Custom House Hotel, 1904

252 HAVEN ROAD, NELSON



Conservation Plan

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Document history

Date	Version	Changes
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25-2-26		Updated s6.4

Front cover image: The Custom House Hotel soon after its completion, early 1900s. (Tasman Libraries)

Back cover image:

Executive summary

The former Custom House Hotel, constructed in 1904, is a place of high heritage significance. It is historically significant as a rare example of an Edwardian hotel still standing in Nelson, and further as the last survivor of the five hotels that once served the port area. It is an important local landmark, as it has been since it was built, and is part of a collection of historic buildings and houses that are reminders of the way the port and its surroundings functioned before major land reclamation. It no longer functions as a hotel but retains a high level of social significance associated with this very longstanding use. Despite some significant changes made to its appearance in the 20th century, which removed most of its external ornamentation and detail, the building remains recognisable as an Edwardian hotel, and it has aesthetic significance associated with its form, underlying architecture, and the surviving elements of its formerly ornate decoration that reflect its era and purpose.

After a continuous history of hotel and hospitality use extending over nearly 120 years, the building was acquired by the Nelson City Council in 2024. It was one of a series of strategic acquisitions made with the long term goal of activating the portside area of Haven Road for public use. The council has owned the underlying land, a substantial parcel between the road and the port, since 2012. The future use of the place will be driven by a commercial decision by the NCC within the context of use of the wider Haven Road area.

Any new use is likely to require upgrading work for structural performance, fire safety, accessibility and the like. The building also requires an amount of remedial work, which offers the opportunity to make (positive) changes to its appearance. This *Conservation Plan* therefore recommends that a prioritised programme of repair and remedial work be carried out, either step-by-step or as part of a major project, to return the building to its appearance as it was in the c. 1940s, and also to reinstate as far as possible (or otherwise delineate) the original plan layout of the ground floor.

The building's setting has changed dramatically over time, from a small-scale portiside commercial, industrial and residential area until the 1950s, to being entirely dominated by the port reclamation and the major structures on it, along with the construction of large-scale apartment buildings. A few early buildings still survive to illustrate the early context of the Custom House Hotel, including the nearby Anchor Foundry building, and a number of 19th century houses. The NCC has proposed a further change to the building's immediate setting, which is the demolition of the adjoining 250 Haven Road. That building contains the remnants of a cast-iron bonded store built in 1887, key elements of which are to be salvaged for potential reuse in the Haven Road area. The demolition will also involve clearing the eastern courtyard of the hotel, which will reveal the east elevation of the building fully to view and so have a modest positive impact on its heritage values.

The main recommendations made in this *Conservation Plan* focus on the long-term care and preservation of the building, and include:

- Carry out further research on the history of the place, including the early reclamation and previous Custom House Hotel.
- Liaise with iwi for a mana whenua history of the land.
- Prepare and implement a detailed maintenance plan for the building.

- Plan repair, upgrading and reinstatement work to return the external appearance of the building to its state in the early 1950s, along with the internal layout at the ground floor.
- Commission a Detailed Seismic Assessment (DSA) from a structural engineer specialising in sensitive interventions to heritage buildings. Consider options for limiting damage in the event of a serious earthquake.
- Install and automatic fire sprinkler system and other fire safety precautions to minimise the risk of serious damage or loss in the event of a fire.
- Prepare a comprehensive *Disaster Risk Management* plan for the whole place.
- Take any opportunities that arise to reduce energy use of the building as far as possible, and consider actions that can be taken to enhance the resilience of the building.
- Work with mana whenua to help tell the cultural history of the place in tandem with any development of the site or building.
- Review this *Conservation Plan* and all associated documents after 10 years, or more frequently if needed to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

1.0 Introduction

1.1. Commission and authors

This *Conservation Plan* was commissioned by Tess Harvey, Property Services Asset Planner, on behalf of the Nelson City Council (NCC). It fulfils part of the brief given for conservation and heritage advice for the Custom House at 252 Haven Road and the adjoining building at 250 Haven Road, the latter scheduled by the NCC for demolition.

The report is the joint work of Russell Murray, conservation architect, and Michael Kelly, Heritage Consultant, and draws on protocols for conservation planning developed by Cochran & Murray Conservation Architects and Michael Kelly over several decades of practice.

1.2. Purpose and structure of the plan

The purpose of this *Conservation Plan* is to help manage the future care and conservation of the former Custom House Hotel, 252 Haven Road, Nelson, built in 1904. The *Plan* sets out the history of the building, describes the place and its contents, assesses its heritage values, and sets out conservation policies and recommendations – including a spectrum of options for restoration – to help preserve those values for the benefit of current and future generations.

The *Plan* broadly follows the standard Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT) format for conservation plans (see *Guidelines for Preparing Conservation Plans*, NZHPT, 2000). Conservation standards are those set out in the *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value.*[1] The building's heritage values are assessed for the purpose of this *Plan* using the standard HNZPT criteria.

In addition, to maintain best practice in conservation planning and to respond to the potential threats to the heritage values of the place that are posed by disastrous events, this document incorporates a disaster risk management plan (DRM) approach into the conservation planning. This means this document can also be regarded as the nucleus of a DRM plan.

1.3. Site visit

Two site visits have been made to the Custom House Hotel, the first in January 2025 by Russell Murray with Tess Harvey, to view the interior of the building preparatory to preparing a brief heritage assessment (not ultimately commissioned), and the second on 11 February 26 by Russell Murray and Michael Kelly to view 250 Haven Road and re-visit the Custom House Hotel, to inform the preparation of this *Plan*.

The two buildings were inspected and photographed for the purposes of the reports required and observations on conservation requirements were discussed. No invasive investigation was carried out, the site visit being limited to only what could be seen from safe vantage points.

[1] Also known as *Te Pumanawa o ICOMOS o Aotearoa Hei Tiaki I Nga Taonga Whenua Heke Iho o Nehe*, published 2010 (*ICOMOS* stands for the International Committee on Monuments and Sites.) The full text of the Charter is available online at www.icomos.org.nz

1.4. Location, ownership and heritage status



General location, with the port entrance through the Cut between the Boulder Bank and Haulashore Island to the left. Image from Top of the South Maps, 2026



Location of the building in relation to the Port area. No. 250 is immediately to the right of the Custom House Hotel. Image from Top of the South Maps, 2026

Location

The former Custom House Hotel stands near the harbour on Haven Road, on the southern side of the modern Port of Nelson, on the former Green Point. The street address is 252 Haven Road, Stepneyville, Nelson. The building was originally sited on the waterfront, behind a strip of railway land, but land reclamation for port activities over time has left it surrounded by land.

Ownership

The site is surrounded by port land or former port land on three sides. The land and building are currently owned by the NCC. The legal description of the property is Lot 2 DP 7110 and Lot 1 DP 5245 (this is the small parcel at the north-east corner of the site, the provenance of which is not currently known), which combine to a total area of 440m^2. The land is zoned 'Industrial' in the current Nelson Resource Management Plan (NRMP), as is the adjoining port land.

Heritage status

The building is listed Category 2 listing on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangi Kōrero, which recognises it as a place of cultural heritage significance (and as having local and regional importance). It is scheduled on the NRMP as the Custom House Hotel, group A, which is the highest level of heritage recognition in the Plan. The implications of these listings are discussed in section 6.

1.5. Related documents

See also *250 Haven Road, 1887, Heritage Assessment and Review of Fabric*, 2026, report prepared for the NCC by R&D Architects Ltd. with Michael Kelly Heritage Consultant, and *252 Haven Road, 1904, former Custom House Hotel, Outline Heritage Advice, Removals and Repairs*, 2026, report prepared for the NCC by R&D Architects Ltd..

1.6. Limitations

Time and budgetary constraints have limited the amount of historical research that has been able to be carried out. This *Conservation Plan* focusses closely on the history of the 1904 building, and does not deal with its precursor (c. 1865) and the early European history of the place. Similarly, there has been no engagement with iwi and the mana whenua history of the place has not been explored. Accordingly, the *Plan* includes recommendations for further work to be done.

1.7. Updating this plan

This *Conservation Plan* should be regarded as a dynamic document and updated as often as is necessary (and at no more than 10-yearly intervals), at the discretion of the NCC. It should be updated when new information comes to hand, after major work is carried out, or following a disastrous event, or as soon as any significant part of the plan becomes out of date (e.g. changing regulatory or statutory requirements that could affect the use of the place). It should only be updated with the assistance of conservation specialists who have the requisite skills or knowledge to do such work.

1.8. Acknowledgements

Particular acknowledgement is due to:

Genevieve Morrissey, NCC archivist, who located information with council records that has been invaluable to the preparation of this document.

Karina Tomlin, NCC, who facilitated the site visit.

2.0 History

2.1. The Custom House Hotel

Nelson's port was established with the settlement in 1841. It was located in what was known as the Haven, that area protected from the Tasman Sea by the Boulder Bank, a singular 13.4-kilometre natural rocky structure that terminates at Haulashore Island. The sheltered space – the harbour, shallows and mudflats – is known by Māori as Paroroa or Parurōroa (long food basket).

The port was a short distance from the heart of Nelson settlement, which gathered around the banks of the Maitai awa, and was hugely significant to its fortunes. The settlement depended on the ships (and boats) that plied their trade both internationally and around New Zealand's coastline, particularly in and around Cook Strait. The port developed quickly, with infrastructure such as jetties and wharves augmented by stores, maritime industries, shops and residences.

The earliest hotel at the port was probably the Wakefield Arms, which was built on Wakefield Quay in 1842. Another early hotel was the Sutherland Arms (1843), to the east, at Auckland Point. Other early hotels built on or near the port included the Albion Hotel (1859), Pier Hotel (1859), Ship Hotel (1866), Haven Inn (1854), Shipwright's Arms (1860) and London Tavern (1857).[2] Other hotels were built on the eastern portion of Haven Road, closer to town but still next to the water. In Nelson's formative years, hotels came and went or changed names, but generally speaking, the town supported a lot of hotels.

For travellers arriving in Nelson, the presence of hotels at the port gave them immediate access to accommodation without having to travel into town. For port workers and local residents, the hotels were places to have a drink and socialise. Despite the vibrant scene, it was a lack of suitable accommodation for families that publican John Hitchcock stated was his primary motivation in leasing land from the provincial government to build a new hotel, which he named the Custom House Hotel for its proximity to the Custom House on Wakefield Quay. He told a hearing of the annual Justices of Peace Licensing Court (Nelson Province) that he also hoped to pick up business from 'travellers by the many steam vessels now periodically visiting Nelson.'[3] The court approved his license, although Hitchcock was not the licensee by the time the hotel opened.

The site chosen was, as noted, near the Custom House, on what was known as Green Point. It was located on a reclamation built by the government that was later expanded and designated a railway reserve. The site was very close to the sea and the location of two berths for vessels, held by lime trader James Lukins.[4] At some point after the railway reclamation, a stone wall was built as a revetment protecting the sea edge. The Custom House Hotel opened in August 1865. It featured a large open verandah at the first floor, facing the port.

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[2] See Smith, Dawn 1987, '19th Century Nelson Hotels', Journal of the Nelson and Marlborough Historical Societies, Volume 2, Issue 1, 1987 pp.1-2

[3] *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, 20 April 1865, p.2

[4] Slack, Stuart, 'James Lukins And The Lime-kiln On Haven Road', *Nelson Historical Society Journal*, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2009, p.53



The original Custom House Hotel, date unknown (Nelson Museum, 76905)

It operated continuously for nearly 40 years, with regular changes of licensee, particularly in its early years. Apart from offering accommodation and selling liquor, the hotel was used for hearings, such as coroner inquests, club meetings, formal dinners and the like. As was not uncommon at the time, some of the hotel's publicans were women. The hotel's condition declined towards the end of the 19th century, to the point where its replacement was mooted.

In 1903, fire engulfed the hotel and spread on the wind to the Union Steamship Company's office nearby. The fire is thought to have started in the hotel kitchen.[5] There was no loss of life but the publican, Frank Dakin, and his family, lost all their possessions. Buildings on the other side of the street were scorched by the flames, but somehow the immediately adjacent Sclander and Co.'s bonded warehouse, largely built of galvanised iron, survived, although it was 'badly damaged'.[6]

In the wake of the fire, the owners of the building, Nelson brewers Dodson and Son got to work and planned a new hotel. Dodson and Son, begun in 1854 by Joseph Dodson, the first Mayor of Nelson (1874), was a long-standing and successful Nelson brewery and hospitality business. It was a family affair and closely associated with the Dodson and Duncan families. It operated until 1969, when the business was bought out by Dominion Breweries.[7]

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[5] *Nelson Evening Mail*, 26 November 1903, p.2

[6] Ibid.

[7] For more on Dodson and Co. see 'The story of the Duncans and the Founders Brewery', https://www.theprow.org.nz/enterprise/nelson-brewing-family/ [retrieved 8 February 2026]



The replacement Custom House Hotel, soon after its completion (Tasman Libraries)



A detail of an image showing the crowd farewelling 12 Reinforcement troops leaving for Europe in 1916, showing the north elevation and the adjacent Sclander & Co.'s iron store. (1/2-025764, ATL)

It's not clear when the company began owning hotels, but it seems to have acquired the Custom House Hotel in the mid-1890s and owned it for a number of decades.

Dodson and Co. was at that point managed by Henry Duncan, grandson of Joseph Dodson. It was Duncan who organised the hotel's rebuilding. He hired Leaper Bros. to design and build the hotel. Henry Leaper was the architect, probably self-taught, and Charles and Alfred managed the construction work.[8] Leaper Bros. formed a close association with Dodson and Son. The decorative work was done by Savage and Sons. Contemporary accounts also provide the name of the plumber, Harold McArtney and the bricklayer, W.H. Grimmitt.[9] This exact combination of tradesmen built another hotel (the Rising Sun) for Dobson and Son in 1910.[10] The new hotel opened with much fanfare and celebration on 9 June 1904.

There were several notable features of the hotel, most particularly the provision of electric light throughout, courtesy of a four and a half horse-power gas engine.[11] In the early 20th century, before widespread generation and comprehensive reticulation, electricity was still a novelty in and the hotel's illumination was something of a public attraction when it opened. The work of Cameron Bros. of Wellington, it featured a marble switchboard made by J. Kirkwood of Cameron Bros. (Cameron Bros. leveraged the interest in the hotel by making Kirkwood available to prospective customers in Nelson after the hotel opened).[12]

Also lauded was the internal decorative work, which included fine timber panelling in the hallways, tinted wallpapers with 'artistic friezes' and heavy, papier mâché cornices. It was observed that, had gas light been used, all the decorative work would have been compromised, by the heat, soot and moisture from the gas. Noteworthy too was the elaborate main façade, which faced west over the port, not the main road, and featured a cantilevered balcony 'supported by joists extending eight feet into the main building and bolted to the floor joists', with additional support provided by angle brackets.[13] [See full contemporary description of building below.] The building had, in fact, three main façades – one to the road (facing south and the least important of the three), and two to the port, to the west – with a cantilevered balcony the length of the building, and the north, featuring recessed verandah at the first floor.

