

BEFORE THE TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER OF

the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

An application for Resource Consent
by Bayhill Developments Limited

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JEREMY SALMOND

Dated: 23 November 2016

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QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1 My full name is Laurence Jeremy Elder Salmond. I am a director of the firm Salmond Reed Architects Limited and I have been in professional practice as an architect since 1972. I hold the degree of Master of Architecture (Auckland) and I am a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Architects.
- 2 I am a member of the Association for Preservation Technology International and a past Chairman of the New Zealand Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS); I contributed to the development of the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value. I am a member of the Auckland City Urban Design Panel and I was a founding Trustee of the North Shore Heritage Trust. I have received the Queen's Service Order for Public Service for my work in heritage conservation and advocacy.
- 3 I have 44 years' experience as an architect and working experience in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, particularly in the field of conservation architecture. I have undertaken specialist training in conservation method and practice in Australia, the United Kingdom, USA and Canada. I am experienced in building restoration and the preparation of conservation plans and heritage studies. I have experience in the analysis, design and documentation of conservation works for a wide range of heritage buildings, as well as the design and construction of contemporary new structures. I am the author of the book *Old New Zealand Houses 1800-1940*. I have contributed to a number of other published works and I have delivered papers and lectures at conferences and seminars, and in public, related to conservation theory and practice.
- 4 I have assisted several local authorities with the identification of areas of distinctive character and issues related to the preservation of these, and I have developed guidelines for the maintenance of existing character which have been published by those authorities for this purpose.
- 5 I have prepared, or contributed to, studies on heritage values which can be identified in urban and other settings, where these studies are intended to assist with the formation of planning policy and rules. These have included studies of historic landscapes associated with significant cultural heritage buildings, conservation plans for historic landscapes

and built precincts, and contributions towards the development of master plans and area plans for defined landscapes.

- 6 My firm specialises in the conservation of heritage buildings, sites and areas, and a major part of the work of the practice is concerned with the maintenance, restoration and adaptation of old buildings. We have prepared in excess of 150 conservation plans for important heritage buildings throughout New Zealand.
- 7 The company has worked (sole, or in association with other design professionals) on many significant projects to rehabilitate and adapt important heritage buildings, including (in Auckland) the Civic Theatre, the former Chief Post Office, the War Memorial Museum and the Art Gallery, (in Wellington) Sacred Heart Cathedral, and (in Christchurch) the Arts Centre of Christchurch.
- 8 I confirm that I have read the Expert Witness Code of Conduct set out in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014. I have complied with the Code of Conduct in preparing this evidence and agree to comply with it while giving oral evidence. Except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person, this written evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed in this evidence.

BACKGROUND AND ROLE

- 9 I was initially approached in 2009 by the then owner (who is not the current applicant) to give an opinion on the heritage values associated with the Hydro Grand Hotel for the purposes of gaining a resource consent.
- 10 I subsequently prepared a report (attached as Appendix A) in which I outlined the historical background of the hotel, and set out to show the capacity of the existing building to be adapted to suit the requirements of a contemporary hotel. My report also acknowledged advice I received from the project that the costs of such an approach would not be commercially sustainable.
- 11 I was approached again in April 2016 to provide a similar professional service for a revived project for a new owner with a new design team. I subsequently recast my earlier report to reflect the new circumstances and I understand a copy of that report was subsequently annexed to the Application for Resource Consent. As with the earlier project, I was

advised that adaptation and reuse of the existing building would not be commercially sustainable and I understand a further report on that matter is also annexed to the Application for Resource Consent for the current proposal.

- 12 It is important that I clarify that I have not to date prepared a Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposal to identify effects of the proposal on identified heritage values. My brief did not extend to the opportunity to undertake detailed archival research into the history of the building and consequently I don't consider my report to be either a full statement of heritage values or a heritage impact assessment.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 13 My evidence to this hearing reflects the substance of my report to the Applicant. In addition, I provide:
- a. a summary assessment of the heritage value of the building;
 - b. an assessment of the condition of the building at the time of my original inspection in 2009;
 - c. a broad summary of the work necessary to adapt the building for contemporary use;
 - d. a discussion of the subject of façadism;
 - e. a review of applicable District Plan provisions;
 - f. a discussion of potential mitigation measures; and
 - g. a response to submissions received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 14 The Hydro Grand Hotel is a significant heritage building in the Timaru CBD landscape.
- 15 While I consider the building to be adaptable to use as a contemporary hotel with all modern amenities required for such use, I am advised that the cost to achieve this is not considered by the applicant to be commercially sustainable.
- 16 I acknowledge that if the building is demolished, all associated heritage values will be lost. I would say, however, that what is intended to

replace it is a competently designed building that will itself be a prominent feature of the Timaru CBD landscape.

