

Maritime House

Waterloo Quay



Photo: Maritime House (2006) Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Note this document has been adapted from the 2006 Recommendation for listing on the District Plan prepared by Russell Murray (WCC reference “Shed 35.doc”)

Summary of key heritage values:

- Maritime House has high architectural value for its carefully considered composition and use of materials.
- The Centreport area is a constantly changing landscape influenced by reclamation, containerisation of cargo and the use of waterfront land for modern high-rise office buildings. The brick buildings (Shed 35, and nearby Maritime House) contribute to the sense of place, provide visual interest and have become landmarks that help orientate visitors to the Centreport Harbour Quays commercial and industrial precinct.
- Maritime House is a building that is intimately associated with the waterfront unions, and the building has high historical and social significance. The building has value as a physical reminder of port and shipping operations, which continue to perform important economic and transport functions in Wellington.
- Maritime House is the last intact example of a wharf office building built by the Wellington Harbour Board in the inter-war period and has high rarity value for that.

Maps 12 & 17, Symbol 420] PC58

District Plan:

Note the listing reads “Maritime House, 1928 and curtilage [sic] as appended to Chapter 21 of the District Plan.”

Legal Description: (1995 District Plan reference Map 17 reference 175)
Part Lot 1 DP 7469, Lot 12 DP 406642
(note DP is listed alternatively as 769 – requires further check to verify).

Heritage Area: not registered 2012

HPT Listed: Not listed 2012

Archaeological Site: 86 Waterloo Quay, Building 36 - Maritime House (WCC reference)
52 Waterloo Quay, Building 36 - Maritime House (WCC reference)

Other Names: The King's Wharf Office, King's Wharf Approach (original name & address)
King's Wharf
Hinemoa Street (nearby road)
The Promenade (nearby road)
Harbour Quays (CentrePort Precinct)

Key physical dates: 1928

Architect / Builder: James Marchbanks, Wellington Harbour Board engineer
Wharfinger's office

Former uses: First Aid division of the Harbour Board including ambulance garage
Office building – various tenants

Current uses:

Earthquake Prone Status: 256065 Bdg StrengthInv Owner Notified 18/05/2012

Extent: Cityview GIS 2012





Site location plan showing Shed 35 and Maritime House. Shed 35 is the rectangular building located just below the annotation “Pipitea Quay” and the small, irregular shaped building to the left is Maritime House. Image: Cityview GIS 2012

1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

The Port of Wellington has its genesis in the choice of Wellington as a location for organised settlement by the New Zealand Company in 1839. Settlement by northern hemisphere immigrants necessarily brought in its wake a need for infrastructure to support these settlements, ports included.

Reclamation of land from the harbour provided space for the port and the city to develop. The first reclamation of many occurred in 1852, and by 1901 the original shoreline from Thorndon Quay to Clyde Quay no longer existed.¹ The Wellington Harbour Board, created by an Act of Parliament in 1879, was established to regulate use of the harbour and to ensure the profits from shipping were used to developed the port.² When the Board assumed control of the Queen’s Wharf in 1882, it proceeded to erect wharves, warehouses, and offices to receive the ships, house cargo entering and leaving the harbour, and to administer port operations.

Maritime House fulfilled the latter function. Known previously as the King’s Wharf Office, it was designed in 1926 by the Wellington Harbour Board engineering department³, which was headed by James Marchbanks. Prior to joining the Harbour Board in 1909, Marchbanks had been employed by the Railways Department, rising to the station of chief engineer in 1895. Marchbanks was also responsible for the design of the adjacent Shed 35, and these two buildings share a number of stylistic similarities.

¹ Robert McLean, ‘History of Reclamation’, New Zealand Historic Places Trust 2004.

² Alys Mendus, ‘Report on the Historic Values of the two remaining Wharf Buildings on the Commercial Port, Wellington. Shed 35 and Maritime House’. New Zealand Historic Places Trust 2003. The following information is derived from this report, unless stated otherwise.

³ Building Permit 00056:25:B2519, 13/1/1927. Wellington City Archives (WCA).

The building was primarily designed to house the Wharfinger's (the manager of the port) staff, however space was also provided for the first aid division of the Board, such as an office for ambulance drills and an ambulance garage. In addition to this, part of the building was leased to private firms.

