

Commercial Building

25 Webb Street/ 1 Hopper Street



Image: Charles Collins, 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- 25 Webb Street is a good representative example of a mixed-use commercial building designed in an Edwardian Neo Italianate style. The building makes particularly good use of its corner site, and despite the loss of its original verandah, is remarkably complete.
- There is little known about the specific history of this building, but its general history mirrors that of many buildings found in the city periphery and suburban Wellington. This building was designed as shops and residences to take advantage of the extension of the tramway along Hopper Street in the early 20th century.
- 25 Webb Street is one of few historic buildings remaining in its immediate setting. It contributes significantly to the sense of place and continuity on Webb/Hopper Streets and connects well to the nearby National War Memorial and Carillon.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 339
Legal Description:	Pt Lots 1, 2 DP 471
Heritage Area:	-
HPT Listed:	-
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	-
Key physical dates:	Built: 1905
Architect / Builder:	Unknown
Former uses:	Mixed use – Commercial and Residential
Current uses:	Commercial and Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not EQP – SR 225515

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

There is little known about the specific history of this building, but its general history mirrors that of many buildings found in the city periphery and suburban Wellington.

The suburb of Mount Cook is bounded by the town belt to the west, and the Wellington College and Government House reserves to the east, and sits between the suburbs of Te Aro, Brooklyn, and Newtown. The history of the area is tied firstly to the military, and secondly to the hospital, with the development of these being responsible for much of the expansion into the area prior to the turn of the century. Similar expansion was caused by the extension of the tramways from Cuba Street up Hopper Street in the early 1900s, and it is likely that this prompted the construction of this building. Built in 1905, this building was designed as shops and residences, and Hopper Street became a subsidiary zone of business to the larger main shopping areas on Adelaide Road and Riddiford Street.¹

The building was constructed for owner Edward C. Peers and was constructed by Campbell Colquhoun. The application value was £2,500 and the building was to include four shops and dwellings, each with their own fireplace and chimney and a small outdoor courtyard.² This building is designed in the Neo-Italianate style and is a good example of a mixed use commercial and residential building designed for a corner site.³ The building is two-storeys and emphasis has been given to the Hopper Street façade through the use of a more elaborately designed/ornate pediment and cornice. This buildings prominent corner location and design make it an important element of the streetscape.

The building has been through few listed changes, with the only building alteration application held the Wellington City Archive dating from 1984. The building at this time was occupied by the Westpac Bank, and significant internal alterations were carried out to adapt the building for the bank's use.⁴ Externally there does not appear to have been any significant alterations carried out, although the verandahs have now been removed.

¹History adapted from: Peter Cooke, 'Mount Cook – A History,' (prepared for the Wellington City Council, 2006), 1-2, 5-6, accessed 11 November 2013, http://mtcookmobilised.pbworks.com/f/MtCook_History-COOKE.pdf

² WCA 00053:121:6725

³ Wellington City Council, '25 Webb Street', *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory 1995*, (Wellington City Council, 1995).

⁴ WCA 00058:0:C66016

1.2 Timeline of modifications (original plans - 00053:121:6725)



1905 Corner Hopper Street and Webb Street [1-3 Hopper Street, 25 Webb Street], four shops and dwellings (00053:121:6725)

1984 Corner Webb Street and Hopper Street [29 Webb Street, 2 Hopper Street], partitions, level 1 (00058:0:C66016)

1.3 Occupation history

Not assessed

1.4 Architect

In a style that is typical of architect John Swan, but the plans are not named.

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

This building is designed in the Neo-Italianate style and is a good example of a mixed use commercial and residential building designed for a corner site. The building is two-storeys and emphasis has been given to the Hopper Street façade through the use of a more elaborately designed/ornate pediment and cornice.

The plans for the building show that a verandah originally wrapped around the majority of the building – this has since been removed.

This building's prominent corner location and Neo-Italianate design make it an important element of the streetscape.

2.2 Materials

The building is constructed in English bond brickwork with painted cement render and timber joinery. Concrete bands are specified at one foot depth. A number of different timbers are used in this building including: jarrah floor joists, totara sleepers, ground plates and piles, rimu joists, and matai tongue and groove flooring.

2.3 Setting

This building is situated on the corner of Hopper and Webb Streets in the suburb of Mount Cook. The area is made up of single and double storey commercial buildings and multi level apartment/office towers. More widely, the National War Memorial and Carillon is visible from the intersection.

Sources

Cooke, Peter. '*Mount Cook – A History*'. Prepared for the Wellington City Council, 2006, accessed 11 November 2013,
http://mtcookmobilised.pbworks.com/f/MtCook_History-COOKE.pdf

Wellington City Council, *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory 1995*, Wellington City Council, 1995.

Wellington City Archive

1905 Corner Hopper Street and Webb Street [1-3 Hopper Street, 25 Webb Street], four shops and dwellings (00053:121:6725)

1984 Corner Webb Street and Hopper Street [29 Webb Street, 2 Hopper Street], partitions, level 1 (00058:0:C66016)

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?*

25 Webb Street is a good representative example of a mixed-use commercial building designed in an Edwardian Neo Italianate style. The building makes particularly good use of its corner site, and despite the loss of its original verandah, is remarkably complete.

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's prominent corner location and its distinctive Edwardian Neo-Italianate design make it an important element of the streetscape.

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?*

There is little known about the specific history of this building, but its general history mirrors that of many buildings found in the city periphery and suburban Wellington. This building was designed as shops and residences to take advantage of the extension of the tramway along Hopper Street in the early 20th century.

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 included in the NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270 and is in an area known to have been occupied pre 1900.

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 one of few historic buildings remaining in its immediate setting. It contributes significantly to the sense of place and continuity on Webb/Hopper Streets and connects well to the nearby National War Memorial and Carillon.

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 an Edwardian commercial Neo-Italianate building, constructed in materials and using techniques common to the period. It has had an uneventful history that is representative of many commercial buildings in Wellington.

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 original built fabric and appears to have had few modifications - other than the removal of the verandahs. The interior has been altered for different occupants, and its authenticity is unknown. The building retains authenticity of style, craftsmanship, and materials.

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 for its architectural, and townscape values, its historic associations, its archaeological values, and its authenticity.

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)		

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*