

Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory Project



HAWKE'S BAY ELECTRIC POWER BOARD BUILDING

OTHER NAMES: Miracle Centre



LOCATION:

Street and Number: 305 Heretaunga Street East

City / Town: Hastings

Region: Hawke's Bay

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Legal Description: Lot 1 DP 23344

Certificate of Title: HBP4/1191

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Architectural Value:

The Hawke's Bay Electric Power Board Building has architectural value for the distinctive geometric composition of the main façade, and while it features the Art Deco motifs of the tall flutes, it is otherwise undecorated, and almost modernist in its simplicity. It is the work of an important local firm of architects.

Historic Value:

The building is part of the history of the Hawke's Bay Electric Power Board, and represents the shifting of its head office from Napier to Hastings.

Aesthetic Value:

The building is important in the townscape, being part of a group of period buildings (on both sides of the street) that are visually compatible. Its modern neighbour to the west does not detract from its setting, while the Municipal Buildings to the south is an important neighbour. The whole of this block of Heretaunga Street East is important in establishing the architectural character of the Hastings CBD.

HISTORY:

In 1935 the Hawke's Bay Electric Power Board purchased the electrical undertaking by the Hastings Borough Council.¹ At this time they rented a shop in the Municipal Chambers for use as a branch office.² In 1936 the Board purchased the section in Heretaunga Street where the Salvation Army/Protestant Hall stood.³ The hall was subsequently moved to the corner of Lyndon Road and Warren Street, where it remained, used by the Old Folks Association until 1971 when it was demolished.⁴ The Miracle Centre building was built in 1938 according to the design of Davies and Phillips, as a site for the head office of the Hawke's Bay Power Board, which was to be relocated from Napier to Hastings.⁵ The site was considered to be most suitable as the existing power house was located adjacent to the rear of the section.⁶ The first board meeting in its new premises took place in 1938.⁷

It appears that the Power Board (later called the Hawke's Bay Power Distribution Limited) continued to occupy the building until around 1994, when it was sold and the Hastings and Districts Credit Union took over occupancy. This continued until 2003, when consent was granted to alter the use of the building from bank to church (the Miracle Centre). The Miracle Centre still occupies the building and it is owned by the Hastings Assembly of God Trust Board.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Architect: Davies and Phillips

Builder: Not presently known

¹ Orr, R. *A history of the Hawke's Bay electric power board*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Fowler, M 2007 *From disaster to recovery: the Hastings CBD 1931-35*, Michael Fowler Publishing Limited, Havelock North p. 191.

⁵ Fowler, M 2007 *From disaster to recovery: the Hastings CBD 1931-35*, Michael Fowler Publishing Limited, Havelock North p. 195.

⁶ Orr, R. *A history of the Hawke's Bay electric power board*

Date of construction: 1936

Construction details: Reinforced concrete.

Description: The Hawke's Bay Electric Power Board Building is a two storey building, relatively wide in comparison with nearby commercial buildings, and of unusual design; it is a plain geometric composition, the main element being a band of windows that runs within a rectangular frame, underlined by strong horizontal fluting. At each end, two vertical Art Deco motifs break through the frame, making a nice play of vertical elements against the strong horizontality of the windows. The surrounding wall surface appears to be of tiles, now painted.

The ground floor door and window joinery has been replaced in aluminium, but in other respects the building appears to be relatively unaltered. The absence of the architectural drawings means that the original architectural and engineering design is not known, as it is for many buildings in the city of this period.

ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

Element	Significance
The whole of the main façade, above verandah level.	Architectural, aesthetic values.
Tiles of the main façade (if indeed the façade is tiled)	Technical, aesthetic values.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:

Fowler, M 2007 *From disaster to recovery: the Hastings CBD 1931-35*, Michael Fowler Publishing Limited, Havelock North p. 195.

Orr, R. *A History of the Hawke's Bay Electric Power Board*

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

NZHPT Register: Not registered.

District Plan: The building is not specifically listed as a Heritage item in the Hastings District Plan, but is located within the Central Character Precinct.

New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993: This site has not been identified as a potential archaeological site under Section 2 of the New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993.

ARCHIVE PLAN(S):

Hastings District Council does not hold the original plans for this building.