Since its inception, the building has been occupied by a combination of port staff, private firms and public organisations, including port and seamen's unions, and it was leased by the Defence Department from 1939 to 1946.⁴ The Wharfinger's office vacated the building in 1981, while the Harbour Board occupied part of it until 1986.

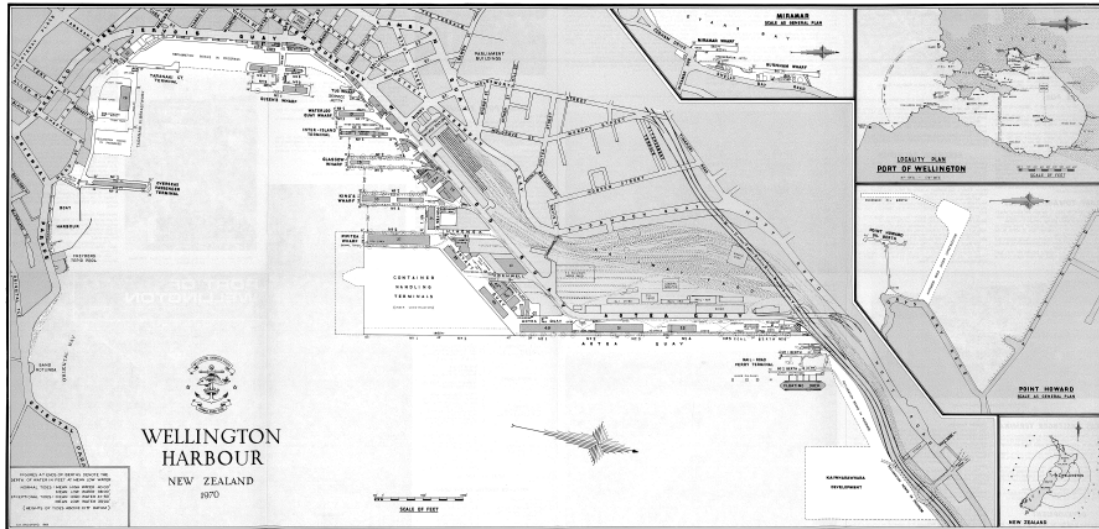
Along with the rest of the port facilities, Maritime House was transferred to what is now CentrePort when the harbour boards throughout the country were dissolved in 1989. The Mechanical Branch of the port company occupied the building after this, and in more recent times it has been leased to the New Zealand Harbour Worker's Union and the Seaman's Union.