The hotel was heavily promoted after it opened. In 1906, presumably buoyed by the patronage, Dakin announced he was adding another story – and 20 rooms – to the hotel.[14] This would have needed the support of Dodson and Son, but in any case, nothing came of it and Dakin left the hotel in 1907. The new publican was Donald Wells, who held the licence until 1911.

The land occupied by the hotel was transferred to the Nelson Harbour Board in 1920. It's not clear how the leases were arranged prior to this, but there is a reference to a 10-year renewal of the lease to Dodson and Son in 1925.[15]

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[8] *Nelson Evening Mail*, 31 May 1940, p.4

[9] *Colonist*, 6 June 1904, p.1 (supplement)

[10] *Colonist*, 24 August 1910, p.5 (supplement)

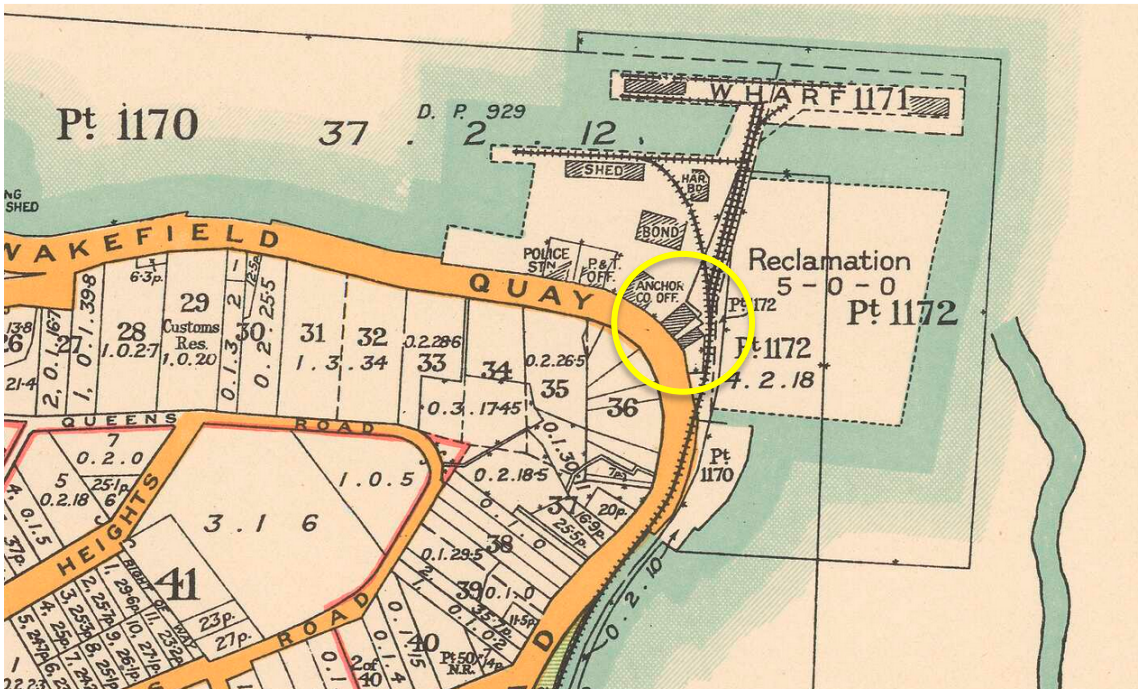
[11] *Colonist*, 6 June 1904, p.1 (supplement)

[12] *Nelson Evening Mail*, 10 June 1904, p.3

[13] Ibid.

[14] *Colonist*, 23 August 1906, p.2

[15] *Nelson Evening Mail*, 4 December 1924, p.2



Plan of Wakefield Quay and surrounding areas, with the railway and reclamation prominent near the hotel, 1931. (Plan of city of Nelson, ATL)

In the 1920s the setting of the hotel began to change. From 1927, a 20-acre reclamation, to be used to house oil tanks, began to encompass Green Point and pushed the water's edge some distance away from the hotel. The reclamation took some time to take shape, but, with extensions, it eventually filled the entire length of the estuary alongside Haven Road, utterly changing the setting and outlook of the area.

There is no known record of the hotel being altered prior to 1950, although it was almost certainly changed in a variety of ways. The changes evident in the building today, by comparison with what was there in 1904, really began in earnest in the post-World War II period. By this time, Dodson and Son had transferred the building to Nelson Hotels Ltd.. A series of changes over several decades took the bar a long way from its origins.

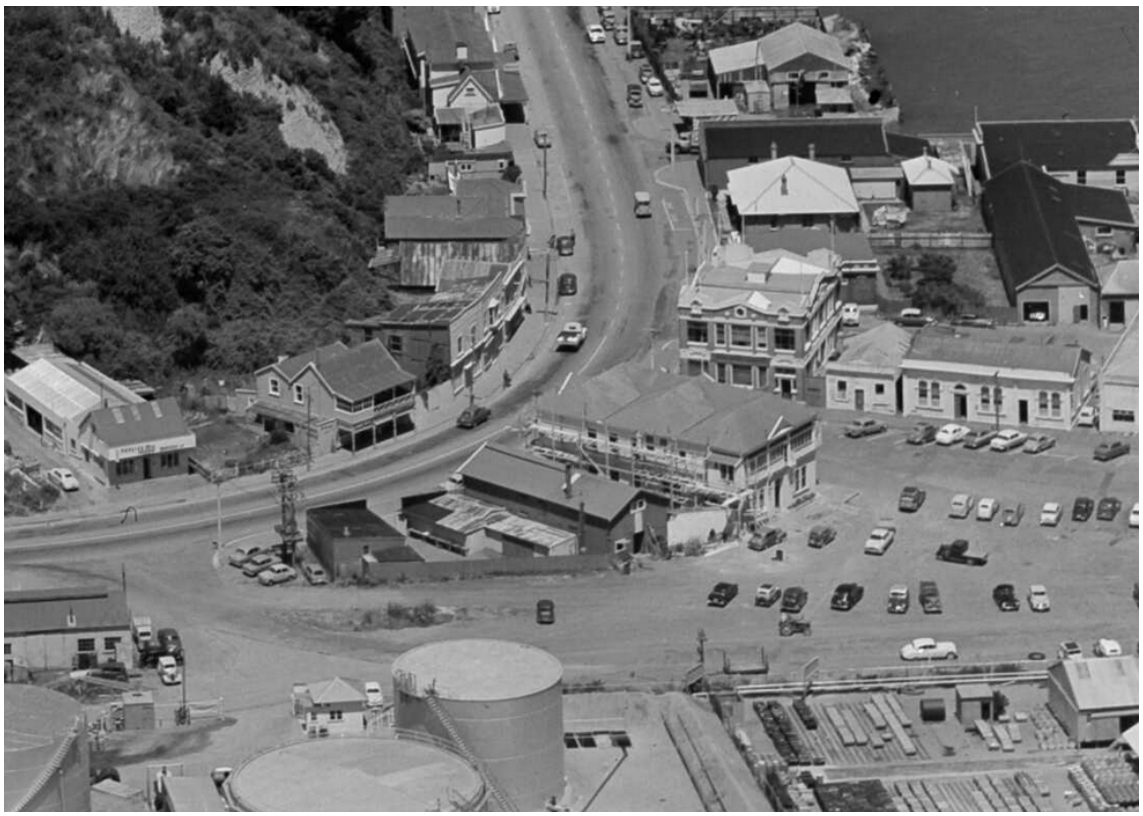
The ground floor was altered in late 1950 or early 1951 to expand the bar. The wall between the original bar space and main corridor was removed, replaced by a beam, the south entry doors were moved into a sheltered porch recessed into the floor plan, and new walls were inserted to form a private bar, office, and narrow passage through to the main corridor. The bar was expanded to two horseshoe bars, with one extending into the private bar (this was accessed from the west entrance). On the east side of the entrance, what had a been a sitting room (a private bar, originally the 'commercial room') was converted into a store. A new sitting room was formed where there had been a store at the north-west end of the ground floor (reinstating the original purpose of that space).[16] The alterations were designed by architect C.R. Duke[17] and the work done by H. Baigent and Sons. Duke signed the application on behalf of Baigent. The application was approved in October 1950, so it's not known if the work was done that year or the next.

[16] Building Permit 8987, 18 October 1950, Nelson City Council Archives (NCCA)

[17] In association with Alex Bowman, as recorded on the drawing on file in BP 8987



Roadworks on Haven Road in 1959, with the hotel in the background and the 1957 concrete store addition prominent to the right. (NCCA)



Enlargement of an aerial image from 1962, showing the hotel with scaffolding built up along the west elevation (WA-55852-G, ATL)

In 1957, architect Alex Bowman designed extensive changes to the building for Nelson Hotels Ltd.. He described the changes in the specification for the work.

> The replacement of the existing store; the construction of Men's conveniences in the store off Public Bar; the construction of Staff lavatory, laundry and kitchen store in existing store; the construction of men's and women's conveniences in area occupied by men's and staff lavatories; the reconstruction of a store under the staircase; the removal of two chimneys including all the repairing necessary to walls, floors, ceilings, roofs etc.[18]

The two chimneys removed were those in the kitchen and the dining room and former commercial room. There was a host of other smaller changes. The plans prepared for this work also show, for the first time, the store constructed in the gap between the hotel and the foundry (former bonded store) at 250 Haven Road. The plan of the existing bar differs from the 1950 drawing, indicating that the earlier twin horseshoe design for this was modified, possibly during construction.

It was stipulated that the contractor (Murphy Construction Ltd) had to 'carry the work in such a manner that the hotel is able to continue its function without interruption…'.[19] The estimated cost of the work was £1,710.

In 1963, Nelson Hotels Ltd removed the east wall of the main passage and replaced it with a beam, removed the partition for the store on the east side of the ground floor and built a new partition, halving the size of the dining room, and significantly expanding the size of the bar area. This largely opened up the south end of the ground floor into a contiguous space. The architect was Alex Bowman and the builder was T. Hughes Ltd. The estimated cost was £200.[20]

Nearly a decade later, in 1966, Nelson Hotels Ltd made more changes to the building, with Alex Bowman again the architect. This time he designed changes to the first floor – forming a toilet at the south end and, in the adjoining room, remove an earlier partition to make a guest lounge. At the ground floor, the 1950 main bar was reduced in size by removing one of the counters, opening up more floor space for patrons. In the north-west corner of the building, the dividing wall and the chimney between the lounge bar and sitting room was removed (the last of the building's three chimneys to go), greatly expanding the lounge bar area. A new external door was added on the west elevation to provide a separate entrance, and a new bar counter was installed. A door was also opened from the new bar through into the main corridor. The cost of the work was £300 and the builder was M.L. Oronge.[21] Little of this work is evident today. The drawing identifies an outbuilding, of unknown purpose and provenance, at the north-east corner of the site.

In 1971, a glazed smoke stop screen was designed and erected at the top of the stairs by builders H. Baigent and Son for Nelson Hotels Ltd.. The work was estimated to cost $400.[22] In 1972, general repairs were made to the roof, again by H. Baigent and Sons.[23] By this time, DB

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[18] Building Permit 3371, 9 July 1957, NCCA

[19] Ibid.

[20] Building Permit A09608, 3 October 1963. NCCA

[21] Building Permit B058966, 26 January 1966, NCAA

[22] Building Permit C030981, 7 October 1971, NCAA

[23] Building Permit D011939, 25 January 1972, NCAA

Breweries had taken over ownership of the hotel as part of an ongoing expansion through acquisition of smaller breweries. That same year, modifications were made to the men's and women's showers on the first floor, east side, just inside the doors built the previous year. The work was designed by JASMAD and undertaken by C.L Carpenter, at an estimated cost of $800.[24]

In 1981, a stand-alone garage on the north-east corner of the building was demolished and replaced by a new garage/store of concrete block construction. The work was designed by Graham Smith Architects and the owner was listed as MacDonald Barnett of Auckland. The construction drawing identifies 'existing sheds to be removed', although the shape of these differs from the structure shown on the 1966 drawing. The builder was M.B. Spicer and the estimated cost was $5,800.[25]

In 1986, a tank (keg) room was constructed – this is presumed to be the current coolroom structure behind the public bar. The listed owner was F. Fitzpatrick of Best and West Ltd.. The value of the work was $5,800.[26] The plan shows three outbuildings on the east side of the hotel, including the store on Haven Road and the 1981 garage, and the outline of an unidentified third structure between them. A letter in the permit file from Graham Smith Architects records an application for 'town planning approval to demolish existing store and rebuild in permanent materials a new store/laundry/flagon wash'.

By 1999, when the Nelson City Council wrote to remind the owner of his obligations under fire safety regulations, the owner was D. Fitzpatrick. In 2002, with fire safety matters still not resolved, the ground floor of the hotel was again revamped, by the Adama Trust (Zviki Eshet). The application stated:

> The refurbishment involves the removal of the toilet complex fronting Haven Road to allow natural light from the existing windows into the bar area. The toilets are to be relocated in a revised configuration at the rear of the building. The refurbished toilet configurations will provide accessible facilities. The refurbishment also includes the removal of the existing bars and the internal chiller. The bar will be replaced by a single bar providing continuity between the front and rear of the building. The proposal is primarily to provide additional natural lighting and improve continuity within the bar area. The ground floor and first floor uses remain the same.[27]

This description appears to largely match the current arrangement of the ground floor plan, although it is not clear from the drawings whether the chiller was replaced or simply modified. The plan records the cellar in the south-west corner as a 'tank room'.

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[24] Building Permit E51559, 24 October 1972, NCAA

[25] Building Permit D027513, 22 October 1986, NCAA

[26] Ibid.

[27] Building Consent 020994, 17 December 2002, NCCA



The hotel in 2003(NCCA)



The interior of the main bar, taken in 2003 (NCCA).

