

CML Building, 116-120 Russell Street South, Hastings

Inventory Number: 4; Property ID: 21416; TRIM Reference: 21416#002#0005

NZHPT Register Number: 1076

Report by Chris Cochran

Final Report August 2012, edited and updated September 2015 by the HDC Environmental Policy Team.

Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory Project



CML BUILDING

OTHER NAMES: Shattky Donaldson and Eagle Building and Minh Ta



Photo: P. Huddleston, 2015

LOCATION:

Street and Number: 116 – 120 Russell Street South, Hastings

Location Information: Corner of Russell Street South and Eastbourne Street

City/ Town: Hastings

Region: Hawke's Bay

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Legal Description: Lot 13 – 14 DP 4052

Certificate of Title (includes registry): CT H3/798, Hawke's Bay Registry

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Architectural Value:

The building is an eclectic and successful blend of styles, combining well with its neighbours. The counterplay of the forms of the building; the turret and wings out on two sides; make an interesting and unusual composition. It has added architectural value as a significant commercial building designed by the well-known practice of Swan and Lavelle.

Historic Value:

Colonial Mutual Limited was a significant Australasian company, with interests in many parts of the world. This building was their Hastings branch for a number of decades from 1939, although when their association ended is not known. This means that the building is representative of the role of Australasian financial service companies in New Zealand's commercial development. In most other respects, the building has had a typical commercial history.

Aesthetic Value:

The former CML building has aesthetic value for its place in the townscape. The tower and turret roof form an exclamation mark at a highly visible intersection at south end of the impressive row of buildings on Russell Street. Decorative motifs of Maori origin are an additional unusual feature.

Social Value:

Modest value only, although to some extent the building has landmark value due to its prominent location on the corner of Russell and Eastbourne Streets as well as the tower. It is likely to be a well-regarded structure in the city-centre. In addition, many local people will have conducted business here.

HISTORY:

This building was constructed for the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society Limited (CML), which was originally established in Melbourne in 1873. Melbourne was a city that had grown prosperous on gold and a series of co-operative organisations, based on mutual benefit, were formed during the second half of the 19th century. By the end of 1874 the company had established offices in the other capital cities of the Australian colonies. CML branches were then established in Fiji (1876), South Africa (1883) and New Zealand (1884). In 1886, CML entered the British market.

CML opened branches in many New Zealand cities and towns, often designed in the house style, which drew on the Spanish Mission style. It was not until 1938 that CML bought the building. It is not known when the Hastings office opened but this building was constructed for CML in 1939 to a design by the noted Wellington architectural practice, Swan and Lavelle.

CML was a consistent performer, remaining intact through several depressions and it outlasted many other competitors. In 1996, it was demutualised and listed on the Stock Exchange the following year. It merged with the Commonwealth Bank in 2000 and the name CML largely disappeared from the commercial scene.

CML sold their Hastings office to Pamela Stewart of Melbourne in 1979.¹ She was described as a secretary and remains the owner of the building. Nothing is presently known of her. The building is currently owned by Napier Optical Ltd.

The building has been occupied by a variety of businesses over the years, although street directories are not entirely clear in this regard. In more recent years, principal tenants have included fashion shop Minh Ta, optometrists Shattky Donaldson and Eagle (now Visique Shattky on Russell) and Baldwin's Jewellers.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Architect: Swan and Lavelle

Builder: H.W. Abbott

Construction details: In-situ reinforced concrete building, plastered; steel-framed windows; tiled turret roof.

Description: The former CML building is a two-storey structure, distinguished by an octagonal corner turret with flanking wings extending north along Russell Street and east along Eastbourne Street. The turret has a column at each corner. The columns extend beyond a parapet to give a stepped profile. A tiled roof of near-conical shape rises from within the parapet, and is capped with a flagpole. The two wings of the building are quite plain, but are discreetly trimmed with a moulded sill under the windows and a band of fluting and zigzag patterning at the top of the parapet; an enlarged version of the zigzags (slightly reminiscent of tukutuku weaving patterns) ornaments the top of the parapet of the tower. A Maori theme is also discernible in stylised koru and lattice designs worked in panels on the Eastbourne Street side of the building. The style is hence of mix of stripped Classical (in the columns and plain wall surfaces), Spanish Mission (in the turret roof and clay tiles), and art deco (in the geometric patterning, some of which borrows from Maori tradition).

A verandah extends along the Russell Street façade and a short distance around the corner. It has a new wide fascia, but the underside of the verandah is lined with what appears to be the original sheet material with half-round battening. Steel windows are still in place, and there is a terrazzo shop front with chromed window frames, again presumed to be original.

Although modern signage has altered the main elevations and the original coloured plaster finish (with racked joints in imitation of stonework) has been lost to modern paint coatings, it is otherwise in reasonably authentic condition, maintaining exactly its original form.

ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

Element	Significance
Form (tower and two flanking wings)	Architectural, technical and townscape importance

¹ Ibid.

