

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME Coronation Buildings
ADDRESS 256-260 Stafford Street, Timaru

PHOTOGRAPH



(A McEwan, 9 July 2018)

FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. no.34 **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 2057 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 3 DP 429968 & Lot 16 DP 10657

VALUATION NUMBER 2500064900

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1902

ARCHITECT / DESIGNER / BUILDER JS Turnbull, architect; Messrs Werry & Hunt, builders

STYLE Edwardian commercial classicism

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two storey-building with irregular footprint and hipped and gabled roof forms. Elaborately decorated façade is symmetrical about an ornate pediment above a large arched opening on the first floor. End bays are marked by secondary pediments and oriel windows. Convex veranda carried on metal posts links the Coronation Buildings and its northern neighbour, with a central store entry marked by a raised canopy. Central pediment bears the name and date of the building in relief lettering.

MATERIALS / STRUCTURE

Brick, cement plaster, metal roofing.

ADDITIONS / ALTERATIONS

Post-fire restoration and internal alterations (JS Turnbull, architect; 1908-9). Removal of central first floor balcony over veranda; original veranda replaced by suspended veranda (date unknown). Modern shopfronts installed, veranda on posts reinstated, building restoration (1997).

SETTING

The building stands on the south-west side of Stafford Street in the middle of a block bordered by Canon Street to the north and Strathallan Street to the south. A number of other heritage buildings are located in the vicinity, including Hay's Buildings (1907-8, heritage item # 29) and O'Meeghan's Buildings (1911-12, heritage item # 35). The extent of scheduling is

limited to that portion of the site on which the original building was erected, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the two parcels on which the buildings stands.

HISTORY

The Coronation Buildings were erected in 1902 by Thomas Thomson, who had established a drapery business in Timaru in partnership with his brother James in 1883. The building was named in honour of King Edward VII's coronation on 9 August 1902 and was officially opened on 2 January 1903. Fire damaged the building in October 1908, after which time the original architect, JS Turnbull, restored the building. 'Tommy' Thomson (c.1855-1935) had learnt his trade in his native Scotland before emigrating to New Zealand in 1874. The family firm held the building for almost 60 years, with a small triangular shop at the northern end being occupied by a confectioner in 1925. Thomson's, which had been taken over by Thomas's son Charles in 1935, was bought by Hay's Department Store in 1961. Charles Thomson served as Mayor of Timaru in the years following (1962-65). The site had largely been built upon by c.1970 and the Farmers Trading Company acquired the property in 1982. Farmers still occupies the building, as well as the one immediately to the north of the Coronation Buildings, which was built in c.1910.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Thomson's Coronation Buildings have high historical and social significance for their association with Thomas Thomson and his family, the building's continuous use as a department store since 1903 and, more generally, the early 20th century development of the Timaru town centre. The parade to mark the coronation of King George V assembled outside Thomson's store on 22 June 1911.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Thomson's Coronation Buildings have cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former owners and their customers and commemorative value for its association with the coronation of Edward VII.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Thomson's Coronation Buildings have architectural significance as the work of notable Timaru architect JS Turnbull. Timaru-born James Turnbull (1864-1947) trained in Melbourne and then established a practice in Timaru in c.1895. The son of Richard Turnbull, a prominent Timaru businessman and politician, Turnbull also designed Job Brown's Beehive Stores (heritage item #117, 1901-2) in Temuka, Chalmers Church (heritage item #38, 1903-4) and a large number of Timaru houses. Turnbull went into partnership with his former assistant Percy Watts Rule in c.1920, after which time Rule was the principal designer in the firm. The firm designed the Temuka Library (heritage item #118, 1926-27), St Mary's Hall in Timaru (1928-29), St James' Anglican Church at Franz Josef (1928-31) and the 1930 additions to the Bank Street Methodist Church (heritage item #51).

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Thomson's Coronation Buildings have technological and craftsmanship significance for their brick construction and the quality of the building's ornate classical detailing. Timaru builder William Henry Hunt was in partnership with William Werry from 1895. Werry and Hunt erected a number of commercial buildings in central Timaru as well as undertaking extensive water-race construction in the North Island. The firm also erected the former Hay's Buildings in 1907-8 (heritage item # 29).

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Thomson's Coronation Buildings have high contextual significance as a notable historic feature within the Timaru town centre; one which signalled and facilitated the development of the northern end of Stafford Street as the town's premier shopping district. The building featured prominently on early 20th century postcards of Stafford Street and is included in the 'heritage streetscape' scene in Te Ara's Timaru story. 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

Although the building post-dates 1900 its site may have potential archaeological value relating to earlier activity undertaken on the site. An 1875 map of Timaru (South Canterbury Museum) shows what appears to be a residential building on the western portion of this site.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