By the early 2000s, the hotel was known as the Portside Hotel. In 2005, by which time the hotel was listed as a heritage building by the NCC, approval was given to the applicant, Raffaele Miccio, to replace a window with French doors on the mid-point of the east elevation. The explanation given was as follows:

> The proposed doors will not fit within the existing window opening and some loss of the old fabric of the building will result from their installation, namely the window frame and a small portion of the wall. However, the new doors will not be visible from the street, and are not unsympathetic to the style of the building.[28]

In early 2006, the hotel was sold to Lynn Hamilton and Jill Williams who turned it into a strip club, while retaining the accommodation upstairs. They wanted to establish three separate bars and introduce stripper poles to add to the experience. The local community was unhappy about the change of use and brought a petition to the NCC. The council made it clear that as long as the premises conformed to local planning rules, the strip club could stay. However, the owners soon got behind in their rent and by mid-2006, the hotel changed hands again.[29]

The new management was Mike and Bernie Oxnam and Roberta Taylor and they renamed the hotel the Haven Road Hotel. They were seeking a more family friendly patronage.[30]

In 2012, with a long-term view of amenity opportunities in the port area, Nelson City Council finalised an arrangement with the Port of Nelson to purchase the hotel site and the adjacent 250 Haven Road and other land from the company in exchange for land on Wildman Avenue. The negotiations, which also required public input, took two years to complete.

At some point, the building reverted to its original name. In 2017, the building was assessed as not being earthquake prone. Recent occupants of the hotel are not known. It closed, for the meantime, in 2019. The building was acquired by the NCC in 2024.

There are many changes to the building that are not covered by known building permits or consents. The most obvious of these is the application of stucco to the exterior of the building. What is known is that it was not done before 1959 (an image of the hotel taken that year shows the weatherboards still uncovered).[31] The dates of the infill of the rear verandah and the construction of a cantilevered room on the north-east corner (first floor) are not known. Both were in place by 1956, and so pre-date the change of cladding.[32] Similarly, the dates for the aluminium insert windows (c. late 1970s or early 1980s, and possibly early 2000s) and the changes to the hallways that saw the removal of the original timber panelling (1950s?) are not known.

The full story of the infill of the east yard between the hotel and 252 Haven Road, and subsequent changes to these structures, is not understood. No records have been located in

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[28] Notice of Decision under the Resource Management Act, Resource Consent Number: RM045683, 11 February 2005, NCCA

[29] *Nelson Mail*, 21 June 2006

[30] Ibid.

[31] Image of Haven Road reconstruction, May 1959, held by NCAA and Port of Nelson docks and industrial area, WA-41163-F, ATL

[32] See image WA-58852-G, ATL

council files that cover this work, aside from the 1957 store and 1981 garage.

Contemporary description of hotel

The following description of the new hotel was published in the *Colonist*, 6 June 1904, p.1 (Supplement), headed 'Improvements at the Port':

> …the old hotel, condemned as it was, is replaced by a fine new building, that for interior comfort and artistic decoration throughout we have not seen surpassed...The building occupies a frontage to Haven road of 41½ feet, and extends back 72 feet, the western side fronting the Railway Wharf approach, while the back is towards the north and the harbor. So situated, the hotel is open practically on all sides, and from upstairs, which is well provided with balconies to the north and west, practically every part of the harbor, with the wharves, is in full view, and also a considerable portion of the town.
>
> There are three entrances. That from the Haven road opens upon the main hall, eight feet wide, which extends the full depth of the building, 72 feet, where swing doors give access to the Railway wharf reclamation. There is also a western entrance, opening to a transverse hall 16 feet long, which joins the main hall. In the angle formed by the two halls, towards the street is the bar, which covers a space of 28 feet by 16 feet, the bar proper standing in the centre, with several small parlors opening therefrom, a measure of privacy being thus obtainable at any time.
>
> On the right of the main entrance is the commercial room, 15½ feet by 12 feet; behind this is the dining-room, 15 1/2 feet by 27 feet; and still further back the kitchen, 15½ feet by 12½ feet. On the left side, beyond the transverse hall, are the club room, 23 feet by 16 feet, and a sitting-room, 16 feet by 11½ feet. At the rear is an asphalted yard, with public and other conveniences fitted up in the most sanitary and permanent manner, and all the necessary accessories for the comfort attached to a modern hotel, in the way of hot water baths, etc. The stairway rises from the main hall, and is divided into two flights emerging upon the upper hall, which also is eight feet wide, and extends the whole length of the building.
>
> On this floor are twelve bedrooms of an average size of 16 feet by 10½ feet, sitting-room, bath room, etc. An overhanging balcony five feet wide extends the whole western length, this being supported by joists extending eight feet into the main building, and bolted to the floor joists, brackets of angle iron also being placed in position for an additional strength. A fine balcony eight feet wide extends the whole northern width, and makes an ideal lounging spot or convalescent retreat, as it lies open to the sun, and from this vantage the work at the wharves, and the coming and going of the vessels is always in view, giving an interest to the onlooker.
>
> We have referred to the decorations as being superior, and inspection will bear out the assertion. Downstairs the walls are covered with tinted papers, with artistic friezes to match, heavy cornices of "Cameroid" (a papier machee material), and the ceilings are covered with the same material. In the halls the dados are of picked rimu, plain and reeded panels alternating. Upstairs the hall is finished in exactly the same style, and the bedrooms are all distempered in pleasing tints, with friezes to match. The ceilings are of matchlining painted.

2.2. Sources

Primary

Newspapers

Colonist, 6 June 1904 (supplement), 23 August 1906, 24 August 1910 (supplement)

Nelson Evening Mail, 26 November 1903, 10 June 1904, 4 December 1924, 31 May 1940

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle, 20 April 1865, p.2

Nelson Mail, 21 June 2006

Nelson City Council Archives

Building permits/building consents/resource consents

Building Permit 9897, 18 October 1950

Building Permit 3371, 9 July 1957, NCCA

Building Permit A09608, 3 October 1963. NCCA

Building Permit B058966, 26 January 1966, NCAA

Building Permit C030981, 7 October 1971, NCAA

Building Permit D011939, 25 January 1972, NCAA

Building Permit E57559, 24 October 1972, NCAA

Building Permit D027513, 22 October 1986, NCAA

Building Permit D027513, 22 October 1986, NCAA

Building Consent 020994, 17 December 2002, NCCA

Notice of Decision under the Resource Management Act, Resource Consent Number: RM045683, 11 February 2005, NCCA

Image of Haven Road reconstruction, May 1959

Images of the hotel, 2003

Secondary

Slack, Stuart, 'James Lukins And The Lime-kiln On Haven Road', *Nelson Historical Society Journal*, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2009, p.53

Smith, Dawn 1987, '19th Century Nelson Hotels', *Journal of the Nelson and Marlborough Historical Societies*, Volume 2, Issue 1, 1987 pp.1-2

'The story of the Duncans and the Founders Brewery', https://www.theprow.org.nz/enterprise/nelson-brewing-family/ [retrieved 8 February 2026]

Other

Image WA-58852-G, Alexander Turnbull Library

3.0 Description

3.1. Setting and site

Setting

The Port of Nelson is situated at the south end of the Nelson Haven. The main shipping entry to the port is through the Cut, a modern man-made channel between the southern end of the Boulder Bank and Haulashore Island; the land used by the port spans from the north end of Wakefield Quay through to the outlet of the Maitai awa at its eastern extremity.

The Custom House Hotel sits at the southern end of the harbour and port, more or less opposite the Cut. When it was built, it was situated on the harbour's edge at Green Point at the northern end of Wakefield Quay. Here, it overlooked the water and was part of a diverse group of buildings that made up a small commercial and industrial centre (including a post office, and the custom house), all backgrounded by the tall and steep coastal escarpment that runs to the south along Wakefield Quay.

Over time, extensive reclamation undertaken on the seaward side for port expansion has isolated it from the water and its maritime outlook and today it is surrounded on three sides by a substantial container wharf and warehousing and other buildings and no longer has a visual connection to the sea. Much of the escarpment is now screened from view by modern buildings along Haven Road, although it still has some presence in the broader landscape.

The building is sited prominently on the bend of Haven Road where it is a distinctive local landmark. It is seen in conjunction with the former Anchor Foundry building at no. 258, as well as the non-descript (but surprisingly interesting) building of no. 250, which serves as something of an architectural foil to the hotel.



Synthetic aerial view, showing the surrounding terrain and port land. Image from Apple Maps, 2026

Site

The site is little larger than the footprint of the building. On the south, the end elevation – and site boundary – is hard to the footpath. On the east, it shares a common boundary with the building at no. 250 Haven Road, and the existing beer garden (including the two modern concrete structures) is built out to meet into that building's external wall. This features remnant cast iron columns, windows and cladding of the 1887 bonded store that first occupied that site. There is a narrow access yard to the north bounded with a modern sheet metal fence that partly screens off the adjacent container stacking area. At the west, the site boundary is hard on the edge of the low timber entry deck beside the open carpark area (this is a separate plot of land also owned by the NCC), delineated with a low post-and-rail fence.

There are no site features of any note or significance. A young but vigorous pohutukawa at the south-west corner partly obscures the building from views from the road, and further immature trees are set in narrow in planters along the north boundary and against the building on that side. The small amount of visible ground surface outside the footprint of the building is all paved in asphalt or concrete.

3.2. Building

Exterior

The distinctive early Edwardian form and architectural ordering of the former Custom House Hotel still remain legible, despite the substantial change of appearance – the textured stucco cladding – made some time after 1959 (a change that was not at all complimentary to its original design). The stucco is likely to have been installed over the original weatherboards, with the original ornate timber detailing shorn off in the process. Some elements of the original timberwork are still visible at the eave line and the minor gables, most prominently on the west elevation.

The building is traditionally divided between hospitality on the ground floor and accommodation on the first floor and this is reflected both in its overall design and its current layout. In form, the building is a simple rectangular box, two-storeys high. On the eastern side, it is flanked with the assortment of single-storey additions that make up the beer garden, filling up the wedge of space to the west wall of no. 250. The roof plan is in the shape of the letter 'E' with hipped roof forms and internal gutters between the bars of the E. Minor gables on the north and south ends denote the three main entry points and a trio of minor gables on the west indicates the front door. There is a cantilevered balcony running along the west elevation at the accommodation level; on the north, the original open verandah has long been enclosed. The roof is clad in corrugated steel, laid at a moderate pitch on all slopes except the balcony, which is in the order of 15°.

The two main elevations are notable for the characteristic Edwardian interplay of the vertical proportions of the door and window joinery set against strong horizontal datum lines, and rhythmic arrangements of openings. The street (south) elevation is symmetrically composed, with a central entrance at the ground floor with a pair of double doors with a segmental-arched head, flanked on either side by paired windows with matching arches, and this pattern is repeated at the first floor with square-headed windows; a richly decorated minor gable on the centre features an unusual combination of dentils and fretwork laid over rusticated weatherboard cladding. The main west elevation originally had comparable patterns of windows flanking the entry doors (although this quality has been undermined with changes to the windows over time,

most prominently on the wall section to the north of the doors). The cantilevered first floor balcony, with x-braced railing, and metal cantilever brackets is a major architectural feature of the original design, as is the decorated eave and the trio of minor gables above (and the flagpole in the central minor gable) that survived the stucco-ing process. The balcony and its roof appear to have been largely reconstructed at some point, as most of the visible framing (and possibly much of the balustrade) is modern. The balcony deck is supported in part on curved steel brackets at each major joist.

The original double-hung timber window joinery seems to have survived (most likely) until the late 1970s or early 1980s. Now, only one pair of the original double-hung windows still remains, at the ground floor, south elevation, on the west side of the entry door. These windows have segmental arched heads. All of the rest of the joinery is modern, predominantly 1980s-era satin-anodised aluminium units that have been inserted into the old timber frames and later units in black powder-coat finish that may date to the early 2000s. The aluminium windows all have square heads, regardless of the openings they are fitted into. There are also some modern timber windows in the lounge area and also a set of glazed timber doors to the beer garden that were installed in 2002.

The pair of timber doors on the south end elevation appears to be the original, although they have been moved from the external wall into the floor plan with the 1950 recessed porch. Two elegant stained-glass fanlights are still extant, one each over the north end door and the west doors, although the latter has been partly covered over. These have starburst motifs in the corners and a border of amber glass.

There are many small-scale modern elements, fixtures and fittings that have accreted on the building, including the west entry deck and porch roof and north entry porch, various fire escapes and ladders on the north, east and south elevations, the small bathroom cantilevered off the north-east corner at the first floor, and the courtyard, beer garden and storage and service areas on the east elevation, along with the typical and entirely ad-hoc accretion of signs, conduit, plumbing pipes, heat pumps and the like.

Interior

Ground floor

Despite the many alterations made over time, something of the original plan layout can still be discerned upon careful inspection. Much of the main hallway is still in place (including the stair), as are the transverse walls of the kitchen and laundry spaces, and bulkheads and beams indicate some of the original wall lines.

The plan was originally organised about two main axes. The principal axis was a wide longitudinal hallway running along the centreline of the building. It opened off the street at the south and ran right through to the railway reserve at the north, with entry points at each end. From the south doors, the hallway opened to a small ‘commercial room’ at the south-east (to be hired for meetings and the like) and the main bar at the south-west corner. On the west side, the main entrance to the hotel opened to a second transverse hall, the same width as the main hall and formed the secondary axis. This separated the public bar from a ‘club room’ and a further private sitting room was situated at the north-west corner. On the east, the main dining room was placed to the north of the commercial room, followed by the kitchen, laundry and

lastly ablutions facilities at the north-east corner. The recessed porch to the laundry and ablutions area is still partly visible, although now built in.

The entry door on the west elevation is now the main access to the hospitality spaces, although it has been moved out to the external wall line (it was formerly recessed within a shallow porch). Its foyer opens to an office space (for the management of the accommodation) and to the lounge at the north and bar at the south, which in turn wraps around to the dining room on the east, all contiguous spaces. There is a small brick cellar under the lounge, accessed through a floor hatch, which has a footprint of about 5m x 5m, and is divided in two by a modern partition running north-south. The dining room lets out to the beer garden and courtyard spaces and also opens to the kitchen.

A modern chiller of PIR panels has been shoehorned into place behind the bar, this and the adjacent bar-wash area occupies a large portion of the former main hallway. There is a void above this (not accessible) that may hold refrigeration equipment. The modern external porch and door on the north end elevation are now the main entry for the first-floor accommodation. The original door opening remains on the hallway axis and the original stained-glass fanlight for the north doors is still in place atop this opening. The primary ablutions facilities are located next to the porch in the north-east corner of the building, where they have been for decades (possibly since the hotel opened).

