



16 March 2017

Andrew Henderson,
Senior Associate – Planning,
Beca,
410 Colombo Street,
Christchurch

Dear Andrew,

Review of Gray Assessment

Thank you for requesting a review of the John Gray *Heritage Assessment of the Hydro Grand, Timaru*. This is as follows.

Historic research

I was surprised to read that no additional research was undertaken, just a repeat of evidence presented at the hearing. There are no references as to whose evidence was used or where the information came from. As a minimum I would have expected a detailed review of the original drawings and all subsequent alterations based on a review of Council permit/consent records. This should be then tabulated into a chronology.

A description of the building is given. There is a brief history, not referenced, followed by largely subjective descriptions of the building without any historical or architectural justification, such as:

- Oriel windows which look somewhat out of place today”;
- “it was apparent that this building was built to a strict budget as regards the lack of fancy [!?] finishes.... And a total lack of pressed metal panelling...which would have been expected in other well-appointed hotels of the time”.

Similarly I would have expected to see research into those associated with the building such as owners and publicans and a discussion on events. This research can be easily achieved from sources such as Paperspast. This information should form a separate section. The information on the architect is minimal.

Ideally the historical research should be carried out by a qualified and experienced historian or architectural historian. These should be members of SAHANZ Society or Architectural Historians of Australian and New Zealand) or PHANZA (Professional Historians Association of New Zealand)

Architecture

There is no description or analysis of the architecture or style, nor is there a comparative analysis of hotels of the period in Timaru, South Canterbury, Canterbury or indeed New Zealand. As a minimum Gray should have requested from HNZ a listed of listed hotels and reviewed the Council lists within the region.

The report includes a brief description of condition and comment on whether the building should be considered dangerous or not. This information is not relevant to a discussion of heritage values.

Gray then copies the NHZ assessment from the on-line listing, the purpose for which is not clear. The original report should have been accessed and referred to as the information on-line is usually a summary only. The full report could have also provided good references to be followed up by Gray for his own research and assessment.

The architectural section should have also included extensive photographic research into the building. This would have illustrated the history of the building and its changes and could have been used to corroborate archival material, had it been researched.

There is no description of the setting or its history and therefore no possibility of an analysis of the place of the hotel in its setting.

Heritage assessment

The report then progresses to an assessment of impacts before the assessment of heritage values. This is a curious order to present the information as without the assessment of heritage values stated first, it is difficult to know how an assessment of impacts can be written.

Gray quotes the Kerr Conservation Plan 1990 document. It has been revised 4 times since 1990 and the latest version, written specifically for Australia and New Zealand was written in 2013. It is not clear how this document has informed the report, or how it has been used.

The HNZ criteria for assessment used is appropriate. However, the assessments are generally lacking in depth and it is difficult to see how they relate to the historical and architectural sections. Given the lack of any detailed research and analysis of the history, people and events associated with the building, its architecture, style, and setting, it is difficult to know how a full assessment can be possible. For example:

Architecture. There is no discussion of how the architectural style is demonstrated (to quote Kerr). What elements are key to this style? Where does the style come from? Is it unique in Timaru, South Canterbury, New Zealand? We cannot tell. It is stated that a lack of ornamentation was common at the time, but in the assessment this lack of decoration was denigrated as being cheap. The same questions can be asked under the heading *representative*.

Rarity. As there has been no research presented as to how rare the building is it is difficult to see how the statement can be accepted.

Integrity. Integrity here is taken as authenticity. There is no discussion of the various levels of authenticity, as required under the Nara document and the Riga charter. A very narrow definition has been used which will severely limit the discussion on authenticity, contrary to these two internationally accepted documents.

People, events and patterns. With such limited (unreferenced) research it is difficult to see how any assessment of these criteria is possible.

There is no explanation of whether the building is locally, regionally or nationally significant, nor is there any definition of what this might entail. I have used a ranking system to make this type of assessment (attached), which has been exhaustively tested in a recent Environment Court case and was found by the court (and HNZ) to be a valuable tool, when there is no other such tool available in New Zealand. Similarly the New South Wales Heritage Office have produced *Assessing heritage significance*, NSW Heritage Manual, 2001, that explains the areas and levels of heritage value which should be met for a building to be listed at either a local or state level. While the criteria for assessment of heritage values is slightly different, the manual explains the criteria for inclusion and exclusion.

