

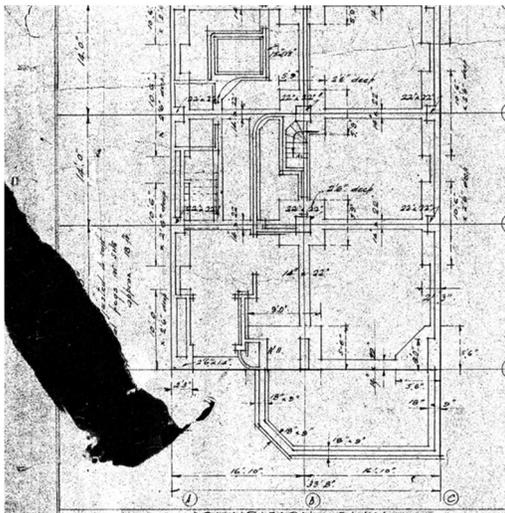
Further Submission on Proposed District Plan (PDP) By Cho Chan and Julie Daysh

SCHED1 Heritage Building Hearing Stream- 3

Oppose Heritage List Item 525/528 on 233 Willis Street Te Aro Wellington



Photo 1 Original Willis Street frontage



Screenshot of showroom on floorplan



Olympus Apartments - Oriel Window over front door



Photo 2: 233 Willis Street frontage.

We are Cho Yam CHAN (Cho) and Julie-Anne DAYSH (Julie), trustees of CAMJEC Trust which is the ultimate owner of 233 Willis Street (233 Willis). We bought 233 Willis from B Bennett previous owner in September 2015

We strongly oppose that this façade, shown in the Photo 2 above, is a fine example of 1940's New Zealand moderne architecture.. This façade is not original. The original 233 Willis Street façade is shown in Photo 1 on page 1. We ask that the 233 Willis building Heritage listing Ref 525/528 be removed from the Proposed District Plan (PDP)

Factual Evaluation of Historical Heritage Evaluation 2021 (HHE) by WCC (Appendix 1)

In summary there is no doubt the triangular oriel window is an Anscombe architectural feature however we question if one window warrants a heritage listing of the whole façade especially when the original showroom as shown in photo 1 was removed for Willis Street widening.



Photo 3 233 Willis Street Building (taken in 1957)

For the following reasons we strongly oppose that this building is a fine example of a light-filled combination factory design. We ask that the 233 Willis building Heritage listing Ref 525/528 be removed from the Proposed District Plan (PDP)

The window bands for letting light into this building are located on the south boundary as shown in photo 3 above. These are now largely covered by Cumberland House. This is also the case with Pearse House on the northern boundary.

The building frontage is 9 metres wide. The side elevations are 45 metres long. One would not expect a street frontage nine metres wide to allow enough light into a building of 45 metres in length. Many windows are shrouded in darkness. This building is not an example of a light-filled combination factory but a building where much of the interior is dark, and cold. Planet Design have a premium spot on part the second (top) floor.. They enjoy a light-filled space but that cannot be said for other parts of this building.

It is also our view that the removal of the showroom has impacted on the integrity of the inner workings of the original factory layout.

We have completed a study of the windows in the building for those wishing to view.





Photo 4 Upper Willis Streetscape in 2023 (233 Willis Street frontage is dwarfed by the scale of the other buildings in Willis Street)

The frontage is dwarfed by the scale of the other buildings in Willis Street. As mentioned previously the triangular oriel window is designed by Anscombe & Associates however there are other examples of triangular oriel windows in other Anscombe designed buildings in Wellington and to retain the façade of a building for an oriel window is not right. The Herd Street Post and Telegraph Office Building has a stunning oriel window and due to the setting of that building the oriel window is in plain sight. There are also examples of the triangular oriel window/s at the Olympus Apartments on Oriental Parade, Anscombe Flats on Oriental Terrace, and Franconia House on The Terrace.

Our evaluation of the fifty-five page Historical Heritage Evaluation 2021 (HHE) on 233 Willis Street is that it is long, wordy, repetitive and in some cases misleading, therefore inaccurate.

In describing the Herd Street Post & Telegraph Building on pages 40 & 41 of the HHE report there is a claim that “233 Willis Street has the same oriel window albeit smaller in scale” to the Herd Street Post & Telegraph Building. This is incorrect.

The Herd Street Building is described in the HHE report as “a sleek Anscombe design executed in a high Moderne aesthetic.” If one did not know our building and that building they may believe that the two buildings are similar by association and that is inaccurate.

We would also like to comment on the

On the title page of the HHE report is a photo of the modern day 233 Willis Street frontage but there is reference to there has been a significant alterations to the front of the building not until page 6 of HHE.