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Maori decorative detailing	Architectural and cultural importance
Concrete construction (survived earthquake)	Technical importance

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:

New Zealand Historic Places Trust File 'CML Building', 12009-360

OTHER INFORMATION:

NZHPT Registration Number: This building is a Category II historic place (Number 1076).

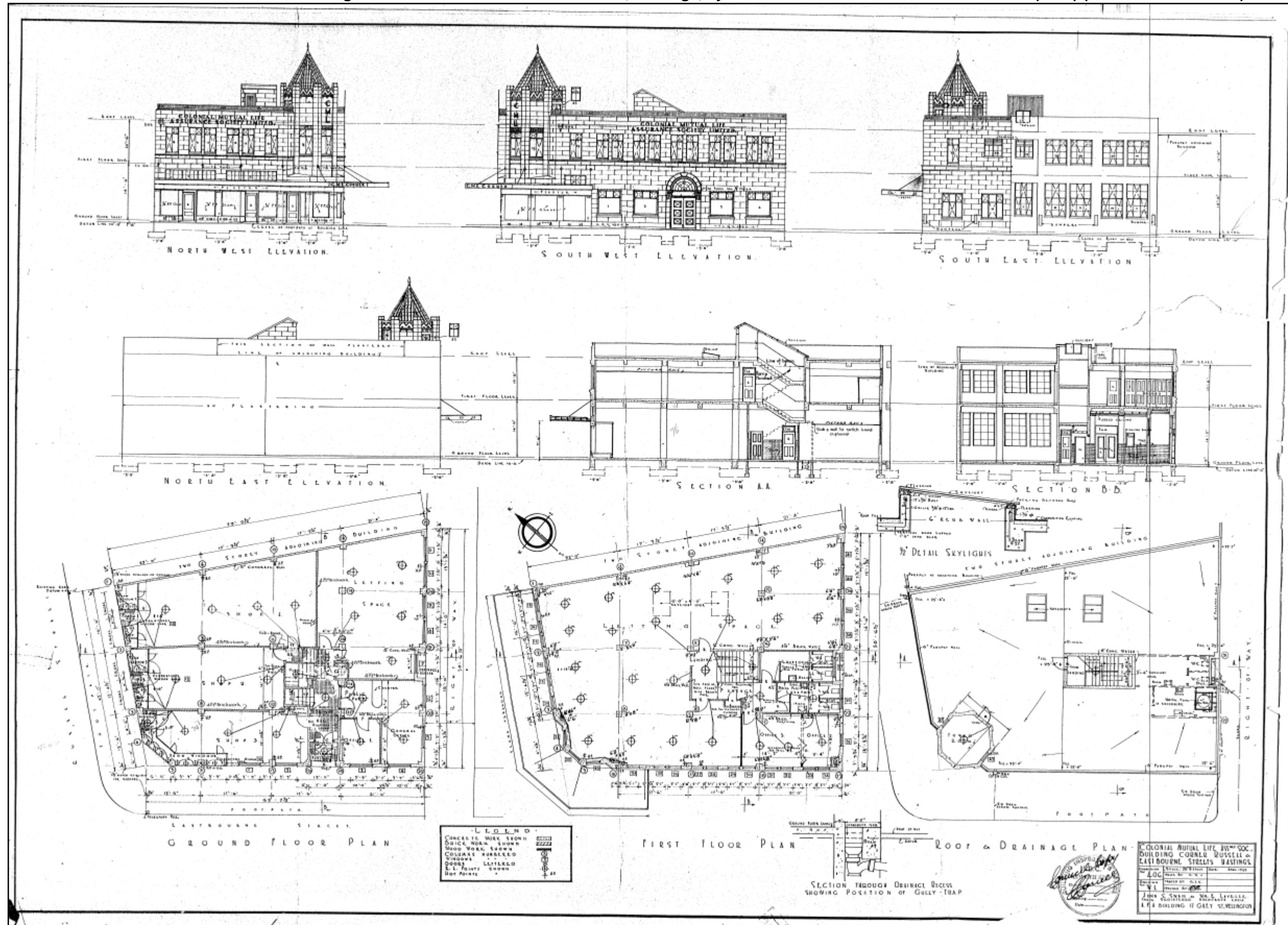
District Plan Listing: Listed as a Category II Historic Place (HB 39 Proposed Hastings District Plan, 2015) and is located within the Russell Street Historic Area (buildings located along the south-eastern side of Russell Street, from Eastbourne Street to Queen Street)² and the Central Character Precinct.

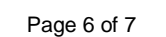
New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993: This site has been identified as a potential archaeological site under Section 2 of the New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993.

² Refer to Section 12.5 of the Operative Hastings District Plan

ARCHIVE PLAN(S):

Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Building Corner Russell & Eastbourne Streets, Hastings, by John S Swan & W.M. E Lavelle Architects (1939) (TRIM Ref: 21416#010)





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