

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works Building

ADDRESS 95 Stafford Street, Timaru

PHOTOGRAPH



(A McEwan, 9 July 2018)

FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM No. No. 43 **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 327 / 1
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 53349

VALUATION NUMBER 2500047900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1874

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Thomas Roberts, architect; Thomas Machin,
contractor

STYLE Italianate

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey building with irregular rectangular footprint and shallow hipped roof forms. Façade has an offset central entry flanked by triplet or paired windows. String course between floors; entrance is framed by pilasters and topped by an entablature bearing the building's name. Paired windows above entry have arched heads; others on façade have multi-pane fanlights. Bracketed eaves, steps to entry, quoins, double-hung sash windows with dressed surrounds. External chimneybreasts on north and south elevations. There is a separate brick structure with a gabled roof at the rear of the site, which is accessed via Turnbull Street.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timaru bluestone (basalt), brick, timber, corrugated metal.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Brick extension erected to the rear (c.1955?).

SETTING

The building stands on the east side of Stafford Street, south of its intersection with George Street and to the north of the intersection with Woollcombe Street. The property is bounded to the east by Turnbull Street. The Theatre Royal (heritage item # 46) and the Excelsior Hotel are on the opposite side of Stafford Street and the former Landing Service building

(heritage item # 44) lies to the north-east of the site. The extent of scheduling is the land parcel on which the building is located, in view of the potential archaeological values of the site as a whole.

HISTORY

Those arguing that South Canterbury should have an independent identity within Canterbury province had to be satisfied with the establishment of the short-lived Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works. The act of parliament setting up the board was passed in 1867 and the board first met in December of that year. It had the power to spend revenue from land sales and other sources on public works such as roads, bridges and the harbour. Purpose-built offices for the board were erected in 1874 to the design of the board engineer. The board went out of existence only two years later when the provincial government system was abolished; its offices subsequently passed to the crown and were taken over by the Lands and Survey department. Additions to the rear of the building were made in the mid-20th century and later the building was used for storage. It is now known as the Gladstone Building and provides commercial office space.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has high historical significance for its association with the semi-autonomous board that undertook public works in Timaru and the wider district between 1867 and 1876. The board's former premises provide evidence of the scale of the entity's operations and early perceptions of South Canterbury as a distinct region.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has cultural value as a demonstration, albeit short-lived, of the way of life of the staff and elected members of the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has architectural significance as the work of early Timaru architect Thomas Roberts, who was born and trained as an engineer in England. Roberts emigrated to Canterbury in 1870 and was engineer to the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works before establishing a private practice as an architect and licensed surveyor. Roberts also designed the Sealy house (1875), which is now known as Shand House at Craighead Diocesan School (heritage item # 9), the Union Bank of Australia in Stafford Street (1876-77), and the Wrecks Monument (1883/1885, heritage item # 49). In 1890 Roberts joined the NZ Midland Railway Company and five years later he was appointed Assistant Engineer in charge of Nelson district for the Public Works Department. By December 1901 he had returned to private practice in Nelson, leaving that city in c.1905.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has high technological and craftsmanship significance for its stone masonry construction and detailing. The building represents both a response to the March 1869 council bylaw stipulating masonry construction in the central business district, which followed the December 1868 fire that destroyed around 30 buildings in the town centre, and the use of a building material that is closely identified with Timaru's colonial building tradition. The contractor Thomas Machin was later to practise as an architect, which was permissible before registration and the protected status of the term 'architect' was introduced in the early 20th century.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has contextual significance as a local landmark within Timaru's town centre. The concentration of scheduled heritage items and historic character buildings lining Stafford Street and in the vicinity of the port and railway station gives Timaru's principal CBD thoroughfare its distinctive identity and sense of place.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the building pre-dates 1900 its site has potential archaeological significance relating to the colonial use and development of the site.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has high overall heritage significance to Timaru and Timaru district as a whole. The building has high historical significance for its association with the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works and the provincial government period in New Zealand's history and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of those who worked in the building on behalf of the board. The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has architectural significance as an Italianate design by board engineer Thomas Roberts and high technological and craftsmanship significance for its bluestone construction and detailing. The former Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works building has contextual significance as a local landmark and its site has potential archaeological significance in view of its early 1870s development.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

A

REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 25 April 1873, p. 2; 15 August 1873, p. 3; 28 November 1873, p. 1; 13 March 1874, p. 4; 12 June 1874, p. 3; 10 July 1874, p. 3; 16 October 1874, p. 3; 13 November 1874, p. 4; 16 November 1874, p. 3; 20 November 1874, p. 5; 30 November 1876, pp. 2 & 3; 1 June 1878, p. 4; 11 June 1914, p. 5.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/327>
- *Cyclopedia of New Zealand – Canterbury Provincial District* Christchurch, 1903 (available online).
- Archives New Zealand.
- New Zealand Parliamentary Debates., 3rd session of the 6th parliament, Vol. 28, 26 July to 2 September 1878, p. 104; available online.



Extent of setting, 95 Stafford Street, Timaru.