

TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM

HERITAGE ITEM NAME Dominion Hotel [former Melville Hotel]

ADDRESS 334-336 Stafford Street, Timaru

PHOTOGRAPH



(A McEwan, 9 July 2018)

FORMER DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. NO. 36 **HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY** 2053 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Pt Lot 136 & Pt Lot 137 DP 1

VALUATION NUMBER 2500062300

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1872, 1876, 1886 & 1912

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** West & Barber, architects (1885/86); Thomas Lusk,
architect (1912)

STYLE Commercial classicism

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Three storey-building with rectangular footprint and hipped roof forms; outbuildings at the rear and basement beneath. Symmetrical façade has a centre-and-ends composition with open-bed pediments crowning end bays; central recessed entry with two-storey recessed balconies framed by Ionic columns. Rusticated pilasters, multi-pane casement windows, cartouches set within pediments; latter bearing 'AD' (south) and '1912' (north). Dentilled cornice, keystones above windows, solid parapet. Name of building and 1912 proprietor (J Reilly) in relief lettering below cornice. Fire escapes below windows on first and second floors.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Brick, Oamaru stone facings, concrete, corrugated iron.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Fire escapes added (post 1930?). Side (northern) entrance removed and replaced by a window (date unknown).

SETTING

The building stands on the south-west side of Stafford Street, south of its intersection with Sefton Street and the Port Loop Road. The building offers views of Caroline Bay to the north. A brick building (1925) on the north-western boundary of the hotel was demolished in 2015 and the site subsequently redeveloped. A 1914 shop stands immediately to the south-east.

The extent of scheduling is both land parcels on which the hotel is located in view of the potential archaeological values of the site.

HISTORY

Melville House, later Melville Hotel, opened in April 1872 at the north end of Stafford Street. It was reported that 'considerable additions' had been made to the building in July 1876. William Moore then 'extensively enlarged' the hotel in 1886. Having run the hotel since 1907 John Reilly undertook further major alterations of the building in 1912; he renamed it the Dominion to mark the change. The 'new' hotel opened in 21 December 1912 and Reilly held the license until 1920. He had previously run the Wallingford Hotel in Temuka and would go on to run the Gladstone in Fairlie. Since losing its liquor license in the later 20th century the building has been used as an art gallery, youth venue, and backpacker accommodation. It is currently vacant.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has historical and social significance for its association with its early publicans, especially John Reilly, and their patrons and, more generally, the commercial development of Timaru's town centre. The building's redevelopment in 1912 demonstrates the Edwardian-era building boom that occurred in Timaru, whereby earlier shops and business premises were replaced or, in this case, extensively refurbished. The redevelopment of the hotel is also contemporary with the establishment with the Caroline Bay Association and the expansion of Timaru as a seaside resort.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its former publicans and their patrons, whether as hotel guests or visitors to the bar.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has architectural significance as the work of two notable Timaru architectural firms. Messrs West and Barber called tenders for additions to the hotel in August 1885. Daniel West and Robert Barber succeeded Maurice Duval as architects to the South Canterbury Education Board in mid-1883. They also maintained a private practice, designing 'Green Hayes' (heritage item # 90) for John and Jane Hayhurst at Temuka in 1881-82, until the dissolution of their partnership in 1886. In June 1911 Thomas Lusk (c.1882-1946) entered in to a partnership with building surveyor Bart Moriarty, who had previously supervised the construction of the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart (heritage item # 19, 1909-11). Lusk and Moriarty also designed O'Meeghan's Buildings (heritage item # 35) in 1911 and Meehan's Building in the following year (heritage item # 20); the partnership continued until early 1914. Lusk later moved to Dunedin and then to Hamilton; he was the father of noted Canterbury artist Doris Lusk (1916-90).

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has technological and craftsmanship significance for its brick and stone masonry construction and the quality of the building's 1912 classical façade. Lusk and Moriarty were likely also the contractors for the 1912 refurbishment, given that they provided design and build services to their other clients at the same time.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has high contextual significance as a notable 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 building on the

corner of Sefton and Stafford Streets, the Dominion Hotel's contribution to the streetscape has increased in importance.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As parts of the building pre-date 1900 the site of the Dominion Hotel has potential archaeological significance.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Dominion Hotel has overall heritage significance to Timaru and Timaru district as a whole. The building has historical and social significance for its association with the commercial development of the town centre since 1872 and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its early proprietors and their patrons. The Dominion Hotel has architectural significance as the work of local architects Messrs West and Barber and Thomas Lusk and technological and craftsmanship significance for its brick construction and classical detailing. The Dominion Hotel has high contextual significance for the contribution it makes to the Timaru town centre streetscape and potential archaeological significance in view of the development that has occurred on the site since the early 1870s.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Timaru Herald* 29 April 1872, p. 3; 5 June 1872, p. 2; 3 July 1876, p. 3; 27 April 1887, p. 3; 8 October 1907, p. 2; 7 May 1908, p. 2; 7 August 1912, p. 1; 4 December 1912, p. 11; 21 December 1912, p. 12; 26 October 1912, p. 8; 17 April 1914, p. 3; 16 January 1915, p. 3; 7 May 1915, p. 10; 15 July 1920, p. 2; 7 April 2017 (available online).
- *Oamaru Mail* 9 October 1911, p. 5.
- *Temuka Leader* 24 April 1886, p. 2; 5 September 1907, p. 4; 8 June 1909, p. 3; 15 June 1922, p. 2.
- *Progress* 1 July 1913, p. 41; 1 May 1914, p. 42.
- *South Canterbury Times* 11 August 1885, p. 3; 23 March 1886, p. 3; 9 April 1886, p. 3; 14 June 1901, p. 3.
- *NZ Tablet* 29 June 1911, p. 19.
- *Press* 3 February 2010 (available online).
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/2053>
- S Brosnahan *Thinking about Heaven – a history of Sacred Heart parish, Timaru* Timaru, 2011.



Extent of setting, 334-336 Stafford Street, Timaru.