The entry doors on the south (street) elevation appear to be the original doors. These open to the bar via a shallow recessed porch installed in 1950 (originally, they opened directly to the

The ground floor level today conveys little sense of the original Edwardian character of the building. Exceptions to this including the high ceilings, the staircase and remaining central hallway, the internal doors, some of the trims and the remaining pair of double-hung windows. Otherwise, the interior is wholly dressed in a non-descript and low-key early 2000s pub vogue. Most of the visible finishes and fixtures are modern and there is little old or original fabric on display. However, there could well be material of heritage value concealed behind the modern wall and ceiling linings.

The beer garden – and courtyard – occupying the east yard is built out to the wall of 250 Haven Road. This space is bookended by two modern structures, the concrete store at the south (1957), and a concrete block garage at the north end (1981). The open space between these structures is covered with two separate sunshade roofs, and the external wall of no. 250 forms an intriguing part of the décor here. This is notable for the conspicuous row of rectangular 19th century cast iron columns, windows, and associated corrugated steel cladding. None of the structures in the yard are of any architectural merit or interest.

First floor

The first floor seems to largely follow its original layout, with a broad central hallway running the length of the floor plan, with the accommodation and other rooms opening off to either side, and this level gives a moderate sense of its Edwardian origins, although very little remains of the original finishes or fittings or fixtures. The visible linings (hall ceiling excepted) are all modern plasterboard – this is, as was commonly done, sitting on top of the skirting boards, and appears to be dressed into the door architraves (meaning the door jambs and architraves are as they were originally).

The stair landing is partitioned out of the main hallway with a translucent-glazed smoke-stop screen (1971) and gives access to various service spaces. The rest of the hallway has a largely

authentic appearance featuring a prominent anaglypta-paper ceiling with a floral motif and oak-leaf themed papier-mâché cornice (this may be modern fibrous plaster, since it looks like it might be fixed over the face of the plasterboard), an elegant hall screen with turned spindles and fretwork brackets, a collection of four-panel doors and moulded skirtings and architraves sitting on blocks, all in clear-finished rimu. All the door hardware has been replaced over time.

Aside from the smoke stop partition, the most notable spatial changes at this level are that the open verandah at the north end has been closed in (not dated, but pre-1956) and a small cantilevered shower room has been appended to the north-east corner (also pre-1962). Some of the other spaces have been converted to form ablutions facilities – some of these changes were already in place in 1966, although the facilities have also been altered since.

As they now stand, the rooms are relatively spartan, with battened softboard or hardboard ceilings and plain painted plasterboard walls, each with an aluminium window in the external wall. Access to the west balcony is through the north-west room (the original double-hung windows would have provided casual access and served as fire escapes, but this is not possible with the modern awning windows). Some rooms have timber floors, others are finished with carpet, and some rooms have clear finished old timber trims versus painted in other spaces. Most of the guest rooms are equipped with a handbasin and vanity and there are communal ablutions facilities near the stair at the west of the hall. A single fireplace hearth remains in one room (room 3), with the form of an old chimney breast above it – this may be modern-era framing and has been converted into a bookshelf.

3.3. Current images

The photos on the following pages were taken by the authors in January 2025 and February 2026.



South elevation (and part of east elevation), February 2026.



View from the south-west. The juvenile pohutukawa is dominant. February 2026.



West elevation. The original form of the building is still clearly visible and the later changes to the ground floor window openings stand out. Note the intricate carpentry detail of the eave and minor gable ends. February 2026.



Oblique view of the closed-in north verandah, February 2026.



Main bar area at the south end of the building. The main entrance (west elevation) is to the left with the lounge behind, and the doors to the beer garden (east elevation) are on the right,, January 2025.



Lounge area, looking north. The floor has a pronounced crown. February 2026.



View through the dining area to the kitchen, modern French doors to the beer garden at the back right, February 2026.



Inside the bar, looking south to the remaining pair of original double-hung windows, February 2026.



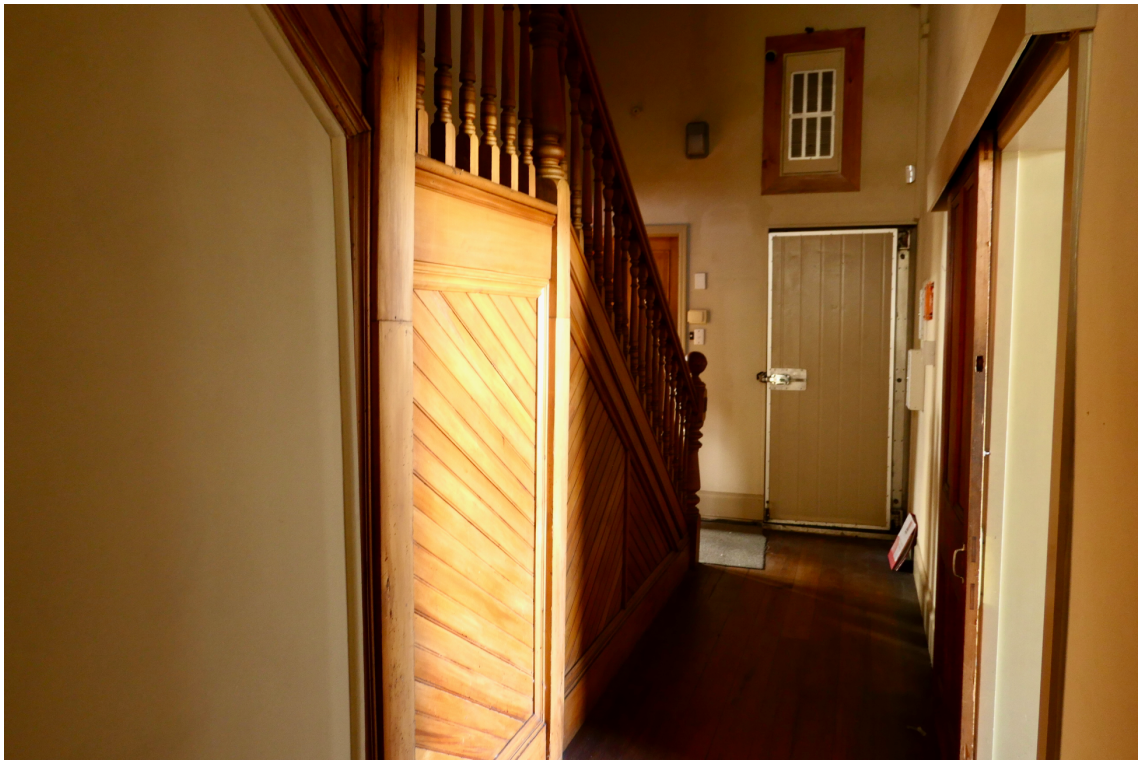
Original (?) weatherboard cladding inside the laundry space (former east porch), February 2026.



Inside the beer garden, east elevation, looking at the common wall to 250 Haven Road, with the cast-iron columns and vertical corrugated cladding of the 1887 former Sclander & Co.'s store at 250 Haven Road, February 2026.



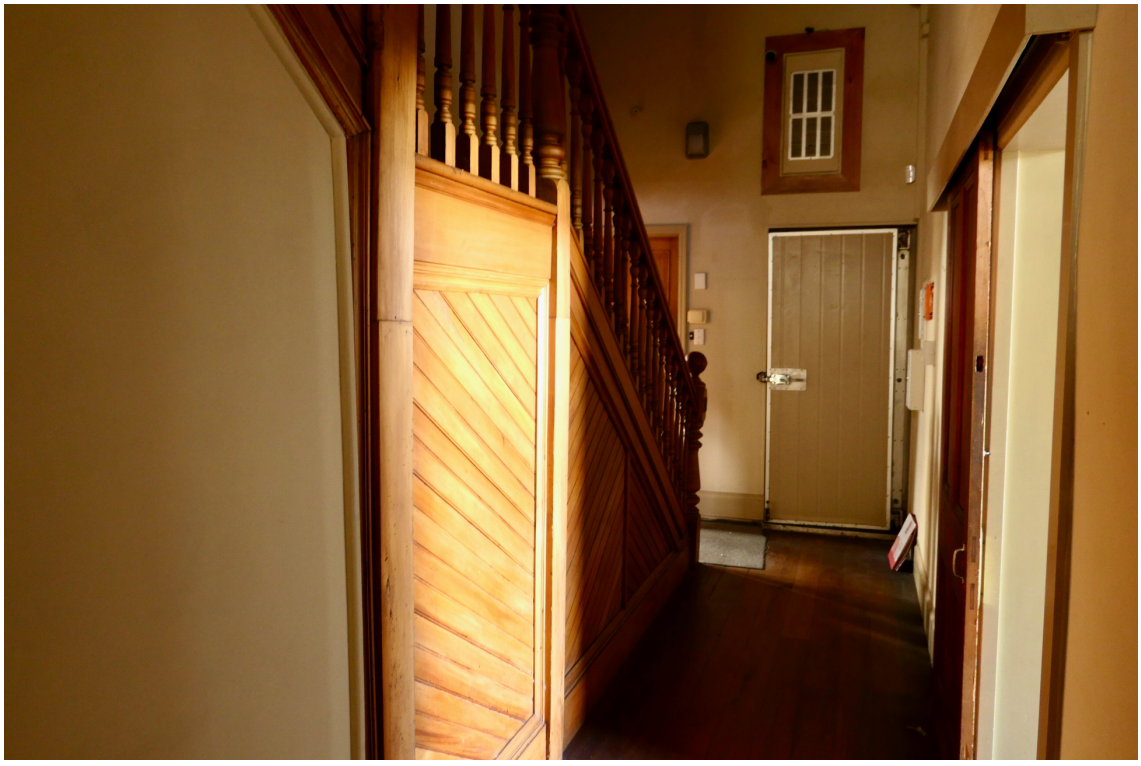
Characteristic view in the courtyard area – an ad-hoc assembly of modern structures, accretion of building services and an aluminium window inserted into the original timber frame, February 2026.



The main stair and balustrade, with old or possibly original wall panelling underneath, and the freezer door to the chiller ahead, February 2026.



Characteristic view in the courtyard area – an ad-hoc assembly of modern structures, accretion of building services and an aluminium window inserted into the original timber frame, February 2026.



The main stair and balustrade, with old or possibly original wall panelling underneath, and the freezer door to the chiller ahead, February 2026.



First floor landing and 1971 smoke stop screen



First floor hallway, looking south



Room 3, common room, with (faux?) chimney breast, original hearth



Room 5, typical guest room, with vanity.



View inside room 1, near the head of the stairs, showing the enclosed verandah space. Note the step up between floor levels, February 2026.



Detail of the cornice and ceiling, possibly the original papier-mâché, February 2026

4.0 Significance

This section sets out the cultural heritage significance of the place. Criteria are those found in the HNZPT Act and these are grouped under the four headings of historic, social, aesthetic and scientific value as recommended in *Guidelines for Preparing Conservation Plans*, NZHPT, 2000.

4.1. Assessment of significance

Historic significance

Values associated with particular events or uses that happened at the place, and which have importance for their impact on the community.

The Custom House Hotel is historically significant as a rare example of an Edwardian hotel still standing in Nelson. It occupies a site of some importance, in that it has been used for the same purpose and by two buildings of the same name, since 1865. When it was opened in 1904, the hotel was something of a sensation in Nelson for the extensive use of electricity for lighting, still a novelty at that time. It set a benchmark for similar businesses to follow.

The hotel illustrates the shifts in the patterns of movement over the 20th century; it drew much of its early custom from the large numbers of travellers who flowed through the port during the period when ships and boats provided the primary means of travel between ports and the two islands. When that diminished, the hotel leaned back on its role as a social venue offering budget accommodation.

The building has been a landmark in the port area since its construction and forms part of an historic collection of buildings in the wider area (Anchor Foundry, 252 Haven Road and a number of old houses) that are reminders of the way the port looked and functioned before major land reclamation. Internally, the many alterations to the hotel are a reminder of the changing tastes of hotel managers and the public.

Social significance

Values associated with the use of the place; what it means to people, and the spiritual, artistic, traditional or political values that the place may embody.

Even though it has been closed for several years, the hotel retains very high social significance, due mainly to its primary function as a hotel. The place has been visited by many Nelsonians over its history. For some people, particularly local residents, it would have been an important social outlet. That connection will remain for some time to come, regardless of the future use of the building.

Aesthetic significance

Values associated with the formal qualities of the fabric of the place and its setting; with style, form, scale, colour, and texture, and with ones' emotional response to the aesthetic qualities.

The building has aesthetic significance associated with its form and underlying architecture, as well as for the surviving elements of its formerly ornate decoration, which clearly reflects its era and purpose. It remains recognisable as an Edwardian hotel, and even though its appearance was greatly altered in the 20th century with the removal of virtually all of its original detail and the addition of the stucco cladding, its underlying form remains substantially unchanged.

Scientific significance

Values associated with building materials and technology, with structure and services, and with evidence of past use, especially as may be revealed using archaeological techniques.

The building is of modest scientific and technical significance as it is made with materials and techniques in common use at the time and which are still well represented in the wider region. An investigation of its standing fabric would reveal information about its original materials and construction, as well as information about later changes. This evaluation may change as a result.

Archaeology

The archaeological potential of the site….[Amanda Young in here].

Mana whenua

The value of the site to mana whenua also not been evaluated at this point. It is expected mana whenua representatives will be invited by the NCC to provide advice in due course.

5.0 Inventory of heritage value

The core purpose of this inventory is to help guide the long-term management of the place in a way that protects and enhances its heritage values. It provides a framework for evaluating the impacts on heritage values of management decisions including potential future changes (whether repair, restoration or adaptation). A thorough and well considered evaluation of any potential change will help to ensure the building's heritage values are maintained and enhanced.

5.1. Degrees of significance

The inventory sets out the relative heritage values of each aspect of the place, including its setting, form, spaces, elements and fabric, graded from the most important to the least important. Given the nature and extent of changes to the building over time, two degrees of significance are considered appropriate for the purposes of this *Conservation Plan*:

Heritage Value 1 (1)

This means the elevation, space or fabric is of **high** heritage significance. It is assigned to the surviving original form, features and fabric of the building, as it was completed in 1904.

Nil Heritage Value (Nil)

This means the element or space, or item of building fabric has **little or no** heritage significance because it is a modern change to the building that does not enhance its heritage values, or is an inappropriate addition or change that detracts from its heritage values, or is unrelated to the building, or of solely functional value.

In some cases (especially with original fabric of 1904), there is repair material of a later date incorporated in the element or space. Unless such repairs have been extensive, or badly executed, they are judged to have little or no negative impact on the heritage value of the element.