Some form of assessment tool should have been used.

Detailed assessment

Gray lists possible levels of cultural heritage significance, A to intrusive. Given the paucity of research and the consequent limited ability to make definitive, objective assessments of heritage values, it is uncertain how Gray can assess the relative significance of elements and fabric.

One area of cultural significance is level of authenticity and it is presumed, but not stated, that this contributes to cultural heritage significance. Given that there has been no research, but assumptions, as to authenticity, the levels A to intrusive, cannot be relied upon.

It is usual for the list of spaces and fabric to have an assessment of relative authenticity, such as heritage (original or early) fabric or non-historic fabric. There is no such assessment.

Assessment of impacts

As the assessment of heritage values is inadequate, the assessment of impacts cannot be relied upon. In addition Gray appears to step outside his field of expertise as an architect offering opinions on structural options and costings. In the Environment Court hearing referred to above, an architect attempted to provide similar commentary on engineering and quantity surveying and was heavily criticised and her opinions were discounted.

Conclusions

The Gray report is inadequate in research, and analysis such as that the assessments of heritage values and heritage impact assessments cannot be relied upon to make decisions on the retention or demolition of the Hydro Grand.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Bowman', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ian Bowman

Ranking heritage values and significance

Physical

Archaeology

- High has the potential for national or regional archaeological values i.e. rare site types, sites from the first phase of settlement, particularly intact physical remains
- Moderate has the potential for local archaeological values i.e. relatively early, possibility of relatively intact physical remains, representative types
- Low known to be pre-1900, or has the possibility of pre-1900 evidence, but unlikely to have high or moderate archaeological values

Architecture

- High highly original, early, ideal, landmark or innovative design, style, use of materials, or craftsmanship for the period
- Moderate good design, style, use of materials, or craftsmanship for the period
- Low typical design, style use of materials, or craftsmanship for the period

Technology

- High highly original, ideal, innovative or early construction design for the period
- Moderate good example of construction design for the period
- Low common construction design for the period

Rarity

- High first, only remaining or one of very few of the period, locally/regionally/nationally
- Moderate one of few of the period, locally/regionally/nationally
- Low common for the period, locally/regionally/nationally

Representivity

- high has all the key characteristics of architecture or technology of the period
- Moderate has many of the characteristics of the architecture or technology of the period
- Low has few characteristics of the architecture or technology or period

Integrity

- high unchanged or has had important modifications since construction retaining heritage values
- Moderate unimportant changes since construction but essential character and most heritage values retained
- Low character changed significantly with few heritage values remaining

Group

high	principal contributor to the dominant values of the group
moderate	compatible with the group but not a principal contributor to the dominant values of the group
low	of little importance to the group

Historic

People

high	intimately associated with a group or person of national or regional significance
moderate	intimately associated with a group or person of local significance
low	minor or peripheral connection to a locally significant group or person

Events

high	intimately associated with events of national or regional significance
moderate	intimately associated events of local significance
low	minor or peripheral connection to a locally significant event

Pattern

high	intimately associated with pattern of national or regional significance
moderate	intimately associated with pattern of local significance
low	minor or peripheral connection to a locally significant pattern

Cultural

Identity

high	focus of national or regional community identity, sense of place or social value or has special age value such as constructed within the first 30 years of settlement
moderate	focus of local community identity, sense of place or social value or has age value such as construction between 1870 and 1900
low	has minor community focus, sense of place or social value

Public esteem

high	focus of national or regional community identity, sense of place or social value, recommended for listing, discussed in national publications, or received an award at the national, or local level
moderate	focus of local community identity, sense of place or social value, or recommended for listing and discussed in local publications
low	has minor community focus, sense of place or social value

Commemorative

high	commemorates national or regional endeavours or people at a national, regional or local level
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moderate commemorates local endeavours or people at a local level

low has minor commemorative value

Education

high has a very high potential for education of heritage values at a national or regional level

moderate has a high potential for education about heritage values at a local level

low has minor potential for education

Assessment of significance

The values of the place or object

High at a national, regional or local level it is ranked highly in a number of heritage areas and has high integrity or has very significant values in one heritage value

Moderate at a local level it has few high heritage values and/or has moderate integrity

Low it has few heritage values

The place or object has significant heritage values:

National at a national level

Regional at a regional level

Local at a local level