Heritage Assessment of the Hydro Grand Hotel

- 17 My appended report summarises the significance of the Hydro Grand as a *“three-storey building in what has been described as Edwardian Baroque-style, but also owes something to the English Queen Anne style of architecture.”*
- 18 I described it as *“a notable architectural feature of the Timaru business district”*, and observed that *“although its original roof gables have been removed, it remains a distinctive building.”*
- 19 I would add to this that the building is associated with an architect of some interest as a local practitioner who was responsible for a number of significant buildings including, notably, the Chateau Tongariro Hotel of 1929.
- 20 I am not aware of specific associations of the building with either notable persons or events in the history of Timaru, but I would observe that it has been a significant part of the wider landscape of Timaru for almost 90 years.

Condition of the Heritage Fabric of the Hydro Grand Hotel

- 21 I inspected the building in 2009. In my report on the building, I noted that, as with most unused buildings, the interiors of the hotel appeared dirty and there was a pronounced air of decay and deterioration.
- 22 I noted also that exterior joinery was not in good condition, and there was some evidence then of water entry and a small amount of wet rot decay to timbers.
- 23 My inspection suggested that the building had not been occupied then for some time, and as far as I am aware, in the 7 years subsequent to that visit the building has continued to lie vacant. I would expect that it has continued to decay.

Work Required to Adapt the Hydro Grand for Contemporary Use

- 24 I understand that the project team has investigated the option of refurbishing the existing building as part of the larger development.

- 25 In my opinion, it would be necessary to substantially reconstruct the whole of the interior of the building to adapt it to new use. I consider that the existing floor-to-floor heights remain appropriate for a contemporary hotel, but I recognise that a new primary internal structural system is likely to be necessary in the event that it was to be adapted for new use.
- 26 Such a system would be necessary in any case to provide support to the unreinforced masonry external walls, to resist seismic loads.
- 27 I conclude that if the building were to be adapted for continued use as an hotel meeting contemporary standards of accommodation and structural integrity, very little of the interior is likely to be salvaged, apart from the floor plates.
- 28 In the conclusion to my report, I noted that any reuse of the building in this way would effectively result in "façadism" (where only the external walls and roof of the building are retained), which could not be seen as an appropriate conservation option for the building. I would add here that this may nonetheless be seen by some as an acceptable outcome if it meant that the authentic original form of the building could be retained.

District Plan Provisions

- 29 The Timaru District Plan provides little assistance as a template for the assessment of effects on scheduled heritage buildings. Under Part B of the plan, at Policy (6) provides a set of criteria to determine whether a building should be scheduled. It can, therefore, be assumed that the Hydro Grand satisfies these criteria in whole or in part.
- 30 Policy (7) provides criteria to "*give guidance to Council as to matters to take into account in making decisions on resource consent applications affecting scheduled items*", as follows:
- 7) *To assess applications which would affect scheduled items against the following criteria in addition to the other objectives and policies of the Plan:*
- (a) *the impact the proposal has on the integrity/value of the heritage item;*

- (b) the importance attributed to the heritage item by the wider community;*
- (c) the effect on the landscape, townscape or precinct value of the proposal;*
- (d) the extent to which the proposal is consistent with any conservation plan or other strategy for the maintenance or enhancement of the heritage value of the building, object, site or area;*
- (e) any recommendations made by the NZ Historic Places Trust [now Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga];*
- (f) any recommendations made by the Takata Whenua;*
- (g) alternative or viable uses for the building, object or site;*
- (h) public health or safety.*

31 The Explanation and Principal Reasons state that the criteria “*give guidance to Council as to matters to take into account in making decisions on resource consent applications affecting scheduled items*”, and notes that “*the opportunity to make viable use of heritage buildings is an important consideration as is any risk to users of the building or to the public.*”

32 I have assessed the proposal against these criteria as follows:

- (a) the impact the proposal has on the integrity/value of the heritage item;*

It is clear that the proposal will result in the loss of the building and all associated heritage value.