5.2. Format of the inventory

The inventory is divided with sections for each major element and space of the building. Each section is organised with, as appropriate, a short history of the element or space, a brief description, a list of features and fabric and an assessment of the heritage values associated with that fabric.

Each section sets out some basic guidance as to the extent of intervention that could be carried out without adversely impacting the identified heritage values of the place or identifies actions that could be carried out to enhance heritage values. Appropriate conservation actions in respect of each of these heritage values are discussed further in section 7.0 *Conservation Policy*.

5.3. Inventory

Exterior

Site Heritage Value: 2	

History

Very little is known about the history of this area, although it has always been used for service facilities or other functions complementary to the building

Description

The site is little larger than the footprint of the building, with open space confined to the entry deck on the west and the northern yard; the eastern yard is fully infilled with the medley of structures that make up the beer garden, and all the ground surface is covered with asphalt paving. There are juvenile trees in shallow planters along the northern boundary and a rapidly growing pohutukawa at the south-western corner.

Elements

Extent of the site, 1904	1
Hard paving and entry deck	Nil
Bar store addition (south-east corner), 1957	Nil
Garage addition (north-east corner), 1981	Nil
Beer garden structures and roofs, various dates	Nil
Juvenile trees and other plantings	Nil
Modern boundary fence to north	Nil
Post and rail fence to carpark and adjacent timber entry deck	Nil
Street light at south-east corner of site	Nil

Extent of acceptable intervention – site

No aspect of the existing hard landscaping or the various other site features complements the architecture or character of the building or contributes positively to its heritage values. This places particular weight on planning any future interventions to the site to better the current circumstances and to aim to enhance heritage values rather than detract from them.

In broad terms, interventions on the site that improve the relationship of the building to its site and the wider setting and interventions that improve the presentation of the building are likely to be acceptable from a heritage perspective. For instance, the proposed removal of the two modern concrete structures in the east yard and the associated beer garden fitout (in tandem with the removal of no. 250) would enhance the presentation of the building and enable it to be seen more or less in the round, which would in turn enhance its heritage values.

Other interventions to the site that would help enhance the building's heritage values would include removing the juvenile pohutukawa at the south west corner (both to open up views of the building and to remove a future hazard to it), changing the construction of the boundary fences to be more in keeping with the building, and improving the hard landscaping around the building, along with relocating the poorly-positioned street light close to the south door (note, a street light has been in this position at least since the 1950s).

Roof Heritage Value: 1	

History

As far as is known, change to the roof has been confined to removal of the 3 original chimneys and, at some point, replacement of the original corrugated steel roofing (there may have been at least two roofing replacements as the balcony roof seems to date to c. 1960s).

Description

The main roof retains its distinctive original 1904 hipped form and E-shaped plan, with two narrow internal gutters with outlets to the east, and minor gables on the north and south sides and three minor gables on the west side.

Elements

Overall form of the main roof, 1904	1
Minor gables to three elevations, and flagpole to middle gable on west elevation, 1904	1
Underlying original sarking and framing and the like, 1904	1
Modern corrugated colorsteel roofing and metal spouting, n.d. but likely early 1990s	Nil
Old corrugated roofing (verandah), likely c. 1960s	Nil
Lean-to roofs and structures in the east yard, various dates	Nil
Modern services on roof	Nil

Extent of acceptable intervention

The authentic overall exterior form of the main roof should be preserved as it stands at present and any further additions or changes to this form should to be avoided, with the exception of removing modern building services elements to the greatest extent possible (and so minimising the number of roof penetrations for the future).

Discreet change could be made to help improve the technical performance of the building, for instance to enhance its weathertightness, or increase its capacity to deal with heavy rain (i.e. improving the internal gutters), or to enhance its long-term durability. Such change is allowable provided that it cannot be seen from the ground around the building, that the work avoids the loss of any fabric of heritage value, does not impact the building's heritage values, and is designed to be fully reversible.

Elevations
Heritage Value: 1





History

The north verandah was filled in by 1956, and the cantilevered shower room at the north-east corner of the first floor was also in place by then. The store was added to the south elevation in 1957. Major changes made after 1959 include the stucco over-cladding of the building (and the removal of virtually all of its original architectural detail), and the later replacement of all the windows, bar one pair, with aluminium joinery, in two separate phases. The east yard has also filled up with structures over time, although it seems it may always have housed some sheds or other facilities.

Description

Although the stucco cladding is a major and profoundly unsympathetic change to the building, the four elevations still retain (largely) their original form, and some of the original ornate carpentry detail remains at eave level and in the minor gable roofs.

Elements

Overall form of the elevations, 1904	1
Original timber window frames and sills, 1904	1
Modern timber and aluminium windows and doors (1970/80s and later)	Nil
Modern aluminium doors and porch to north elevation (n.d.) and timber doors (2002)	Nil
Original paired double-hung timber window assembly, south elevation, 1904	1
Original timber doors, south elevation, 1904	1
Original stained-glass lead-light fanlights, north and west doors, 1904	1
Minor gables to three elevations, and flagpole to middle gable on west elevation, 1904	1
Decorated eave, west elevation and north elevation, 1904	1
Balcony deck, first floor verandah and cantilever brackets, west elevation, 1904	1
Infilled north verandah, n.d.	Nil

Cantilevered bathroom, first floor, north east corner, and nearby fire escape	Nil
Modern stucco wall cladding, n.d.	Nil
Beer garden structures in east yard	Nil
Modern porch at north elevation and entry canopy at west elevation	Nil
Modern signage and lights etc.	Nil
Modern external fire escape ladders, services, conduit, fans, heat pumps, antennae etc.	Nil

Extent of acceptable intervention

The general form of the four main elevations should be preserved as they stand at present. Should the NCC desire, there is ample opportunity to improve the appearance and sense of authenticity of the building without impacting any fabric of heritage value, and a sliding scale of possibilities for restoring its appearance (discussed further in s7, conservation policy) is as follows:

1. Do nothing to improve the building's appearance except for removing all the structures in the east yard (anticipated to be done in conjunction with the deconstruction of no. 250) and making the minimum necessary repairs. Carry out repair and maintenance work as needed to put it into good condition, maintaining the existing external appearance. This presumes the stucco cladding is sound and weathertight and not in any immediate need of replacement.
2. Tidy up the existing appearance – carry out work to remove all extraneous and redundant building services (and re-routing the remainder in a purposeful and orderly manner), as well as removing the pohutukawa and other plantings inappropriate to the building and site. Implement a livelier colour scheme more in keeping with its Edwardian origins.
3. As above, but reinstate timber window and external door joinery throughout, all to match the original design as shown in historic photos, leaving the stucco cladding in place. This would leave the building looking much as it was in the early 1960s. Remove the extraneous west entry porch and deck and also remove the north entry porch.
4. As above, but reinstate the original arrangement of windows in the lounge area (to restore the original form of the north and west elevations).
5. As above, but completely remove the stucco, repair the underlying cladding and framing as needed, and reinstate a good facsimile of the original decorative timberwork on all four elevations.
6. As above, but also reinstate the open first floor verandah on the north elevation.

Discreet change could also be made to help improve the technical performance of the building, to enhance its weathertightness, or its performance in heavy rain, or to improve its long-term durability. Such change is allowable provided that it is carried out discreetly, that the work avoids the loss of any fabric of heritage value, does not impact the building's heritage values, and is designed to be fully reversible.

Interior

As comparatively little of the original building fabric is currently visible on either floor level, it is considered appropriate for this section of the inventory to take a broader approach to this part of the inventory, instead of making a detailed room by room survey.

Ground floor

Heritage value 1

Cellar, south-west corner of bar, plastered concrete walls and floor, and sump, 1904?

Original external and internal wall framing underlying modern finishes, 1904.

Stair, balustrade and diagonally boarded panelling, 1904 and later.

Original moulded architraves to windows and doors, 1904.

Assorted 4-panel interior doors, largely clear finished (most not in original locations), 1904.

The paired double-hung window, south-east wall section, 1904.

Tall moulded skirting boards, painted, 1904?

Rusticated weatherboards in the former east (laundry) porch, 1904.

Nil heritage value

4-panel door modified with a vision porthole, north-west room, n.d.

Partitioning of the cellar.

Modern timber flooring (10mm strip flooring laid over particle board), tanalised pine joists and bearers and concrete piles (assumed to have been re-laid throughout the ground floor).

Modern door hardware (including sliding rails and the like).

Modern internal doors.

Plain modern skirtings and architraves, generally paint finished.

Chiller and glass-wash area.

Bar fit out (all areas) and accommodation reception area, including all joinery.

Kitchen fit out and laundry area fit out, c. 1963 and later.

Ablutions area partitions and fit out, c. 1960s and later.

Visible surface finishes to ceilings and walls, and fixtures and fittings except as noted above.

Carpet and vinyl floor coverings, various dates but all modern.

All window coverings.

Modern signage, including toilet and exit signs and the like.

Lights, switches, smoke detection, hot water cylinders, plumbing fixtures and fittings, ventilation hoods and ducts, and other building services.

Extent of acceptable intervention – ground floor

The ground floor has been significantly modified over time, and aside from the stair and a few four-panel doors, there is very little original fabric visible. However, a few of the walls remain on their original alignment. Work could potentially be carried out to reinstate some sense of authenticity to the original building, including:

1. Completely remove the modern hospitality fitout. Any new fit-out should work with the original layout of the building and be designed to be compatible with its heritage values.
2. Reinstate the extent of the original central hallway. This would require removing the modern chiller and bar wash facility to re-open this space.
3. Reinstate partitions where original walls are known to have been removed (or at least reinstate bulkhead lines to mark the positions of those walls).
4. Remove the north porch (c. 1960s?) and install new doors (reuse the existing fanlight) in a shallow recessed porch, as per the original design.
5. Remove the south porch (1963) and relocate the doors to the external wall of the building.

First floor

Heritage value 1

Anaglypta ceiling and papier-mâché cornice in main hallway, 1904 (note, the cornice may be modern fibrous plaster, and the anaglypta paper could be modern).

Clear finished timber hall screen with pierced brackets and spindles, 1904.

Four-panel doors to rooms, clear finished, 1904.

Moulded rimu skirtings and architraves and window trims, clear finished and painted, 1904.

Stair and balustrade, 1904.

Timber strip flooring, clear finished, 1904.

Underlying floor framing, 1904.

Underlying wall and ceiling framing, 1904.

Matched lining on the ceilings (concealed by modern linings) and original ceiling framing, 1904.

Matched lining on the external walls of room 2 (former open verandah), 1904?

Nil heritage value

Cantilevered bathroom, north-east corner,pre-1956 – early 1950s(?)

Infilling of the former open north verandah, pre-1956 – early 1950s (?)

Government Pattern (GP) architraves and skirtings, typically clear finished rimu, n.d.

Old glazed internal doors, n.d.

Carpet and vinyl floor coverings, various dates but all modern.

Glazed stair/landing smoke-stop screen, 1971.

Modern ceiling and wall linings in rooms.

Bathroom partitions and fit-out.

Dropped ceilings in bathrooms.

Lights, switches, smoke detection, plumbing fixtures and fittings and other building services.

Extent of acceptable intervention – first floor

The first floor has been extensively redecorated in its life but appears to largely retain its original layout, a reasonable amount of original building fabric and most of its original decorative features. Work could potentially be carried out to return it closer to its original form and appearance and to enhance its authenticity, including:

1. Removing the 1971 smoke stop screen at the head of the stairs to return the first-floor hall to its original proportions.
2. Removing the cantilevered bathroom at the north-east corner.
3. Reinstating the original open northern verandah.

6.0 Influences on conservation policy

6.1. Considerations for conservation

Owner's objectives

[Tess to provide some words here for the building owner]

Heritage recognition and protection

The heritage values of the former Custom House Hotel are formally recognised under two different statutory mechanisms:

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act

Entered on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero, no. 2993, Category 2 (listed in 1982). The purpose of the List entry is to promote knowledge of heritage and aid in the protection of the heritage values of the place for the future. The List entry encompasses the whole place, including the site extents and the interior of the building.

Resource Management Act – Nelson Resource Management Plan

The building is scheduled on the NRMP, Category A, which attracts the highest level of protection under the Plan rules. The purpose of the Plan listing is to help protect the exterior appearance and character of the building from inappropriate change, to help ensure its heritage values are maintained or enhanced for the future.

The implications of these heritage listings are discussed in further detail below.

Retaining significance

As noted above, the building has been extensively altered and modified over time, but nevertheless still retains some sense of its history and remains recognisable as an Edwardian hotel. The tangible heritage values (and some of the intangible values) of the place are bound up in its form and in its surviving original fabric. Therefore, to properly conserve its heritage values, change to the original fabric of the place – aside from preservation work, such as repair and maintenance – is generally to be avoided, as noted in the preceding sections.

It is especially critical to prevent any inappropriate further change that could potentially undermine heritage values. In particular it is especially important to head off incremental changes that could slowly add up to an inappropriate effect, as has been the case over the life of the building.

It is equally important to take positive actions to preserve and enhance the sense of history and sense of place that the building has. To that end, restoration work will be strongly encouraged, particularly any work that reinstates the plan layout of the ground floor, the external timber joinery or the ornate original carpentry detailing and finishes.

Management for the long term

Management of the place must take proper consideration of the special challenges of preserving it for an indefinite future. In particular, this means that all planning and management decisions, including planning around disaster risk management and the ongoing funding of maintenance for the place, must always be taken with a long-term focus, and that the protection – or enhancement – of existing heritage values must always be placed at the heart of all decision-making. Using this *Conservation Plan* will support this approach.

The corollary of the expected indefinite working lifespan of the building is that short-term solutions must always be avoided. For example, it would be appropriate to aim for a general 100-year or longer service life for any repair and maintenance work to the original fabric of the building (which has so far lasted over 120 years in apparently reasonable order).

It is also important that disaster risk management planning accounts for the true effort and cost of repairing the place to a satisfactory state after a major disastrous event. This is so that appropriate funding (including insurance) can be set aside by the NCC over time or otherwise secured to help reinstate the heritage fabric and spaces of the building from a damaged but recoverable state should the need arise.

Any proposal for a change in the way the property (or any major part of it) is used must be evaluated against the criteria given in this *Conservation Plan*. Any change, however small or temporary, that would adversely impact heritage values must be rejected. The basic principle is that any change should have a neutral or positive impact on heritage values.