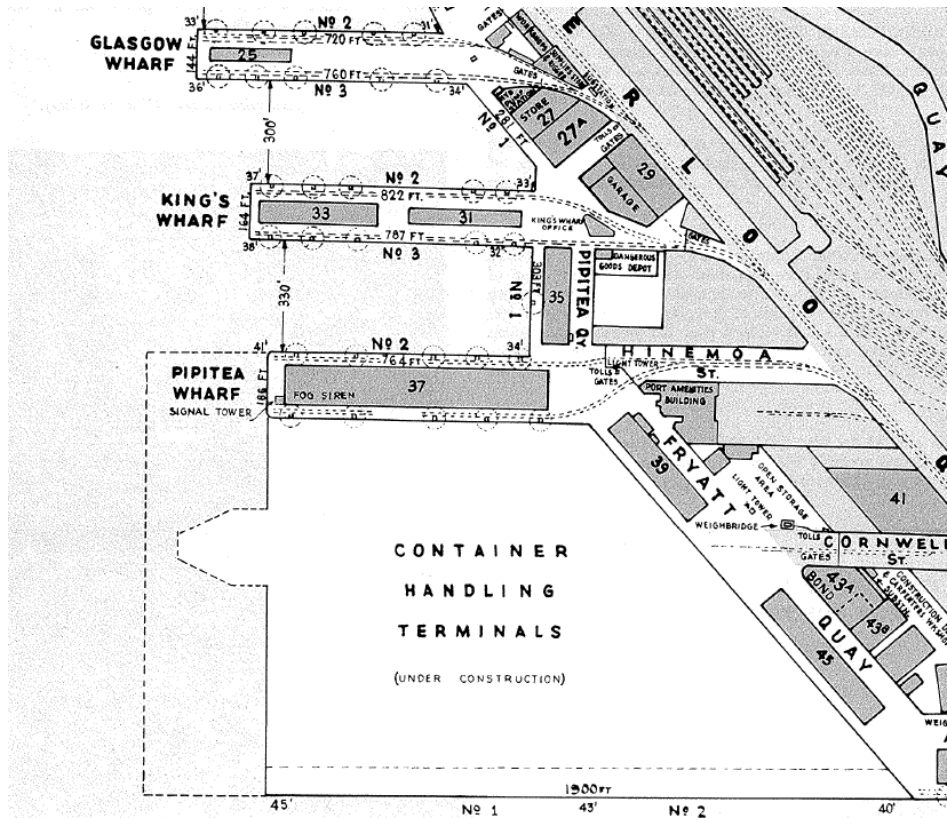
Maritime House and Shed 35.⁵

⁴ File AC023:57:9. WCA.

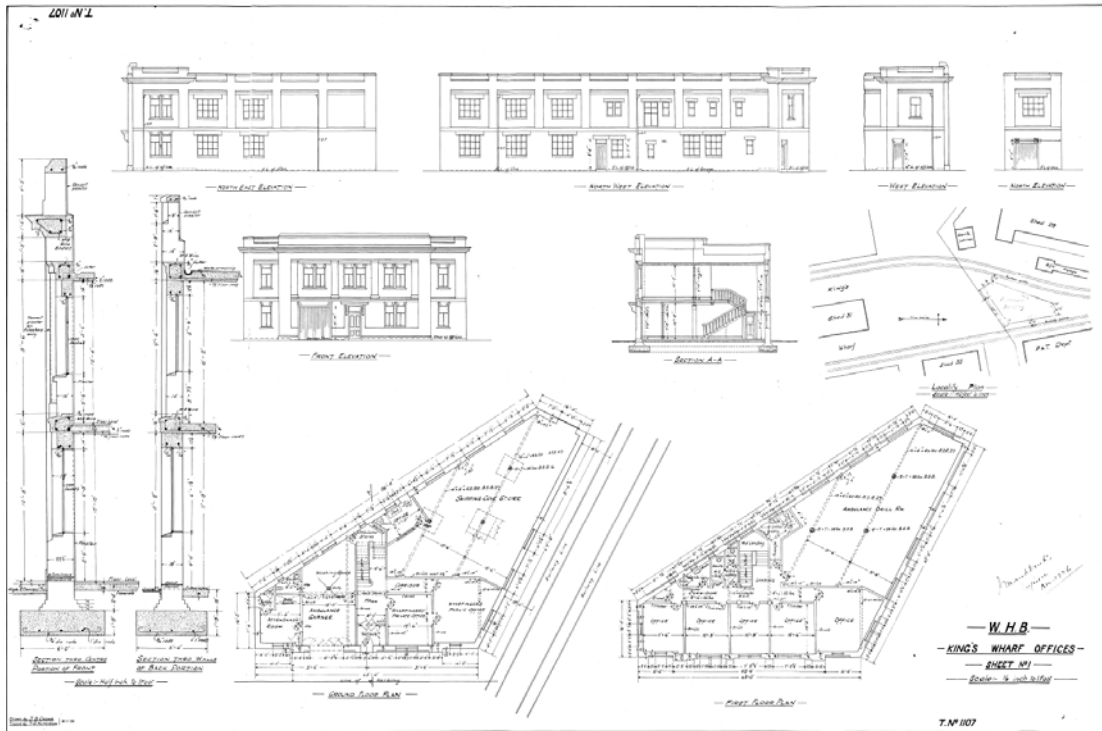
⁵ Aerial photograph of Wellington railway station (1936) Maritime House and Shed 35 are visible to the right (near the top) of the photograph. "Numbered places are identified: 1 Railway station, 2 Government Buildings, 3 Telephone exchange, 4 Government printing office, 5 Wellington Girls' College, 6 Thorndon School, 7 St Pauls', 8 Bishops court, 9 Hotel Waterloo, 10 Inter-island wharf, 11 Railway Wharf, 12 Glasgow Wharf, 13 Kings Wharf, 14 Pipitea Wharf, 15 Fryatt Corner. Photographer unidentified." Image: Alexander Turnbull Library ID: 1/2-025429-F