- (b) the importance attributed to the heritage item by the wider community;*

I am not in a position to assess the community value placed on the building. It is, however, clear from the submissions received that at least some sectors of the community value it, whilst others would like to see it demolished.

- (c) the effect on the landscape, townscape or precinct value of the proposal;*

The proposal will result in the loss of a notable building and familiar landscape feature in the Timaru CBD. As I have noted above, however, the building which is intended to replace it will also be a prominent feature of in the Timaru CBD.

(d) the extent to which the proposal is consistent with any conservation plan or other strategy for the maintenance or enhancement of the heritage value of the building, object, site or area;

I understand that no conservation plan has ever been prepared for the building.

(e) any recommendations made by the NZ Historic Places Trust [now Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga];

I am not aware of any recommendation made by Heritage New Zealand to the applicant or to the Council.

(f) any recommendations made by the Takata Whenua;

I am not aware of any mana whenua interest expressed by takata whenua, or any recommendation made by them to the Applicant or to the Council.

(g) alternative or viable uses for the building, object or site;

I have previously shown how the building might be adapted (in principle) for continued use as an hotel, and similar studies have been carried out by the design architect. That option would require a new primary internal structural system and has not been carried forward into the current proposal.

(h) public health or safety.

I do not understand this to be a specific heritage criterion, and I would say in any case that it is axiomatic that all buildings are required to be designed and constructed with regard to public safety and health.

Mitigation Recommendation

33 If consent is granted for demolition of the building, it would be appropriate to commission a professionally researched historical narrative and photographic record for public interest and as an archival

record of the place. I understand the Applicant is willing to offer such a condition.

Proposed Replacement Building and Site Utilisation

34 While I have seen the documentation for the proposed replacement building, I do not see it as necessary to comment on this, except to say that it is clearly a competent building which will itself be a prominent feature of the CBD landscape.

PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT

35 I have read the Planning Officer's report prepared by Andrew Henderson, with particular reference to matters related to heritage.

36 I note, in reference to Part 2 matters, the report refers to Sec. 6(f) of the Act and concludes that removal of the scheduled building and redevelopment of the site will not be "*an inappropriate activity on the site*". I agree with that assessment.

37 I note reference in the report to a peer review of my assessment by Mr Bowman. It is clear to me that Mr Bowman has carried out his peer review of my earlier report under the misapprehension that the report purported to be a full Heritage Impact Assessment.

38 As I have noted above, the purpose of the advice was to outline the background to the building, to confirm its value as a heritage building, and to show how it might practicably be incorporated into a redevelopment of the enlarged site.

39 Since my report did not set out to be a Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposal, I see little point in responding in detail to Mr Bowman's trenchant critique of its deficiencies. His review is founded on an incorrect assumption of the purpose of the report I prepared.

40 I have long experience in the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments, and if I had intended my report to constitute such, it would have:

- a. said so, and
- b. taken an entirely different form.

- 41 My report was entitled "Commentary on Potential for Redevelopment", and nowhere in the report does the term "Heritage Impact Assessment" appear.
- 42 Mr Bowman has thus constructed, and successfully demolished, a straw man of his own making.

CONCLUSION

- 43 The Hydro Grand Hotel is a Scheduled building in the Operative Timaru District Plan and a listed building on the register of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.
- 44 The building has important heritage and landscape qualities which in my opinion would justify its protection from demolition.
- 45 Although I consider the building to be capable of adaptation to accommodate the proposed activity on the site, I am advised that this will not be commercially feasible.
- 46 I do not say that commercial considerations should outweigh those of protecting and preserving historic heritage – that is a judgement to be exercised by others.

