

R. Hannah and Co. Building

14 Leeds Street



Eva Street Elevation



Leed Street Elevation

Images: Charles Collins, 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- The 1923 former R. Hannah and Co. building is a good representative example of an inter-war light-industrial factory/warehouse that has been converted for residential use. The building is notable for its functionalist design style and gains much of its aesthetic value from the regular modular grid-pattern of its beams, columns and window fenestration.
- This building is historically significant for its role as part of the Hannah complex of shops, factories, and offices that once dominated the centre of Te Aro. R. Hannah and Co. was one of the country's most successful footwear manufacturers and retailers, and dominated the footwear market for over 100 years.
- This building has group value for its relationship to a precinct of buildings erected by Robert Hannah and Company. The buildings have been grouped together to form a distinct pattern of lanes and courtyards.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 109
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 84868
Heritage Area:	N/A
HPT Listed:	N/A
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City R27/270, known area of sited of Maori significance
Other Names:	R. Hannah and Co. Building, Hannah factory apartments Eva Street
Key physical dates:	Built 1922-23
Architect / Builder:	Architect: H.T, Johns, Builder: Hansford and M
Former uses:	Commercial – factory
Current uses:	Commercial and residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not Earthquake Prone – SR 167383

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

The former Hannah Footwear Factory, now known as the 'Hannah Factory Apartments, at 14-16 Leeds Street (or 5 Eva Street) was built in 1923 for the boot and shoe manufacturing and retailing business founded by Robert Hannah. The building is part of a significant collection of light commercial/warehouse buildings constructed in the Cuba, Leeds, and Eva Street block – many by R. Hannah & Co.

Robert Hannah (1845-1930) was born in County Antrim, Ireland. He was apprenticed as a boot-maker and immigrated to Australia when he was 18, but soon moved to New Zealand in the early 1860s. The West Coast of the South Island was then in the middle of the gold rush, and Hannah settled in Charleston, collecting enough money to open his first boot-making shop in 1868. In 1873, as gold mining was in decline, he moved to Wellington. Robert Hannah died in 1930, by which time the company had 19 branches in the North Island and 11 in the South Island.

He opened his first shop on Lambton Quay in 1874, its success leading to further branches in Cuba Street in 1879 (along with a factory) and later in Molesworth and Willis Streets. He married Hannah Ferguson (1852-1928) in 1875 and went on to have eight children. Robert was assisted in his business by his younger brother William who arrived in New Zealand in 1879. The company continued to expand and by the late 1890s there were 10 stores in the North Island. The first factory in Wellington was on the top floor of Hannah's Cuba Street premises, but as the company grew this space soon became too small to be functional. A new factory was built on the land behind the Lambton Quay store and employed 124 people making 3000 pairs of boots, making up about half of the boot trade at the time. By 1908 business was still good, and a combined factory/warehouse was built behind the Cuba Street premises. This building once faced Vivian Street, was built in 1922 for R. Hannah and Co. It was designed by architect H.T. Johns and built by contractors Hansford and Mills. The contract price was £23, 000. The drawings were altered during the planning stage in 1923 to include an extra storey – an indication of the growth and vigour of this well-known shoe manufacturer. The construction consisted of steel columns and beams supporting timber floors with external concrete walls faced with brick laid in an English Bond. Internal timbers for partitions, flooring, and the roof trusses were heart Jarrah, Oregon, Rimu, Matai, and Totara.²

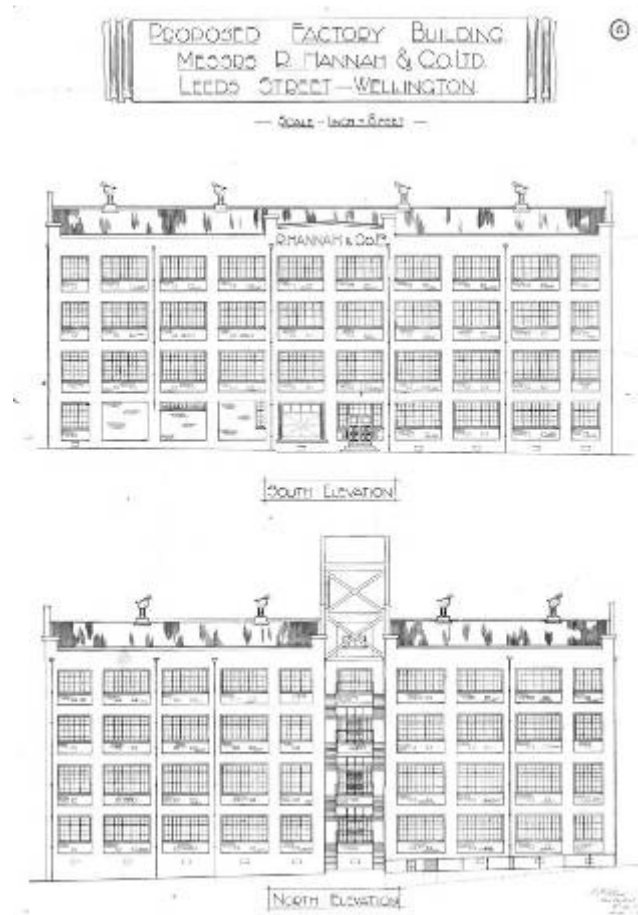
The building was converted to mixed-use commercial and residential, to designs by Athfield Architects in 1995-1996. Most notably a new pedestrian walkway was created at ground floor level that connects Eva and Leeds Streets. This pedestrian walkway offers an alternative route between Dixon and Ghuznee Streets and this has increased the 'foot-traffic' to local businesses in the surrounding laneways.³