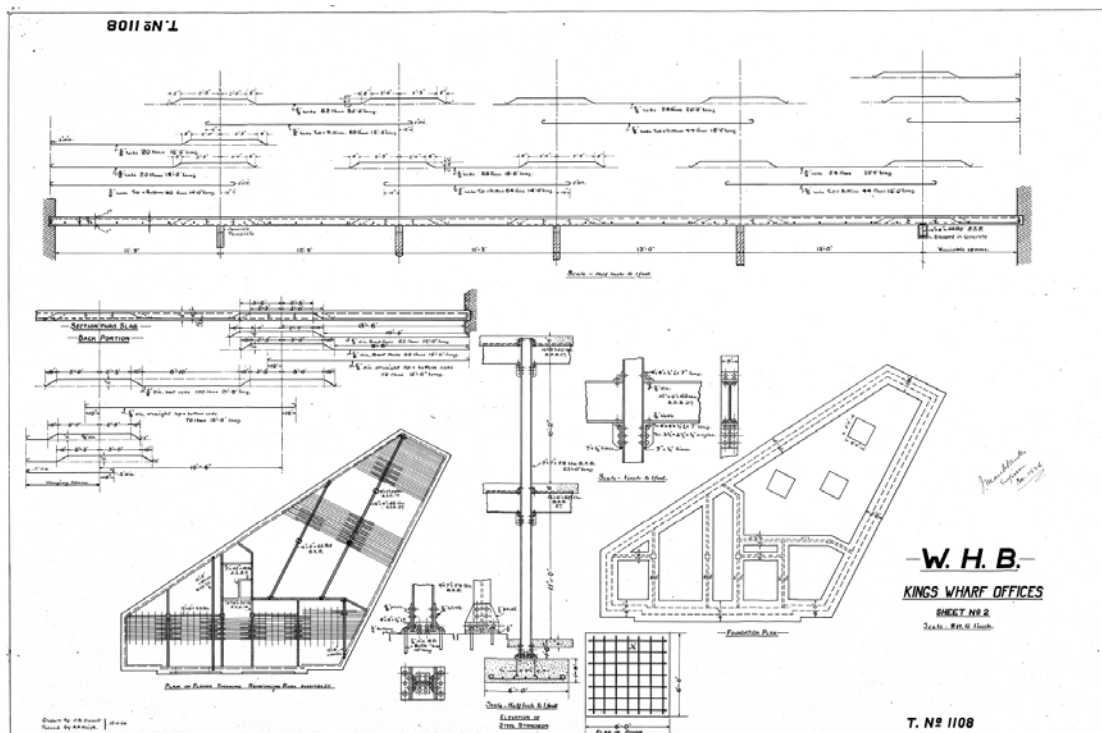
Wellington Harbour Board Berthage Plan (1955). Image: Alexander Turnbull Library



Enlargement of the Wellington Harbour Board Berthage Plan (1955) to show Pipitea and King's Wharf including Maritime House and Shed 35.



Maritime House (King's Wharf Office) floor plans, section, elevation and details. Image: WCC Archives ref B2519



Maritime House (King's Wharf Office) steel and reinforced concrete details. Image: WCC Archives ref B2519

1.2 Timeline

1928	Building constructed
Circa 1927 /1928	The Wellington Harbour Board Ambulance was transferred to the Wellington Free Ambulance. (Further research is required to confirm) ⁶
1981	Building was vacated by Wharfinger's office
1986	Building was vacated by the Harbour Board
1989	Wellington Harbour Board dissolved, and a new port company formed. This is now CentrePort Ltd
1995 - 2002	Maritime House and Shed 35 were deleted from the WCC Heritage Inventory / District Plan following a submission by the building owners / port authority. ⁷
June 2008	Maritime House and Shed 35 added to the Heritage Inventory as part of District Plan Change 58
2012	Proposal to develop the Maritime House as a 'Gastro-pub'. ⁸

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

Maritime House is a masonry and concrete building, two storeys high and capped with a flat concrete roof. Originally planned to house both the Wharfinger's staff and an ambulance garage, the building was later altered to entirely office use. The building is a symmetrical wedge shape in plan, made to fit in a restricted site located between a railway line and a roadway (a former railway siding). The smallest ends of the wedges are at the south-east and north-west of the building. The structure is concrete foundations, floors, lintels and perimeter beams, supported on load-bearing brick external walls.