Sustainability and resilience

The building has a significant amount of embodied carbon locked away in its materials and ensuring it is retained and kept in a compatible use will always deliver the most sustainable outcome. Any future changes or upgrading work should always be planned to minimise further carbon emissions arising from demolition or new construction. This would include minimising the quantity of materials sent to landfill from any future works – and maximising the recycling of materials removed – and ensuring any new materials have the lowest practicable carbon footprints and life-cycle carbon emissions. New materials must also always be selected for best durability, following the proven theme of the building's original materials.

Operational carbon emissions derive from the building's energy use, which would be expected to come principally from environmental control, space heating, and cooking for most conceivable future uses. While a significant proportion of Aotearoa's power supply is now from sustainable and zero or low-carbon sources, periods of high demand will typically result in fossil fuel generating sources being brought online, so any measures to reduce energy consumption, or to improve the proportion of renewable energy used in the building, will help reduce the building's operational carbon emissions. Ideally, the building should be moved off gas completely.

The building is understood to be more or less uninsulated at present so the demand for heating in the cold season would be expected to be high, and there may be demand for summer cooling as well. Measures to improve internal conditions, such as adding insulation or using more efficient heating systems would help lower overall energy consumption over time and benefit the building's occupants and visitors. Further reductions in emissions could be obtained with some level of on-site energy generation and storage (e.g. solar panels and a battery system), although the small site (and limited roof area) will also significantly constrain the potential for this.

6.2. Risks

There are a number of key risks to the place that need ongoing attentive and thoughtful management in order to protect and maintain both its heritage values and its amenity for the foreseeable future. These are outlined below, along with notes on actions that could be taken to reduce the impact of each risk. (Some of the risks are to do with natural disasters and it is noted that mitigating potential impacts from such events will be largely out of the control of the NCC). The actions set out here inform the conservation policies set out in section 7 and the recommendations made in section 8.

Lack of funding

Risk: All buildings and structures require ongoing investment in regular repair and maintenance to keep them sound and useful. Old buildings and structures will usually (and regardless of their heritage status) require an additional level of care and skill to protect original materials from loss or damage, simply due to their age – but against that, are typically built with robust materials and construction systems that often better resist deterioration than most modern construction.

Vulnerability: The survival, occupation and use of the place will depend on the NCC providing sufficient funding support to ensure all of the physical needs of the place are properly met over time. Support will inevitably be sensitive to the nature of the use of the place and to political considerations, and any change in funding could threaten the viability of the place. For instance, an inadequate provision of funding for operational matters, or repair or maintenance work (which could lead to deferring work or addressing long-term problems with short-term solutions due to cost), could potentially have a significant adverse effect on the long-term survival of the place.

Likelihood and consequences: The likelihood of serious damage occurring is relatively low as long as repair and maintenance keeps the place in a sound and weathertight condition. However, the likelihood of deterioration and damage will however quickly escalate if maintenance is deferred or neglected altogether, or if important repairs are not made in a timely fashion. Faults like leaks in the building envelope or inside the building, or structural issues, all have the potential to impact significantly on the fabric of the place and on the health (and safety) of visitors and occupants alike. Faults can quickly compound and escalate in scale if necessary maintenance or repair work is deferred and can become complex and costly to rectify. The consequences of any problems arising from any failure of funding support could therefore have a severe impact on both the condition of the fabric and the use of the place.

Action: Prepare and fund a comprehensive cyclical maintenance plan for the place as needed to ensure the known requirements of the building, over say the next 10 years, are anticipated and fully funded.

Management

Risk: The amenity and/or heritage values of the place could potentially be undermined with poor or inappropriate management decisions that impact on its maintenance or use. Potential management issues could include, for example, deciding on a new use that is not compatible with the heritage values of the building, taking decisions that adversely impact the fabric or heritage values of the building or its site, or deferring maintenance or urgent repair work in a way that leads to deterioration or loss, or undertaking inappropriate remedial work that is not compatible with the heritage values of the building or the quality of its fabric.

Vulnerability: The fabric of the building seems to have proven very tough and durable, even with light maintenance attention over the last few decades. There are some maintenance matters that require attention now and further maintenance issues are certain to arise over time.

Likelihood and consequences: The original and longstanding use of the building as a hotel is thought to be unlikely to continue, and it is anticipated a new use will be established for the place. A change of use has the potential to impact significantly on the heritage value of the place (see the notes on statutory obligations below), and such a change would need to be very carefully managed in order to ensure a good outcome for the building and the retention and enhancement of its heritage values.

Action: To ensure the place is properly cared for over the long term and both its amenity and its heritage values are maintained, its heritage values should sit at the heart of all management decisions. The adoption and effective use of this *Conservation Plan* will help achieve that outcome.

Natural processes – weathering and deterioration

Risk: The general action of weather, and particularly the effects of moisture and salts, on the fabric of buildings inevitably leads to deterioration, decay and corrosion, and can introduce leaks, all of which can significantly reduce the integrity of the building's fabric and structure over time if the condition of the place is not proactively managed by regular and effective maintenance.

Vulnerability: The building is located near the harbour's edge on the quays and is fairly exposed to the weather. This maritime environment means that the conditions for deterioration and corrosion are relatively severe. Given its observed reasonable condition (and so its general performance to date), the main vulnerability, as noted above, will be deterioration or damage arising from a lack of proper maintenance and timely repair. The removal of no. 250 will increase its weather exposure.

Likelihood and consequences: As above, the building is constructed with innately durable and robust materials that appear to be appropriate to its environment and the level of maintenance undertaken to date seems to have kept on top of most of the issues. However, as above, if maintenance is not kept up, small faults from weathering can quickly escalate into significant and costly faults and deferred or infrequent maintenance could result in issues not being detected or attended to before serious damage or loss occurs.

Action: The best way to manage this risk for the future is to carry out an effective cyclical maintenance plan so the building is always kept in good order, and to respond promptly to any need for repairs that might arise outside of regular maintenance intervals. Ensuring the ongoing good performance of the building's weathering details, including upkeep of the exterior cladding and paint, is critical.

Fire

Risk and vulnerability: The building is made almost entirely of old dry native timbers and it – and its contents – could be seriously damaged in the event of a fire taking hold. At present, the only defence against fire is an alarm system and egress routes to protect occupants, and there is no provision to protect the building.

Likelihood and consequences: The Nelson fire station is located a short distance away and a reasonably quick response would typically be expected to any fire alarm. However, a fire would

be likely to spread very quickly and the building could end up severely damaged, or even lost entirely, depending on the circumstances. Even if a fire is contained and extinguished, serious damage would be expected from the fire, smoke, and water from fire-fighting efforts (and potential damage from forced entry by FENZ as well).

Action: The best level of protection for the building would be an automatic fire sprinkler system. This would help constrain the spread of any fire before FENZ arrived, so protecting the building against loss, and would help ensure the safety of building occupants. An updated alarm system would also be beneficial, as would the construction of fire separations that would limit the spread of fire (where appropriate to do so). Regardless of the level of fire safety precautions, periodically liaise with FENZ at the station to ensure they remain familiar with the building and its heritage value and hold a current set of keys for emergency access.

Action: Install arc-fault detection equipment on the main switchboard to minimise the risk of an electrical fault leading to a fire. If gas continues to be used in the building, ensure a seismic cut-off valve is fitted to the supply.

Earthquake

Risk: Nelson is a seismically active area (identified as 'moderate seismic hazard' relative to other regions). The building, along with the rest of the city and especially the low-lying areas is at risk of damage in the event of a serious earthquake or sequence of earthquakes. Damage could be caused by ground rupture, liquefaction, or tsunami effects, or landslide, or a combination of these. The site at 252 Haven Road is on reclaimed ground that falls within the liquefaction hazard overlay on the NRMP and is shown as 'liquefaction damage is possible' on the Nelson Geotechnical Hazards Map.[33] The nearby hill faces are mapped as a 'Tier II' slope instability susceptibility area', with an indication that slipped material could fall onto the road below (and perhaps ricochet across the road). Although it is some distance from known local fault lines and previous ruptures, the site could nevertheless be subjected to strong earthquake shaking, either from a local fault failure or a major seismic event in the wider region.

Vulnerability: The seismic capability of the building is not presently known. The historic demolition of the three chimneys will have removed significant mass from the building, and its relatively small scale and general cellular construction would help its performance, although the current lack of walls in the ground floor area could prove problematic in an earthquake.

Likelihood and consequences: A serious earthquake on any one of the many major faults that could impact the region is all but inevitable within the expected working life of the building. Although the building may be unlikely to collapse if it has reasonable seismic capacity, it could nevertheless be significantly damaged in such an event, possibly to the extent that it could no longer be occupied or possibly be left beyond repair. Even if not badly damaged in an event, the services to the building could be cut off, as well as access routes, for an extended period of time.

Action: To ensure the building performs as well as it can in a serious earthquake event, it is essential that it is always kept in good condition and weathertight. This will help the structure perform to its best.

[33] See https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/4854afe0019e43c9adb51723d78a28db/page/Nelson-Natural-Hazards?views=Legend [viewed February 2026]

Action: Commission a detailed seismic assessment from a structural engineer with significant experience in sensitive interventions to heritage buildings and establish what remedial work, if any, is required to bring the building to a reasonable level of seismic performance. Consider undertaking additional work to limit damage to the building in the event of a serious seismic event.

Tsunami

Risk: The site is within the orange tsunami evacuation zone (wave heights greater than 1m) shown on the local hazard maps.[34] This risk affects the majority of Nelson city and the nearby coastal areas.

Vulnerability: There is no practicable action that can be taken to protect the building against damage or loss in a serious tsunami event. A small tsunami that washed up to the roadside could flood and damage the cellar and the ground floor level of the building. Larger tsunami waves can generate overwhelming forces that can reduce even the most heavily reinforced concrete buildings to rubble.

Likelihood and consequences: Although the risk of a major tsunami is considered to be comparatively low, a tsunami large enough to seriously impact the structure of 252 Haven Road would be such a significant event that the city around the harbour and river would be seriously impacted and the state of the former hotel would not be a high-priority issue.

Action: The advice from Civil Defence, Nelson City Council and the Tasman District Council is to immediately evacuate this area after a long or strong earthquake (one lasting more than one minute or making it difficult to stand up) and move to higher ground, five storeys or more above sea level. Warnings for more remote events, with some lead time, would be issued by Civil Defence. In such an event, the first priority is the safety of building occupants. Carry out regular trial evacuations of the building to help ensure that all occupants understand the requirements, the primary and secondary egress routes and marshalling points and are able to exit the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency and are able to get to high ground in a timely manner.

Climate change

Risk: Climate change poses a major, steadily escalating and direct threat to the Nelson region. The Tasman District Council notes that:

> …in recent years, many residents in the district have been evacuated for fires, floods and storm surges, and freshwater is becoming a scarce resource…Climate change is likely to bring warmer temperatures, more extreme weather patterns and rising sea levels - all of which will have widespread environmental, social, economic and cultural impacts. Issues such as drought, water security and flooding are expected to become more severe, and existing challenges around coastal erosion may be exacerbated.[35]

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[34] See the Ministry of Civil Defence / Tasman District Council Tsunami Evacuation App, online at https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e8671bc561554816992f9b951e1d52cd [viewed February 2026]

[35] See https://www.tasman.govt.nz/my-region/climate-change/how-is-climate-change-affecting-tasman-district [viewed February 2026]

NIWAs current climate change projections for the Nelson district include:

- Higher temperatures as the century advances, including longer periods of high temperatures and heatwaves, resulting in increased fire risk, changing conditions for agriculture and horticulture and decreasing frequency of frosts.
- Changes in seasonal rainfall patterns and increased likelihood of extreme rainy days and flooding, as well as increased likelihood of draught and stronger storms.
- Sea level rise affecting coastal areas and increasing risk of floods.

The increased risk of serious storms, along with generally more severe weather patterns with greater extremes of temperature, wind and precipitation, and coastal storm-surge flooding, all exacerbated by the effects of sea level rise, will pose an increasing challenge to the occupation of the low-lying areas of the city in particular including 252 Haven Road. More extreme precipitation is also likely to drive surface water flooding, flooding of the city's many culverted waterways and overloading of critical urban stormwater and sewerage infrastructure.

Vulnerability: Much of the port area (and a substantial area of urban Nelson) is identified as being at risk of flooding in the foreseeable future (flood models for the year 2100), including the area around the building. The building sits on an exposed site close to the edge of the harbour, and like any structure in the open it is potentially susceptible to the effects of severe weather events. Even though the building is thought to be quite robust and has survived in fairly good condition on this site for over 120 years, it will not be immune from these effects, or from damage in the surrounding areas.

Likelihood and consequences: The building is not known to have been adversely affected by severe weather to date, which is thought to be due to its construction, use of robust materials, and maintenance being more or less kept up. However the expected increase in severe weather events will require a corresponding increase in the frequency of maintenance required to keep the building in good repair.

Action: Always keep the building in sound and weathertight condition. In particular, the roof and associated stormwater and ground water drainage systems must always be kept in good order and fully functional.

Impacts from use and occupation

Risk: The fabric of the building is made of durable materials that have held up reasonably well over its life to date, but it also has some materials that will progressively wear over time in response to its ongoing use.

Vulnerability: Like any well-used old building, 252 Haven Road is susceptible to the effects of gradual wear and tear accumulating over time from its ongoing use, which could potentially cause damage or loss of heritage fabric, particularly in the most heavily trafficked and used areas of the building.

Likelihood and consequences: Wear and tear is an expected result of the use of the building; historically the response has been redecoration, removal of features, or replacement of linings and finishes.

Action: Take measures to protect any elements that have proven particularly vulnerable to ongoing wear from further damage. Maintain ongoing monitoring of the most critical areas or elements to determine if further protection is appropriate.

Loss of skills

Risk: Highly skilled tradespeople are steadily leaving the construction industry without being able to pass their skills along, and some specialist skills necessary for the care of old buildings are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

Vulnerability: The building is constructed with materials and systems that are still relatively well understood and are, more or less, still in current trade use. However the loss of trade skills that are important for its ongoing care could well start to present a problem over the next decade or so. It is (as are all buildings) vulnerable to the unanticipated effects of well-intentioned but inappropriate or poorly considered repair or maintenance work, or remedial work carried out without the requisite skills and knowledge

Likelihood and consequences: Inappropriate maintenance and repairs could easily lead to compounding faults and costly repairs.

Action: Maintain a list of known-good tradespeople who have worked on the building. Vet potential contractors or tradespeople for relevant experience on comparable heritage buildings and suitable skills (and attitude) before commissioning any repair work. Encourage tradespeople working on the building to involve apprentices or young workers so that the critical skills and thinking needed for the proper repair and maintenance of the place are passed on to future generations.