On pg 6 of HHE there is a Heritage Inventory Report – “Significant alterations or additions. Removed forward projecting ground floor bay at the front of the building for street widening in 1990”.

On pg 14 of HHE there is a photo of the original Willis Street frontage We ask why this photo was not compared with the photo on the front page? Instead this photo of the original façade is shown together with a photo of the modern day rear elevation of the building seen from Victoria Street. This is misleading.

Furthermore on pg 15 of HHE under the heading Chronologies and Timelines it reads

1990 Remove front of building for street widening -180 Victoria Street (Wellington City Council Archives E19303]. This information is clearly incorrect because the front of the building was remove in Willis Street widening. This is either intentional or a bad mistake with consequences.

See attached letter to council from Brian Bennett (previous owner of 233 Willis) dated 17 November 2006 (Appendix 2) re Willis Street widening.

History of Heritage Requisition by WCC

In March 2015 we, being building owners 176 Victoria Street which is next to 233 Willis, were given the opportunity by Brian Bennett (B Bennett), the last owner of 233 Willis, to purchase 233 Willis Street from him. We took up the opportunity and made the offer.

In April 2015 as part of our due diligence the last owner B Bennett provided us with his personal property files on 233 Willis part within which a full records of WCC Heritage Listing requisition and we also obtained the Land Information Memorandum (LIM) from WCC.

The property file from B Bennett reviewed that since 2006 the WCC Heritage wanted to heritage list the entire building at 233 Willis and including the carpark at Victoria Street frontage. B Bennett opposed listing from day one.

On 10 August 2009, after 3 years submissions and opposition to the heritage listing, B Bennett took the case and Appealed to the Environmental Court before Judge CJ Thompson and the court issued the decision “the façade only to be listed” on 233 Willis Street.

However 233 Willis was not heritage listed by WCC after 2009 Environmental Court ruling. In the 2015 LIM, that we order, stated “There are no Heritage designation located on this property”

If 233 Willis were on the Heritage List in 2015 LIM we would not have purchased the property. We bought 233 Willis for the potential for development as encouraged by WCC leading up to Victoria Street Transformation in 2015.

We ask how many times shall property owners or future owners of 233 Willis should endure the heritage listing requisition (we see it as harassment) from WCC? If WCC has not listed 233 Willis in District Plan Change 58 after the Environmental Court decision, WCC should stay away from 233 Willis. The action by WCC is a kind of property rights grab which may be legal under RMA and hopefully one day the WCC need to compensate similar to that of Maori Land settlement.

We bought 233 Willis Street is for development.

In March 2019 we commissioned Aaron Lewis of Clark Construction to carry out a feasibility (the benefits and costs) evaluation on whether to keep the building at 233 Willis Street. At the time Macro Panichi from Miyamoto commented verbal that: “233 Willis Street is too heavy to perform in a strong earthquake, all brick infilled walls needing to be removed and rebuilt with lighter material; the columns beam joint needing to be rebuilt” due to these two major factors we did not proceed any further as we decided it is not wise to keep 233 Willis.

Since May 2019 we have been working toward a new concept for two apartment blocks which spans from Willis Street frontage to Victoria Street frontage.

From that time any leases renewal or new leases at 233 Willis St have been on short term leases all with a six month demolition clause inserted.

What have we planned for 233 Willis Street?

We have attained Resource Consent approval (SR 496847) to build this multiple apartment block development to the full site at 233 Willis Street.

What have we done in the Resource Consent?

We have already had interior photographs taken of 233 Willis Street building for heritage team WCC as one of requirements in the Resource Consent SR496847.

We have a quote from Gerry O’Kane of Priority Demolition on demolishing 233 Willis.

We are awaiting an asbestos assessment report for the purpose of demolition of 233 Willis.

We have considered a joint venture with other developers Cambridge Asset Management in terms of applying another apartment construction concept on 233 Willis Street. Concept plans have been completed for feasibility evaluation. Feasibility evaluations are the key to the success of any new development.

A heritage listing on 233 Willis will also affect our building at 176 Victoria Street which is next to 233 Willis. A heritage listing will limit the development potential of 176 Victoria Street that we would build on the car park.

In the current Proposed District Plan, there have been no public submission or interest shown to support 233 Willis to have any heritage value for listing.

Conclusion

We strongly oppose that the 233 Willis Street façade is a fine example of 1940’s New Zealand moderne architecture.. We ask that the 233 Willis building Heritage listing Ref 525/528 be removed from the Proposed District Plan (PDP).

Signed

Cho Yam Chan and Julie-Anne Daysh