Jeremy Salmond
QSO, M.Arch, FNZIA
23 November 2016

APPENDIX A

THE HYDRO GRAND HOTEL, TIMARU
Commentary on Potential for Redevelopment
[revised – July 2016]



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THE HYDRO GRAND HOTEL, TIMARU
Commentary on Potential for Redevelopment
[revised – July 2016]

Introduction

The Hydro Grand Hotel was constructed in 1912-13 to the design of the architect/engineer Herbert Hall in association with Frederick Marchant, who was (or had been) an engineer to the Timaru Harbour Board. Hall (who lived from 1880 to 1939) settled in Timaru after working for a time in Sydney as an architect. He received training in Timaru from Daniel West, and worked mainly on residential projects before the First World War.



Following his return to New Zealand from Australia, he designed numerous buildings (both domestic and public) in Timaru and surrounding districts, including the Carnegie Library at Fairlie, and St David's Church, Cave (for which he was awarded the NZIA Gold Medal). Perhaps his best known and largest project was the neo-Georgian Chateau Tongariro Hotel (1929), erected at Mount Ruapehu.



The Hydro Grand is a three-storey building in what has been described as Edwardian Baroque-style, but also owes something to the English Queen Anne style of architecture.

The triangular shape of the site has resulted in a wedge-shaped building, which celebrates the acute angle at the meeting of Stafford and Sefton Streets, with a domed turret over an open circular balcony at roof level. As originally built, the ground floor walls of the corner dining room were glazed floor to ceiling, but these were later replaced by masonry walls with the present arched window openings. An original canopy has also long since disappeared.

The Timaru Herald reported in 1912, that *"The hotel, in the construction of which every provision has been made for the comfort of tourists and other guests, is splendidly finished in the Georgian style."*

Construction was of gravity brick with rendered exterior walls. Internal ceilings of plaster on lath incorporated asbestos as a fire protection measure. Bathroom floors were finished with *Decolite*.

It was regarded as highly sophisticated for its time, with an electric elevator, freight lift, steam-drying room and hot running water. A hot salt-water bath planned for the ground floor was never completed. The splendid views over Caroline Bay made the dining room a particular attraction.



On the first and second floors, shared balconies on the east side afforded views to the sea, with oriel windows providing shelter in adverse weather. The Herald reported that *"the dining room is probably the largest in Timaru and is unique in appearance in that the walls and ceilings are finished in rough cast. There are two fire places in it, and it should prove a very attractive room while the sunny balconies along the front, completely sheltered as they are from cold southerly winds and comfortably seated, promise to prove highly popular."*

Over time, change has been made to the building to reflect changing expectations and requirements. Various bathing amenities have been installed in some guest rooms, and the ground floor has been modified to provide a bar and a dining room. Kitchens have been modernised, and part of the top floor was converted for use as a resident manager's flat. At some stage, the roof has been altered, resulting in the loss of the gables that were a notable feature of the original building – together with its corner turret.

The building is registered under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act in category II (registration number #2052). It is also listed in Category B in the Timaru District Plan in the Schedule of Heritage Buildings, Structures and Sites (Item 10, covering Lots 2-3 DP 3530). The District Plan is remarkable for the manner in which it deals with historic heritage. Demolition of scheduled buildings is a discretionary activity, yet the plan provides no assessment criteria for the exercise of that discretion.

The acquisition of adjacent land has increased the total site area, and the Applicant seeks to redevelop the expanded site to create a modern hotel and conference centre. The intention is to demolish this and build new. A concept plan has been prepared for such a development.

Previous studies have shown that the building in its present configuration and with its present level of amenity will not readily adapt to meet the needs of a modern facility. In addition, the building, while fundamentally sound, does not meet modern standards for seismic strength, and all building services require to be modernised. Figures for the cost of undertaking such remedial works have encouraged Applicant to prefer a new build option for the site.

This proposition has not been universally welcomed, and there is a body of public opinion that wishes to see the existing building refurbished and reused.

This report is an assessment of heritage values associated with the Hydro Grand. It has been undertaken by Jeremy Salmond, a Director of Salmond Reed Architects Limited, of Devonport Auckland. A site visit was made to Timaru in July 2009, during which a detailed inspection of the building was made. Plans of a prospective redevelopment of the site have been examined.

The approach has been to consider if, and how, the existing building might be adapted in such a way that it could sensibly form part of a modern hotel, having regard to those parts of the building which might be said to contribute to its value as a part of the city's heritage.