Lack of information

Risk: The possible destruction of important archival sources such as old documents and photographs, and the loss of unrecorded oral history sources constitute a risk for the future care of the building.

Vulnerability: Historic information on the building is held in a small number of repositories, as documented in this *Conservation Plan*.

Action: Any further information that comes to light should be archived with other records of the building, with a copy on site and a remote copy stored elsewhere (e.g. in the cloud).

Risk: In the event of a major disaster, such as an earthquake, the building could potentially be severely damaged, and there could be a shortfall in the information needed to repair it appropriately in a way that protects its heritage values.

Likelihood and consequences: The likelihood that the building is badly damaged, but not to the extent that a decision would be made not to repair it, is unknown. However undertaking major repairs or reconstruction work without suitable documentation of the existing structure could potentially have severe adverse consequences for heritage values.

Action: There is currently limited documentation known to exist for the building. A thorough record should be built up, in the form of a set of measured drawings and photographs, or a 3d-scan or 360° walkthrough to accurately record its form, dimensions and details. The record should be kept off-site, with copies in the cloud to mitigate any risk of future loss of information.

Changes to setting

Risk: Inappropriate changes to the immediate or wider setting could adversely impact on the heritage values of the building, as has occurred in the past few decades. This includes the removal of old buildings and the construction of substantial new buildings on adjoining or nearby sites.

Vulnerability: Major changes in the setting could potentially have a significant impact on the use or amenity of the building or on its heritage values, or on the values and amenity of the surrounding area, a large part of which is now a popular recreational and residential area. The current district plan controls (heritage rules and industrial area rules) do not offer any substantive protection to the existing setting of the building.

Likelihood and consequences: As the adjoining sites along Haven Road near the hotel are mostly owned by Council, and most of the land in the port area is directly or indirectly controlled by Council through the joint ownership with Tasman District Council, the building owner has at least some ability to manage the likelihood and consequences of this risk.

The likelihood of development that could adversely impact the building's setting is not known, but without specific regulation it should be considered to be fairly high given the expected indefinite life of the building and the nature of development in the nearby port area to date. Overly close, dense or over-scale development on adjoining sites could adversely affect the understanding of the building as an historic waterfront structure, its spatial relationship to the waterfront, its relationship with the other buildings surviving from the 19th and early 20th centuries in this area, and adversely impact on its condition (for example, by reducing access to light and airflow).

Action: In considering any future development on the NCC land along Haven Road and Wakefield Quay – and to the extent that they are able to influence development of the port land – the NCC must give due regard to maintaining or enhancing those qualities of the setting that are important to the building's heritage values, and take care not to allow the setting to be compromised in a way that would affect the understanding of the building or impact on its condition.

6.3. Conservation requirements and processes

Conservation standards

The most appropriate conservation standards for use in New Zealand are those set out in the *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value*,[36] which has been formally adopted by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and a number of territorial authorities, among others. These standards are applicable to all planning and physical work to do with historic places (or any kind of old building).

All relevant requirements of the *Charter* should be followed in considering work to the building. The main principles are explained below:

[36] Also known as *Te Pumanawa o ICOMOS e Aotearoa Hei Tiaki I Nga Taonga Whenua Heke Iho o Nehe*, published in 2010. The full text is available at http://www.icomos.org.nz/docs/NZ_Charter.pdf.

Carry out regular maintenance

Regular inspections, monitoring and maintenance are essential to the long life of all old buildings and places, not just heritage buildings. If maintenance is not carried out on a planned basis, repairs can become progressively more extensive, difficult, and expensive, and fabric of heritage value can be lost, thus diminishing the significance of the building. A well-maintained building will always be better used and enjoyed and will routinely survive the effects of storms and other natural disasters better than one that is poorly maintained.

Mitigate risk

Where there is a risk to the long-term survival of heritage buildings or structures, whether from natural disasters such as storms or earthquakes, or from man-made threats such as those posed by neglect or district plan requirements, then all reasonable actions should be taken to mitigate those risks. Intervention shoul be limited to the minimum required to achieve a reasonable level of security.

Prioritise work

Work should be organised so that risks that are fundamental to life safety and to the survival of a heritage building are dealt with before other tasks that can safely be deferred.

Repair rather than replace

When repairs are necessary, always aim to keep the loss of original fabric to the minimum. Remove and replace only the deteriorated material that is no longer fit for purpose. It is better to have fabric that is worn and carefully patched than modern replica material, however faithfully copied.

Repair in compatible materials

In carrying out repairs, materials matching the original should generally be used if they are available. Work to a higher technical standard is good practice in some circumstances and may be required to comply with the NZ Building Code.

Restore with care

Restoration of lost features should be carried out only if there is clear evidence of the original form and detail. Such evidence could come from original drawings, early photographs or elements relocated to other parts of the building. Detailed examination of the fabric of the building can often reveal useful information.

Keep change to the minimum

Where alterations are carried out, change should be kept to the minimum necessary to suit new functional or legal requirements. There should be the least possible loss of building fabric of heritage value, so that the authenticity and integrity of the place is maintained.

Use

Ideally, the original use of a heritage building should be continued; where this is no longer appropriate, a compatible new use should always be the aim. This is an especially important consideration for the Custom House Hotel.

Make new work reversible

Where possible, new work should be made reversible, so that change back to the present form or a known past form remains a possibility should this be appropriate in the future, and so this could be carried without further impact on heritage fabric. Recycle or store any original or old fabric that must be removed (so that it might be reinstated in the future) and make new junctions with the old fabric as lightly as possible.

Respect alterations

Additions and alterations to heritage buildings can have historic or aesthetic significance in their own right. Returning a building to its original form is recommended only when the significance of the original structure is outstanding and later alterations have compromised its integrity.

Document changes

Changes should be fully documented in drawings and photographs, with the latter taken before, during and after the work. New materials should be identified by discrete date stamping.

Respect the patina of age

Patina, the visible evidence of age, is something to protect carefully. Buildings should look old as they mature, as age is one of the qualities we value them for.

Respect the contents and setting

The contents and setting of a heritage building can often have heritage value in their own right and both should be regarded as integral with the building.

Conservation processes

The key processes of conservation work are described in the *ICOMOS NZ Charter*:

Preservation

Preservation involves as little intervention as possible to ensure the long-term survival and continuation of the cultural heritage value of a place. Preservation work includes *stabilisation* – slowing or eliminating processes of decay, *maintenance*, and *repair* – in matching or like materials (where new materials are used, they should be distinguishable by experts and well documented).

Formal consents and approvals are not generally needed for this sort of work (see the following section).

Preservation work is the first order of business for 252 Haven Road, to ensure the building is kept in a reasonably sound, secure and safe condition that preserves it for the foreseeable future.

Restoration

Restoration typically involves *reassembly* and *reinstatement* of existing fabric. It is based on respect for existing fabric and the identification and analysis of all available evidence so that the cultural heritage value of a place is recovered or revealed. *Removal* work may be

required in the case of advanced decay or loss of structural integrity, or because particular fabric has been identified as detracting from the cultural heritage value of a place.

As the building has been so altered over time and important parts of its original fabric have been lost, there is not much of it that could be restored per se.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction is the introduction of new material to replace material that has been lost. It is appropriate where it is essential to the function, integrity, intangible value or understanding of a place, if conjecture is minimised or eliminated and if surviving cultural heritage value is preserved.

The building's heritage values would be enhanced by reconstruction work. There is a spectrum of possibilities for this, discussed further in section 7. One possibility to consider would be restoring the original appearance of the building by removing the plaster cladding. This would require a substantial amount of reconstruction work to reinstate the appearance of the original decorative detailing on the building.

Adaptation

Adaptation, such as alterations and additions, may be acceptable where it is necessary to maintain a long-term compatible use of a place. Any change should always be the minimum necessary, be substantially reversible and have little or no adverse effect on the cultural heritage values of the place.

The building has undergone a significant amount of low-key adaptation over time to sustain its use as a hotel. Further adaptation is not out of the question (and indeed may be inescapable) if needed to facilitate a compatible use of the place.

6.4. Statutory obligations

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

The purpose of the Act is 'to promote the identification, protection, preservation, and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand' (section 3). In achieving the purpose of the Act, all persons performing functions and exercising powers under the Act must recognise:

> '(a) The principle that historic places have lasting value in their own right and provide evidence of the origins of New Zealand's distinct society; and
>
> (b) The principle that the identification, protection, preservation, and conservation of New Zealand's historical and cultural heritage should –
>
> > (i) Take account of all relevant cultural values, knowledge, and disciplines; and
> >
> > (ii) Take account of material of cultural heritage value and involve the least possible alteration or loss of it; and
> >
> > (iii) Safeguard the options of present and future generations; and
> >
> > (iv) Be fully researched, documented, and recorded, where culturally appropriate; and

(c) The principle that there is value in central government agencies, local authorities, corporations, societies, tangata whenua, and individuals working collaboratively in respect of New Zealand's historical and cultural heritage; and

(d) The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu, and other taonga.'

Heritage Listing

Part 4 of the Act, 'Recognition of places of historical, cultural, and ancestral significance' makes provision for a New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero. The purpose of the List is to '…inform members of the public about historic places…, to inform the owners of historic places … as needed for the purposes of this Act, and to be a source of information about historic places … for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991.' (Section 65.)

Any place may be entered on the list provided that HNZPT 'is satisfied that the place or area has aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, technological, or traditional significance or value.' (Section 66; part 3.)

The Custom House Hotel is included on the List as a Category 2 historic place (number 2993, 1982), meaning it is regarded as being of local or regional importance. The listing includes the whole of the place, along with the interior of the building. By itself, the listing has no particular regulatory force, this function having essentially been devolved to TAs. However, the Act provides for HNZPT to give advice to TAs within both the building consent and resource consent processes.

An important implication is that any work on the site that requires a building consent (or an application for a project information memorandum) will trigger a statutory notification to HNZPT under Section 39 of the Building Act 2004 (see also below), and HNZPT may provide advice to the TA for consideration when choosing whether or not to grant consent, including advice on potential conditions of consent.

Archaeological Sites

The definition of an archaeological site is broad and includes buildings and structures, or parts thereof. Section 6 defines an archaeological site as any place that was 'associated with human activity that occurred before 1900' and which 'may provide through investigation by archaeological methods, evidence relating to the history of New Zealand'.

The land of the Custom House is not recorded as an archaeological site in the NZAA ArchSite database, but the land was reclaimed and in use prior to 1900 (for the previous Custom House Hotel, which dates back to at least 1865) and so it meets the definition of an archaeological site in the Act. The reclamation diminishes the potential for pre-European archaeology. (There are several recorded archaeological sites in the close vicinity, including O27/310, O27/309, O27/258 and O27/257, and the foreshore O27/177).

Any person intending to undertake work that may 'modify or destroy the whole or any part of an archaeological site' must first obtain an Archaeological Authority from HNZPT for that work. An authority is required by any person who '…knows, or ought reasonably to have suspected, that the site is an archaeological site', whether or not it is 'an archaeological site or is entered on (a) the New Zealand Heritage List … or (b) the Landmarks list'.

As there is no pre-1900 structure standing on the site, in the first instance this means consulting HNZPT for advice before undertaking any work that could affect the ground anywhere on the site, including digging for drains, re-piling, or demolition work extending into the ground.

Resource Management Act

At the time of writing (early 2026) the current government has frozen all existing District Plan reviews and introduced two new bills to replace the RMA – the Planning Act and the Natural Environment Act. Accordingly, this section of the *Conservation Plan* will need to be rewritten in the next year or so to reflect the superseding legislation when it comes into force.

For this reason, if work that could significantly change the exterior appearance of the building is contemplated, or if new structures are wanted on the site, and if the proposed changes are agreed to be consistent with the care and protection of the heritage values of the place as set out in this *Conservation Plan*, then it is recommended that discussions are entered into with the NCCs district plan team to confirm the specific requirements for resource consent or other approvals that might apply.

Nelson Resource Management Plan (NRMP)

This section sets out the relevant requirements set out in the current iteration of the NRMP[37] that could potentially have bearing on the future management of the Custom House Hotel. It is expected (but not certain) that these requirements will carry over into any revision of the NRMP. In summary, the headline points from the current NRMP are that:

1. The Custom House Hotel's Group A scheduling sets a fairly high bar for the preservation of the building on its site and partial demolition, demolition or removal are non-complying activities.
2. Development is controlled under the district plan heritage rules to protect its heritage values. A resource consent would be needed for any change to its external appearance (change to the interior is not regulated under the heritage rules).
3. The industrial zoning restricts the sorts of uses the building could be put to as of right and a resource consent would be needed for many potential uses.
4. Signage is subject to relatively stringent controls.

Objectives and policies

The building is scheduled on the District Plan (Appendix 1, group A) as a heritage building and located in an industrial zone. Note that the listing does not include the interior of the building. The headline objectives and policies on historic heritage found in Chapter 5, section DO4 are reproduced below:

> *DO4.1 – retention and enhancement of heritage items that contribute to the character, heritage values, or visual amenity of Nelson, in a setting that enhances such items.*
>
> *DO4.1.2 – the protection of Group A heritage buildings, places, or objects…is highly desirable.*
>
> [These] are the premier or most significant heritage buildings, places or objects in the District. Their protection and retention is a high priority. The policy recognises that there may be special circumstances when demolition or removal of such items may be

[37] Nelson Resource Management Plans ePlan viewer {February 2026]

acceptable. These are tightly prescribed, recognising that demolition or removal should be the exception. The policy also recognises that it is possible to demolish or remove parts of a building without adversely affecting the heritage values for which it was recognised in the Plan. Demolition or removal shall not be consented to unless the applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the listed building, place, or object:

a. is a serious risk to human life or is in serious state of disrepair, and the cost of remedying the risk to life or the disrepair is prohibitive; or

b. can be demolished in part without significant adverse effect on the heritage values for which the item was listed; or

c. can be reasonably relocated on the site, or another site in the District without having a significant adverse effect on the heritage values of the item, or of adjacent items; or

d. renders the site incapable of reasonable use, and places an unfair and unreasonable burden on the owner.

Regard shall also be had to the effects of any replacement activity or building proposed for the site, including the standard of design and appearance of the site and any buildings.

DO4.1.5 – archaeological sites and places of special interest to tangata whenua…should be protected from activities that would have adverse effects on those sites, places and values.

DO4.1.6 – alterations and adjoining development. The heritage significance and integrity of any feature…should not be unduly compromised by any alteration, addition or adjoining development, having regard to the category of protection afforded the listed item or place and the purpose of that protection.