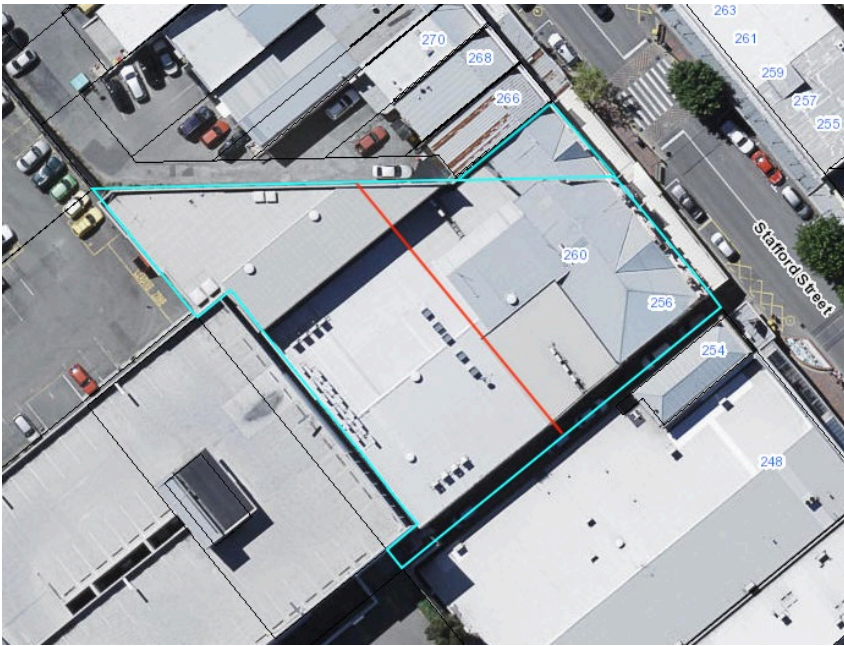
Thomson's Coronation Buildings have high overall heritage significance to Timaru and Timaru district as a whole. The building has high historical and social significance for its association with Thomas Thomson and its continuous use as a department store since 1903 and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former owners and their customers. Thomson's Coronation Buildings have architectural significance as the work of noted Timaru architect James Turnbull and technological and craftsmanship significance for its brick construction and ornate classical detailing by Messrs Werry and Hunt. Thomson's Coronation Buildings have high contextual significance for the contribution they make to the Timaru town centre streetscape and their site may have potential archaeological value in view of its location and possible earlier use.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

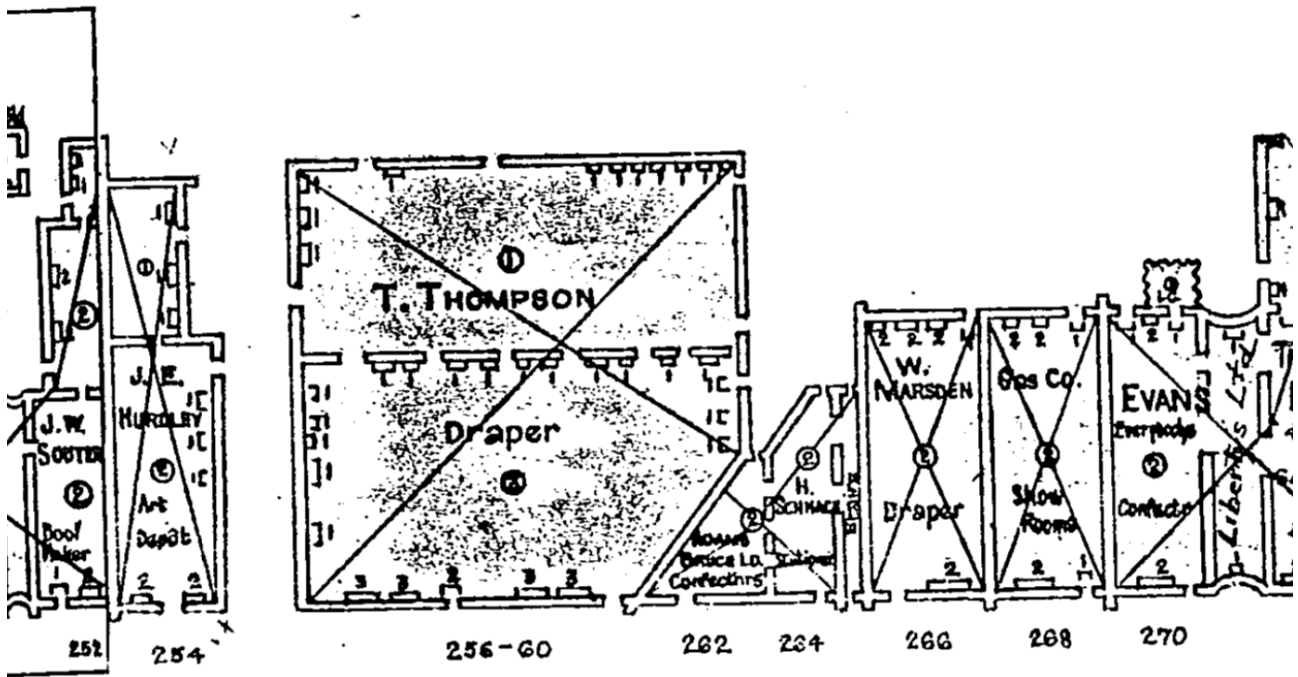
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REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 14 January 1902, p. 4; 15 January 1902, p. 1; 8 November 1902, p. 1; 3 January 1903, p. 3; 2 March 1909, p. 2.
- *Temuka Leader* 10 June 1905, p. 3; 17 October 1908, p. 3.
- *Progress* 1 July 1907, p. 26.
- *Press* 28 March 1935, p. 12.
- *Poverty Bay Herald* 27 March 1935, p. 6.
- *I Hunter Farmers – Your Store for 100 Years* Auckland, 2009.
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2057>
- <https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/11488/heritage-streetscape>
- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc03Cycl-t1-body1-d7-d1-d26.html>



Extent of setting, limited to that portion of the site corresponding to the original footprint of the building, 256-260 Stafford Street, Timaru.



1925 Timaru block plan. South Canterbury Museum.