Discussion

The hotel building is now vacant, except for the inevitable colony of pigeons. As with most unused buildings, the interiors of the hotel appear dirty and there is a pronounced air of decay and deterioration. There is some evidence of water entry and a small amount of wet rot decay to timbers.

Finishes are extremely tired looking, with now-unfashionable wallpapers, carpets and furniture. Some ceilings have been treated with sprayed on "limpet" asbestos, and the public areas can only be described as seedy and uninspiring. These qualities are not intrinsic to the building itself but are a consequence of unimaginative management in the face of declining patronage and revenues – a common fate for old hotel buildings throughout the country as standards and expectations have changed rapidly in the past decade. Exterior joinery is not in good condition, and none of the exterior openings is double glazed, which is likely to be necessary (in an hotel) for sound and thermal insulation.

The layout of the interiors is that of the original hotel, which offered a different standard of accommodation to that which is now considered a minimum in a modern hotel. Rooms are small, and while some have sanitary amenities, these are of poor quality.

It is conceivable that the building could be re-planned on each level to achieve something approaching the standard of a modern hotel, but it is clear that this would require substantial reconstruction to achieve sensible room sizes, and fire and acceptable acoustic separation. It is probable that only the

fabric of the floor plates would survive this process, and that the whole of the interior would have to be re-partitioned and relined. Certainly the food services and other support amenities and all public spaces will require complete replacement to achieve a satisfactory standard.

There is a significant volume of space within the roof, which is certainly capable of being developed for accommodation - especially with the reconstruction of the original gables which have been removed.



Proposed Development

A new commercial development incorporating a conference/functions centre has been proposed for an enlarged site that includes the Hydro Grand Hotel. The project, as presently proposed, relies on replacing the existing hotel building with new construction.

I have previously proposed that consideration should be given to incorporating the existing building into a redevelopment. The perceived value of this lies in the significance of the Hydro Grand as a landmark building in central Timaru, and the fact that the building is scheduled in the District Plan and registered under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act.

I have argued that it is technically practicable to upgrade the building to a sufficient standard for use as a modern hotel. In doing so, I have acknowledged that a significant level of change to the existing building would be necessary, including at least the following:

- Removal of all internal partitions (to be replaced with new sound and fire insulating materials in a new layout;
- Seismic strengthening of existing structural walls;
- Introduction of new access facilities, including stairs and lifts;
- Upgrading existing floor plates to achieve compliant fire separation ratings;
- Upgrading (or replacing) existing exterior joinery to achieve acceptable sound reduction;
- Development of the existing roof space for accommodation.

In addition, there is a quantum of work related to the present state of the building, including

- A great deal of deferred maintenance (water entry, decay and pest infestation);
- Reinstatement of original roof elements which have been removed.

I do not have particular experience in hotel design, but my knowledge of heritage buildings suggests to me that the building *could* be adapted in the manner described. I note however, that this may mean that the numbers of

rooms required commercially for the type of development proposed may not be capable of being achieved on this site.

I have sought to show how a refurbished Hydro Grand could form part of an expanded development in such a way as to benefit the commercial visibility and identity of a modern hotel operation on this site.

The applicant has undertaken an economic analysis of the cost implications of a development that retains the existing building. I understand that it cannot be demonstrated that retention of the hotel as part of this development cannot be justified economically.

Conclusions

The existing Hydro Grand Hotel building is a notable architectural feature of the Timaru business district. Although its original roof gables have been removed, it remains a distinctive building. As an hotel, however, it is a building which was planned for standards which are not those of today. The facilities and amenities of the building are wholly unsuited to modern use, and all will require renewal. In addition, décor and finishes are unacceptable.

If the building is to be able to meet modern standards of hotel accommodation and amenity, it will be necessary to comprehensively re-plan each floor to achieve adequate room sizes and operational support facilities.

If, however, it is determined that existing floor plates are not capable of reuse – whether as structure, or because of the functional programme for an hotel - this would leave only the existing external walls of the building. The result would be effective “façadism” and could not be seen as an appropriate conservation option for the building.

I reluctantly acknowledge the conclusions of the economic analysis obtained by the Applicant, which appear to demonstrate that the cost of retention of the existing building, and adapting this to meet the contemporary performance standards of a modern hotel, cannot achieve a commercial return on that investment.



Jeremy Salmond

5 July 2016