

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME Orari Buildings
ADDRESS 327-341 Stafford Street, Timaru

PHOTOGRAPH



(A McEwan, 9 July 2018)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. New **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** n / a

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Part Lot 1 DP 5826

VALUATION NUMBER 2500075600

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1925

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Herbert Hall, architect; JT Hunt, builder

STYLE Commercial classicism

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two storey-building with triangular footprint and monopitch roof. Rounded corner with principal elevation facing Stafford Street and secondary elevation overlooking Port Loop Road. First floor windows are set within arched mouldings, some with swag motifs. Small decorative balcony beneath glass doors on Port Loop Road elevation. Solid parapet above dentilled cornice. Steel-framed casement and fanlight type windows. Modern shopfronts, suspended veranda along Stafford Street frontage wraps around the corner of the building. Lower height section overlooking The Terrace has enclosed first floor loggia.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, cement plaster, metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Loggia enclosed (date unknown).

SETTING

The building stands on the north-east side of Stafford Street, immediately adjacent to its intersection with Port Loop Road. The building is opposite the Dominion Hotel on Stafford Street and overlooks Caroline Bay on its northern frontage. The irregular triangular land parcel on which the building is located is bordered to the east by The Terrace. The extent of scheduling is the land parcel on which the building is located.

HISTORY

The Orari Buildings were erected in 1925 by WK Macdonald (William Kenneth, 1863-1927) of Orari Station. When he died two years later it was said of Macdonald that the 'most conspicuous among the buildings which the late Mr Macdonald erected, and through which he helped to change the appearance of Timaru from borough to city status, were the handsome block known as the "Orari Buildings" ... and the Hydro Hotel'. The latter had been built by Macdonald in 1912 to the design of local firm Hall and Marchant. Macdonald commissioned Hall, then practicing on his own, to design the Orari Buildings. When built the building comprised 7 shops and a tea rooms on the first floor. Occupants of the Orari Buildings in the early 1930s included Richard Hill, electrical engineer, the tea rooms of the Misses L & D Ransome, Mrs Vickers' library exchange, Mrs Lewis, hairdresser, and a furniture dealer. The building was lavishly decorated for the Royal visit of Queen Elizabeth II in 1954; ten years later a large neon sign advertising Players cigarettes was removed from the roof of the building. It had been a Timaru landmark for many years. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries the building was known as Mascot House, named for its principal occupant Mascot Finance. It remains in commercial use.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have historical significance for their association with the post-World War I building boom that took place in the Timaru town centre. The building is also associated with a second-generation member of a notable runholder family and demonstrates the commercial interests of some of the district's wealthy farmers.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former owners, occupiers, their customers and patrons.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have architectural significance as the work of noted Timaru architect Herbert Hall. Hall (1884-1940) was born and educated in Christchurch and trained with Fred Barlow and the Luttrell Brothers before establishing his own practice in Timaru in c.1910 and registering as an architect in 1918. He also designed the South Canterbury War Memorial in Timaru (1925, heritage item # 17), St David's Pioneer Memorial Church at Cave (1930) and the Chateau in Tongariro National Park (1928).

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have technological and craftsmanship value for its brick masonry construction and the quality of its classical facade detailing.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have contextual significance as a defining historic feature within the Timaru 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. With the demolition of both the Hydro Grand Hotel (former heritage item # 37) and the redevelopment of the site at the corner of Sefton and Stafford Streets, the contextual significance of both the Orari Buildings and the Dominion Hotel (heritage item # 36) has greatly increased.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the building post-dates 1900 its site may have potential archaeological significance relating to earlier activity undertaken on the property. A photograph taken in c.1880 (Te

Papa Tongarewa Museum of NZ) shows a small cottage on the corner of the site; the footprint of the same is shown on the 1875 map of Timaru (South Canterbury Museum).

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Orari Buildings have overall heritage significance to Timaru and Timaru district as a whole. The building has historical and social significance for its association with WK Macdonald and the interwar commercial development of the town centre and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former owners, occupiers and their customers. Orari Buildings have architectural significance as the work of noted Timaru architect Herbert Hall and technological and craftsmanship value for its brick construction and ornamental classical detailing. Orari Buildings have contextual significance for the contribution they make to the Timaru town centre streetscape and their site may have potential archaeological significance in view of its location and earlier development on the property.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Temuka Leader* 29 December 1927, p. 1.
- *Timaru Herald* 20 August 1910, p. 2; 12 May 2007 (available online).
- *Press* 15 May 1924, p. 4; 22 December 1925, p. 6; 1 February 1928, p. 13; 16 February 1940, p. 5. 19 August 2009 (available online)
- *NZ Truth* 30 August 1930, p. 9.
- *Progress* 2 May 1910, p. 21.
- *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1933. Available online.
- <http://www.timarucivictrust.co.nz/activities/may-24th-2016>



Extent of setting, 327-341 Stafford Street, Timaru.