Building, Cable Street (1932) – Art Deco style

## **2.0 Physical description**

### **2.1 Architecture**

The facade is Edwardian Commercial, with plain arched windows, double hung, and a simple cornice above. The facade is divided asymmetrically by the fire wall and each section is capped with an arched parapet. The bull-nosed verandah is an authentic Edwardian element.<sup>11</sup>

### **2.2 Materials**

The construction is timber frame clad in rusticated weatherboards, with brick fire walls and chimneys. The piles are totara, and the roof is clad in corrugated iron.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.3 Setting**

The building was moved in 2005 and the new inner city bypass (Karo Drive) was created through the original site. As such, the original setting and context for this building has been lost.

The building now occupies a prominent site on the route of the new inner city bypass, separated from the corner of Cuba Street and Karo Drive to the south by 274 Cuba Street, a small one-roomed shop which was moved from 272 Cuba. To the north the building now forms the southern side of the new “Tonks Grove”.

On the northern corner of Tonks Grove and Cuba Street is no. 268 Cuba Street, which was moved 30 metres north along Cuba Street to its present location in 2005. Built in 1902, no. 268 Cuba is a two-storey shop/dwelling of the same scale as no. 270-272.

Directly across the road from no. 270-272, at no. 287, is the buildings former neighbour. This two storey shop/dwelling which dates to 1899 is set back from the street front, which is occupied by two shops built in 1923. The southern side of no. 287, which was always set against no. 270-272, is now exposed to the motorway.

To the south, the final block of upper Cuba Street contains a high concentration of heritage buildings. Predominantly two-storied, these buildings include several Edwardian timber and masonry commercial buildings, including the Thistle Hall and the Moran building. The oldest building on Cuba Street is found on this block at no. 282. The very rare 1869 cottage is obscured from the street behind a 1930s addition.

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<sup>11</sup> Wellington City Council, “289-291 Cuba Street”

<sup>12</sup> Wellington City Council, “289-291 Cuba Street”

### 3.0 Sources

Cochran, Chris, *Turnbull House Conservation Plan* (Wellington: Department of Conservation, 1991), 19.

Historic Places Trust, *289-291 Cuba Street [Relocated to 270-272 Cuba Street]*, WELLINGTON, accessed 14 January 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=5353>

Historic Places Trust, "Turnbull, Thomas - Architect", *Professional Biographies*, accessed September 25, 2012, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+Thomas>

Historic Places Trust, "Turnbull, William (1868-1914) - Architect", *Professional Biographies*, accessed September 25, 2012, [http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+William+\(1868-1914\)](http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Turnbull,+William+(1868-1914))

NZ Transport Agency, "289-291 Cuba Street," *Wellington Inner City Bypass*, accessed January 14 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/289-Cuba.html>

NZ Transport Agency, "272 Cuba Street," *Wellington Inner City Bypass*, accessed January 14 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/272-Cuba.html>

Wellington City Council, "289-291 Cuba Street," *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA 39.

## 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?*

270-272 Cuba Street is a good representative example of an Edwardian shop/residence. The building has been relocated and restored, and its exterior appearance is a near-facsimile of the original.

**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. The building maintains the pattern of a two-storied Edwardian shop/residence with a verandah, which defines the character 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?*

The building is one of a group of Edwardian commercial buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

#### **Historic Value:**

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

The building has historic value for its association with the architect Thomas Turnbull.

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

The building also 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?*

The site has been much disturbed by 2006 road-works but is located within the Central City 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?*

Despite being relocated, 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?*

The heritage properties around upper Cuba Street, Abel Smith, Tonks Avenue and upper Willis Street that were affected by the Wellington Inner City Bypass route were a focus of strong community sentiment. This can be seen from the objections raised to the demolition of heritage properties in the proposed roading scheme that was referred to the Environment Court.

**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 on 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?*

The façade of this building retains authenticity of design, and was restored on its new site in 2005/6.

**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.

## 5.0 Appendix

### Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory	Y	Errors
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	Y	
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report	Y	
Heritage Area Spreadsheet	Y	No included – unsure why?
Heritage items folder (electronic)	Y	
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

### Background research

*Trying to track down James MacKay, esq.*

1918 (1917?) – Died in Scotland, old Wellington identity, furniture shop in Brandon-street  
Evening Post, Volume XCV, Issue 43, 19 February 1918, Page 8

<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19180219.2.54&srpos=2&e=-1917---1918--10-EP-1----0%22james+mackay%22-->

1918 – Bequest to Wellington College “James Mackay Bursary” (12,000)  
Evening Post, Volume XCV, Issue 46, 22 February 1918, Page 7

<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19180222.2.49&srpos=1&e=-1917---1918--10-EP-1----0%22james+mackay%22-->

Came to NZ from China ~1870... retired ~1900... not married, no relations... left 16,000 to charity

Evening Post, Volume XCVIII, Issue 57, 5 September 1919, Page 8

<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19190905.2.96&srpos=3&e=-1919--07-1920--10-EP-1---0%22james+mackay%22-->

Estate sale – block of land – Cuba/Arthur CT 37 folio 179 – two semi-detached Shops and Dwellings

Evening Post, Volume C, Issue 21, 24 July 1920, Page 8

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<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19200724.2.84.6&srpos=1&e=-1920--07-1920--10-EP-1----0%22james+mackay%22+-->

## Heritage Area Report

### Pg 22

- history of the block
- Tonks
- Bypass

### Pg 45

- Relocated buildings on either side of Tonks Grove

<http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=5353>

*From NZTA website<sup>13</sup>*

This building which is split to resemble two frontages, was built for James MacKay in 1900. Tenants over the years have included a fishmonger, grocer, butcher and dressmaker.

The architect was Thomas Turnbull and the design follows the common Italianate style of inner city commercial/residential buildings of the Edwardian period. This building is one of the plainest buildings to have been designed by Turnbull with the barest details which suggest the Italianate style.

The building maintains the pattern of a two-storied Edwardian shop with residence above and a veranda, which defines the character of Cuba Street.

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<sup>13</sup> NZ Transport Agency, "289-291 Cuba Street," *Wellington Inner City Bypass*, accessed January 14 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/289-Cuba.html>