¹ History adapted from Michael Kelly and Ann McEwan, 'Former Hannah's Footwear Factory – 5 Eva Street', (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 58, 2007).

² Wellington City Council, '5 Eva Street – R. Hannah and Co Building', *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Precincts*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA47

³ Athfield Architects, Itinerary n.43, 'Housing in Wellington', accessed 19 July 2013, <http://www.architecture-archive.auckland.ac.nz/docs/block-digital/2012-Athfield-Guide.pdf>

1.2 Timeline of modifications



- 1922 14-16 Leeds Street, factory (00055:7:A649)
- 1923 14-16 Leeds Street, additional storey (00055:11:A1092)
- 1929 14-16 Leeds Street, workshop (00056:87:B8195)
- 1943 14-16 Leeds Street, reinstate earthquake damage (00056:280:B22535)
- 1947 14-16 Leeds Street, partitions (00056:342:B26454)
- 1948 14-16 Leeds Street, alterations (00056:346:B26653)
- 1949 14-16 Leeds Street, dust extractor business (00056:365:B28091)
- 1963 14-16 Leeds Street, building additions - covered way (00058:284:C12509)
- 1985 14-16 Leeds Street, Goods lift shaft (00059:0:D348)
- 1999 16 Leeds Street, Unit 6G, cafe fit-out (00078:464:58328)

1.3 Occupation history

Not Assessed

1.4 Architect

H. T. Johns.

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The 1923 R. Hannah and Co. Ltd. building is a relatively plain, utilitarian, factory building. It is a good representative example of functionalist industrial architecture that utilises structural technology and articulation of openings to maximise light levels. The façade has a regular grid of multi pane windows set into metal joinery, which is typical of traditional warehouse design. Brick infill covers the area from floor to sill level.

2.2 Materials

Reinforced concrete (1943 reinstatements)

Concrete

Brick

Timber - heart Jarrah, Oregon, Rimu, Matai, and Totara.

2.3 Setting

The former Hannah's Footwear Factory is located in the centre of the Hannah's complex, linking Eva and Leeds streets through a modern laneway. The Hannah precinct of offices and industrial buildings is surrounded on all sides by medium rise commercial buildings in a long established part of the central business district.

It is a part of a complex of buildings that were built for the Hannah's Footwear Company, of which the smaller 1940s factory is also a heritage listed building (WCC ref 16/410).

Sources

Athfield Architects. "Itinerary n.43, 'Housing in Wellington.'" Accessed 19 July 2013, <http://www.architecture-archive.auckland.ac.nz/docs/block-digital/2012-Athfield-Guide.pdf>

Kelly, Michael, and Ann McEwan. 'Former Hannah's Footwear Factory – 5 Eva Street.' Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 58. 2007.

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

Wellington City Archive

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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?*

The 1923 former R. Hannah and Co. building is a good representative example of an inter-war light-industrial factory/warehouse that has been converted for residential use. The building is notable for its functionalist design style and gains much of its aesthetic value from the regular modular grid-pattern of its beams, columns and window fenestration.

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 townscape value for the contribution it makes to the precinct of narrow lanes and light industrial buildings around Leeds and Eva streets. This area has been developed into a semi-private pedestrian enclave.

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 has group value for its relationship to a precinct of buildings erected by Robert Hannah and Company. The buildings have been grouped together to form a distinct pattern of lanes and courtyards.

Historic Value:

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

This building is historically significant for its role as part of the Hannah complex of shops, factories, and offices that once dominated the centre of Te Aro. R. Hannah and Co. was one of the country's most successful footwear manufacturers and retailers, and dominated the footwear market for over 100 years.

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

Scientific Value:

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

This building is sited in the NZAA Central City archaeological area R27/270 and is associated with a number of sites known to be of significance to Maori.

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?*

This building is well known as a part of the Hannah Factory residential complex, and is on a well-used pedestrian route through the city.

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 which contribute to the sense of place and continuity of the Eva and Leeds Street warehouse precinct.

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 of twentieth century functionalist industrial design. It was constructed in materials and using techniques that were common to the period.

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 much of its original built fabric, and has had few intrusive modern alterations or additions. The interior has been significantly altered and has less integrity.

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 locally significant due to its associations with the Hannah's Footwear Company; the role that it plays in the townscape; its group value; and as a representative example of mid-twentieth century functionalist industrial factory.

3.0 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)		