The building shares some compositional features and stylistic similarities with Shed 35, an earlier building by Marchbanks. The ground floor of the building is treated as a planar plinth for the upper floor, relieved only by windows – a plastered beam line with a deeply bevelled top delineates the position of the first floor. Above this line, the structure is expressed as a grid of beams and columns with recessed wall panels between; a plaster moulding enlivens the head of each panel. The parapet above is deceptively tall, up to 2.5 m at the front façade, and conceals the flat roof beyond. The brickwork is of high quality and includes gauged scotia trims in the wall panels and flat arched windows with gauged lintels.

The principal façade of Maritime House faces east, to the sea. The main central part of this façade, some three quarters of its length, is brought forward of the corners with heavy square pilasters which rise to a substantial plaster Doric cornice cum entablature and extend above that to anchor the corners of the solid parapet above. At the ground floor, the main entrance is in the centre of the façade, and is delineated by a small horizontal plastered canopy set on large brackets. To the left side of the entrance, three small timber windows are placed in a panel which infills a larger previous opening (the former ambulance garage); to the right side are two elegantly proportioned double-hung timber windows, centred on those of the first floor above. At the first floor, the wall face is set back from that of the ground floor and divided into panels by square Doric pilasters. Each panel has a pair of double hung timber

⁶ NZHPT Report for Shed 35 and Kings Wharf Office, circa 2006

⁷ NZHPT Report for Shed 35 and Kings Wharf Office, circa 2006

⁸ Hank Schouten, 'Bustling Market to Bring Shed 35 Alive', *Dominion Post* 15 June 2012

windows. The main part of this façade is flanked by the smaller side bays which each contain a single double-hung window at each storey.

The cornice follows the set-back and turns the corner for the first bay of each side wall and meets in to the generally plainer side walls of the building.

The side walls are less ornamented than the main façade but are not without interest, although the northern façade is more consistent than the southern. Both façades have a strong rhythmic composition of large double-hung timber windows set in relation to the expressed structural grid of the upper floor; the columns of the grid extend above the top beam to form part of a strong parapet line which conceals the flat roof. The exterior remains in largely authentic condition.

The building is of some technical interest for its construction with a load-bearing steel frame and concrete floors in conjunction with the brick outer walls.

The interior of the building was not inspected. The original plan shows the Wharfinger's offices accessed off a short hall at the ground floor, flanked by the ambulance garage, and a large storage area to the northern end of the building; a timber stair led from the hall to the upper floor which was divided into offices and a large open "drill room" with an exposed steel post-and-beam structure supporting the roof over.

2.2 Materials

Brick masonry on reinforced concrete foundations; concrete floors with steel beams and columns; concrete roof, painted timber joinery⁹

2.3 Setting



View north towards Shed 35, Maritime House and Statistics New Zealand. Google Maps - ©2012 Google – image date 2009

Maritime House is a two-storey brick office building located on the working wharf (King's Wharf) at the northern end of the Port of Wellington. Its neighbours on the wharf include Shed 35, a large masonry building by the same designer and of similar quality and style of design (although of rather greater bulk), and a variety of sheds and workshops. Further on is the operational area of the wharf which includes more working sheds and the waterside edge of wharf itself.

⁹ NZHPT Report for Shed 35 and Kings Wharf Office Bldg (2006)

Despite the relatively haphazard arrangement of buildings in the area which obstructs good sightlines, Maritime House retains an important presence in the “wharfscape”. Views around the building are afforded by the flanking access-ways, including a railway line and a road-way.

Adjoining Maritime House to the north, but divided off from the working wharf by a chain-link fence is a nascent business park, which features the new Department of Statistics building and other commercial and office buildings, including the headquarters of the NZ Rugby Union, converted from former wharf buildings of a variety of styles and eras. Apart from the Statistics building, the general building height in the area is a tall two to three stories.

The area, despite many large buildings, has an open quality created by the generous amounts of space around the buildings required for the circulation of vehicles and cargo. It is bounded to the west by Aotea Quay; a few other large sheds and the distinctively-painted Seaworks House provide a buffer to the road itself.

The wider setting is the northern city which includes the stadium, railway yards and the government precinct. And Shed 35 and Maritime House are part of a group of ‘maritime’ and industrial buildings on Wellington waterfront that includes: -

- The Eastbourne Ferry Terminal Building (former) c 1910s WCC17/337
- Odlin’s Building (1907) WCC 17/49
- Queens Wharf Harbour Board Gates 1899 WCC 17/50
- Queens Wharf Dog Drinking Fountain WCC 17/56
- Wellington Harbour Board Head Office (former) 1892
- Shed 3 (1887) see also Wellington Regional Council (WCC 17/256)
- Shed 5 (1886) see also Wellington Regional Council (WCC 17/257)
- Wharf Offices - Shed 7 (1895-96) WCC 17 /161
- Shed 11 (1904) WCC 17/332
- Shed 13 (1904) WCC 17/333
- Shed 21 (1909) 17/334
- Shed 22 WCC 17/50
- Shed 27 (1922)

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?*

Maritime House has high architectural value for its carefully considered composition and use of materials.

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 building is one of two early 20th century brick buildings in the Centreport (active port) area of the Wellington waterfront.

The Centreport area is a constantly changing landscape influenced by reclamation, containerisation of cargo and the use of waterfront land for modern high-rise office buildings. The brick buildings (Shed 35, and nearby Maritime House) contribute to the sense of place, provide visual interest and have become landmarks that help orientate visitors to the Centreport Harbour Quays commercial and industrial precinct.

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?*

Maritime House has high group value with the remaining other old sheds and associated buildings on the waterfront and an important historical association, stylistic similarities, and a strong visual relationship with the adjacent Shed 35.

Historic Value:

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

Maritime House is a building that is intimately associated with the waterfront unions, and the building has high historical and social significance.

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

The building has value as a physical reminder of port and shipping operations, which continue to perform important economic and transport functions in Wellington.

Scientific Value:

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

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?*

Maritime House has technological significance as a now rare intact example of an early 20th century waterfront building and for the techniques evident in its design and construction.

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

The building has social and cultural value as a physical reminder of port and shipping operations, which continue to perform important economic and transport functions in Wellington.

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?*

The building has remained (relatively) unchanged on the site for over eighty years and contributes to the sense of place and continuity of the changing landscape of the Wellington waterfront

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?*

Maritime House is the last intact example of a wharf office building built by the Wellington Harbour Board in the inter-war period and has high rarity value for that. The building is one of two surviving fine early 20th century brick maritime buildings in the Centreport area of Wellington waterfront.

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

The building is a fine representative example of inter-war building on the waterfront and of the development of the Port and its administration.

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?*

Maritime House remains in largely authentic condition

Local/Regional/National/International

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

The collection of historic maritime buildings on Wellington waterfront could be considered to be of national significance – further research is required.

3.0 References

Note this document has been adapted from the 2006 Recommendation for listing on the District Plan prepared by Russell Murray (WCC reference "Shed 35.doc")

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NZHPT Report for Shed 35 and Kings Wharf Office, circa 2006

Schouten, Hank, *Bustling Market to Bring Shed 35 Alive*, DomPost 15 June 2012

Wellington City Archives File AC023:57:9

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		2012
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		none
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		none
Plan change?		Removed from list in 1995 and re-listed in circa 2008
Heritage Area Report		none
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		none
Heritage items folder (electronic)		2012
HPT website		none
HPT files		Russell Murray referred to NZHPT files in his 2006 report
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		none

Background research

2006 Recommendation for Listing (Russell Murray for WCC DPC 58)

Maritime House is of sufficient heritage significance to be listed on the District Plan. The listing should protect the existing form, scale and materials of the building. The listing should extend across existing access routes that flank the building in order to maintain the existing views around the building and link in to the curtilage of Shed 35 to protect the immediate setting of both buildings.

Photographs from NZHPT circa 2011



Image: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 086(large)



Image: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 085(large)



Images: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 084(large) and 083(large)



Image: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 082(large) and 081(large)



Image: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 079(large)



Image: Alison Dangerfield NZHPT ref December 2011 075(large)



Image: (circa 2004) WCC ref *Maritime House front*



Image: (circa 2004) WCC ref *Maritime House*

Photographs from WCC Heritage Files circa 2004



Image: (circa 2004) WCC ref view of two buildings