This policy recognises the need to be able to alter or extend heritage buildings to meet the needs of present and future generations, subject to those alterations being sympathetic to and not unduly detracting from the heritage values of the building. Additions and additions can detract from the character of a heritage item and need to be done with care and sensitivity…The value and appreciation of any heritage item can be affected by its surroundings. This might include having sufficient space around it to be able to be appreciated…In implementing this policy, stricter standards should apply to Group A items than to Group B…It is recognised that even major changes can successfully be made to Group A buildings, provided that changes are carefully designed and implemented. This will require care to avoid obliterating the heritage values and fabric of the building.

DO4.1.12 – incentive for protection. Flexibility in development controls should be allowed on sites identified by a heritage overlay where the values for which the site or item was listed are not adversely affected by the development; any adverse effects on adjoining sites are minor; and there is a resulting environmental benefit from protection of the item.

The anticipated outcome of the policies is that heritage is retained (DO4e).

Industrial zone rules

The building is sited in an industrial zone predominantly associated with the port, and the relevant rules and controls for heritage buildings in this zone are spelled out in sections INr.61-63. Note there are some specific carve-outs for buildings directly associated with the port (INr.23), but these appear unlikely to apply to the former Custom House Hotel.

INr.61 Alterations to Group A and B items.
Minor maintenance and repair works are permitted activities that do not require resource consent approval, providing the scope of works fits the following criteria:

a. either:

   i. the work is redecoration, restoration or insignificant alteration of any existing fabric or detailing; and

   ii. it is carried out to the same scale as the original, including window scale, and with materials and details similar to, or having the same appearance to those originally used; or

b. the work is on the interior of a building or its site surrounds (unless otherwise specified in Appendix 1 in which case a. also applies).

As noted above, the interior is not scheduled in Appendix 1. All basic remedial work to the exterior of the building, including making good where the beer garden is removed, would fall into this category. Further, 'Restoration' has a broad definition in the NRMP that could enable significant works on the building without consent approval being needed:

> in relation to a heritage item, means returning a place as nearly as possible to a known earlier state by reassembly, reinstatement and/or the removal of additions unsympathetic to the style of the building.

Once the scope of any proposed works affecting the exterior of the building are known, it will need to be reviewed against this rule to determine if a resource consent would be required. If the work requires a consent, it would be a discretionary activity. Council's discretion is restricted to design and appearance, and public notification is not required. The relevant assessment criteria are:

a. the historic, cultural or architectural significance of the item, having regard to the site on which the item is located.

b. whether the item has particular value because of the scarcity of heritage buildings, places or objects in the area, or because it forms part of a precinct of heritage buildings.

c. the effect of the proposed alterations or additions on the integrity of the original heritage building or object, taking account of the scale of additions to the heritage building and the extent of loss (if any) of material of heritage significance, and how visible the change will be.

d. whether the addition or alteration is compatible with the heritage building, place or object, and whether the alteration or addition, if not in sympathy with the heritage building or object, is clearly distinguishable from the original as new work.

e. the ability of the applicant to develop or use the site without the alteration, and the economic effects of this.

f. whether the heritage value of the building, place or object has altered since the item was listed in the Plan.

g. any immediate or cumulative effects of the alteration on the quality of heritage features in the vicinity and the city as a whole.

INr.62 New buildings on the site of a heritage item.
This is a controlled activity and a resource consent cannot be refused, although conditions can be set. Control is exercised over:

i. design and appearance in relation to existing heritage item; and

ii. distance of new building from, and location and relationship to existing heritage item.

No plans for additional buildings on this site have been disclosed to the authors, and the limited site area seems likely to restrict the construction of any additional building.

The assessment criteria are:

a. the effect of the proposed new building on the integrity of the original heritage building or object, taking account of how visible the change will be.

b. whether the new building is compatible with the heritage building or object, including size, scale and materials used.

c. the location of the new building in relation to the heritage building or object and whether it dominates or detracts from the heritage building or object.

INr.63 Demolition or removal of Group A and B items.
Whole or partial demolition or removal of any Group A heritage building, place or object is a non-complying activity. A resource consent application could be made, but could be refused. The applicant must establish that the adverse effects on the environment would be minor or that the activity will not be contrary to the objectives of the Plan. If this threshold test is met, Council has full discretion as to whether or not to grant consent and what conditions may be imposed. Public notification would be likely to be required. The assessment criteria would include (but not necessarily be limited to) the following:

a. the historic, cultural or architectural significance of the item, having regard to the site on which the item is located.

b. whether the building has particular value because of the scarcity of heritage buildings in the area, or because it forms part of a precinct of heritage buildings.

c. for removal, the degree of heritage loss due to the association of the building or object with the present site and the physical extent of relocation.

d. the location a building or object is to be moved to, having regard to whether this yields a net environmental gain (e.g. the new site is more accessible or visible), and whether the item is to be protected or covenanted on its new site.

e. whether part of the building, place or object can be kept, while still maintaining to a reasonable degree, the features for which the item was listed.

f. the ability of the applicant to economically develop or use the site without demolition, alteration or removal.

g. the nature of any activity that is proposed to occur on the site, including the design and appearance of any replacement building or object.

h. whether the heritage value of the building, place or object has altered since the item was listed in the Plan.

i. any immediate or cumulative effects of the loss or removal of the listed building, place or object on the range, number, and quality of heritage features in the vicinity and the city as a whole.

This section strongly signals that demolition or relocation are effectively contrary to the objectives of the Plan and that the building should be kept on its site.

As the NCC intends to clear the east yard area of the existing collection of structures, the question to consider would be whether the 1957 addition, which seems to be butted up to the hotel if not firmly attached, forms part of the NRMP schedule (Appendix 1) or not, and so whether its removal would be a "partial demolition" or not.

It is the view of the authors that this structure has negligible heritage value and does not meaningfully contribute to the heritage values of the hotel, and that it would be unlikely to have been considered of any significance when the inventory reports were prepared. None of the other structures in the east yard are attached to the hotel, nor are of any heritage value and would be very unlikely to be caught under this rule.

As noted above, once the scope of proposed work is clear, advice should be sought from the NCCs district plan team to confirm consent requirements.

Signage rules

The rules controlling signage on scheduled heritage items are found in section AP20r.4. Signs on Group A buildings are not permitted except for:

a. plaques or signs not exceeding 0.2m2 that identify the item, or

b. signs on heritage buildings if:

   i. the sign complies with the rules in the Appendix

   ii. the sign is not above verandah level, or where there is no verandah is not above 4m from ground level, and

   iii. the sign does not obscure any window or architectural or decorative feature on the building.

Signage that does not comply with (ii) or (iii) is a controlled activity, in respect of the size, location, design and appearance of the sign. Signs outside of this standard are a discretionary activity. The assessment criteria include evaluating the purpose of the sign, whether the sign will detract from or add to the building or surroundings, and whether it complies with guidelines for heritage precincts.

Natural hazards rules

There are now some potential restrictions on future development of the site due to it being annotated on the Liquefaction Hazard Overlay. The policies in DO2 and objective DO2.2.14 are most directly applicable.

Coastal environment overlay

The site sits within the Coastal Environment Overlay, as does all the port land. This overlay indicates that any extension of an existing building would require a resource consent approval for a controlled activity.

Hazardous activities and industries list (HAIL) sites

The site is surrounded by mapped HAIL sites[38], most of which relate to the longstanding maritime and industrial use of the waterfront area. The mapping indicates situations where hazardous substances could cause or have caused land contamination, from improper use, disposal, or by escaping containment. This could potentially impact on any future development of the site.

Building Act 2004

The Building Act controls all matters relating to building construction. The following matters are of particular relevance when considering repairs, maintenance or any future alterations at the former Custom House Hotel.

Repair and maintenance (Schedule 1 - exempt building work)

This clause is relevant to both carrying out any repairs needed to put the building into sound condition, and to the ongoing maintenance of the place. A building consent is not required for '…the repair and maintenance of any component or assembly incorporated in or associated with a building, provided that comparable materials are used' or for '…the replacement of any component or assembly incorporated in or associated with a building, provided that: (a) a comparable component or assembly is used and (b) the replacement is in the same position'. (Note this definition is not closely aligned with that in the NRMP and work that does not require a building consent may still require resource consent approval).

The exemption excludes the complete or substantial replacement of structural or fire rating systems or the replacement of any component or assembly that has not met building code requirements (in particular for durability) – for which a building consent would be required.

All exempt work is required to comply with the Building Code. In particular this means compliance with durability requirements (clause B2): structural elements must have a minimum 50-year life; cladding and similar elements, 15 years, for linings and other elements that are easily accessible, 5 years. It is usually appropriate to aim for a much longer service life when carrying out repair work to an old building or structure; repair work and new materials for the building should, at a minimum, have an expected durability matching or exceeding the existing elements where these have proven to perform well. It is worth noting that the main materials of the place have lasted very well and have generally considerably exceeded the NZBC durability requirements.

Regardless of any exemption that may be available, a building consent (or a formally documented exemption under Schedule 1 (2)) or a discretionary TA exemption should be sought in respect of any significant building work on the site to help ensure a permanent external record of major works is kept.

Principles to be applied (Section 4)

Assessment of a consent application for building work subject to the Act is required to take into account, amongst other things,

[38] See the Nelson Hazards Map viewer https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/cdd8af1dd0854fb5b4ec177709492ed0/page/Natural-Hazards [viewed February 2026]

'the importance of recognising any special traditional and cultural aspects of the intended use of a building', and 'the need to facilitate the preservation of buildings of significant cultural, historical or heritage value' (sub-sections d and l); also

'the need to facilitate the efficient and sustainable use in buildings of materials and material conservation' (sub-section n).

Building consents (Section 40 - 42)

It is an offence to carry out building work not in accordance with a building consent, except for exempted buildings and work as set out in Schedule 1 of the Act.

Section 41(c) allows for certain urgent work, such as emergency repairs, to be carried out without a consent, but the building owner is required to obtain a Certificate of Acceptance directly after completion.

Code Compliance Certificate (Section 91)

A building consent authority must issue a code compliance certificate if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the building work complies with the approved building consent, and that all specified systems can perform to the standards set out in the building consent.

Compliance Schedule and Warrant of Fitness (Sections 100 – 111)

The building will be subject to a Compliance Schedule regime, as it contains a number of specified systems including smoke detection, emergency lighting, escape routes and signage and other features that need to be regularly checked to verify compliance. Section 105 sets out the building owner's obligations to ensure that all specified systems perform as intended. Section 108 sets out the requirements for a Building Warrant of Fitness.

Alterations to existing buildings (Section 112)

This clause would apply to any future building work involving substantive change that might be considered, provided the use of the building remains consistent with its past hotel use. Alterations to existing buildings require a building consent, which will be issued by the consent authority if they are satisfied that after the alteration the building will '…comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable and to the same extent as if it were a new building, with the provisions of the building code that relate to:

(i) means of escape from fire; and

(ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities, and

continue to comply with the other provisions of the building code to at least the same extent as before the alteration'.

Alterations that do not comply with full requirements of the building code may be allowed by the territorial authority if they are satisfied that:

'(a) if the alteration were required to comply … the alteration would not take place; and

(b) the alteration will result in improvements to attributes of the building that relate to (i) means of escape from fire; or (ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities; and

(c) the improvements referred to in paragraph (b) outweigh any detriment that is likely to arise as a result of the building not complying with the relevant provisions of the building code.'

Subsection (1) of this clause allows alterations to existing buildings to be granted consent provided that the consent authority is satisfied that after the alteration:

(a) the building will comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable, with the provisions of the building code that relate to:

(i) means of escape from fire; and

(ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities (if this is a requirement in terms of section 118); and

(b) the building will:

(i) if it complied with the other provisions of the building code immediately before the building work began, continue to comply with those provisions; or

(ii) if it did not comply with the other provisions of the building code immediately before the building work began, continue to comply at least to the same extent as it did then comply.

Subsection (2) allows for alterations that do not comply with the full requirements of the building code if the territorial authority is satisfied that:

'(a) if the building were required to comply with the relevant provisions of the building code, the alteration would not take place; and

(b) the alteration will result in improvements to attributes of the building that relate to:

(i) means of escape from fire; or

(ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities; and

(c) the improvements referred to in paragraph (b) outweigh any detriment that is likely to arise as a result of the building not complying with the relevant provisions of the building code.'

The 'reasonably practicable' provisions recognise that it not always possible to make an existing building fully comply with the same standards as a new building. This approach should enable some flexibility in considering other potential impacts, or any requirements for consequential work that could arise when considering building code compliance matters. Note that this section is also subject to s133AT, which deals with alterations to buildings under an EPB notice and requires that structural strengthening work be undertaken in those cases.

Change of use (section 115)

Similar but more onerous provisions exist where the defined use of a building is to be changed. Section 115 states that an owner of a building must not change the use of a building:

(b) …unless the territorial authority gives the owner written notice that the territorial authority is satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that the building, in its new use –

(i) will comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable, with every provision of the building code that relates to the following:

(A) means of escape from fire, protection of other property, sanitary facilities, structural performance, and fire-rating performance:

(B) access and facilities for people with disabilities (if this is a requirement under section 118); and

(ii) will:

(A) if it complied with the other provisions of the building code immediately before the change of use, continue to comply with those provisions; or

(B) if it did not comply with the other provisions of the building code immediately before the change of use, continue to comply at least to the same extent as it did then comply."

It is possible that the existing use rights associated with the building may be considered by the NCCs building team to have expired, and therefore that any use would be considered a change of use under the Act.

Accordingly, any change of use must be discussed with NCCs building department before any design work is undertaken, and the brief and scope of work carefully assessed against the conservation requirements set out in this *Conservation Plan*. Upgrading work required under s115 has the potential to be accompanied with a significant amount of consequential work required in service of improving compliance, and this in turn raises the risk of further potential adverse effects on the fabric and heritage values of the building (particularly to the interior spaces). The exact requirements would depend on the scale and nature of the proposed new use, but would likely include improvements to structure, fire systems and access (possibly including a passenger lift) and toilet facilities.

Access (Sections 117 – 120)

In carrying out alterations to any building "…to which members of the public are to be admitted … reasonable and adequate provision by way of access, parking provisions and sanitary facilities must be made for persons with disabilities."

These provisions are not initiated by lawful repairs and maintenance work (see above), but any significant alterations to the building or a change of use could potentially activate this requirement. If improvements to access were to be required, NZS4121 is an acceptable solution for the design of access works. The Standard covers matters such as access ramps, toilet facilities, access routes, passenger lifts and staff facilities.

It is noted that the building is inherently not very wheel-chair friendly due to its elevation off the ground and the internal stepped accesses and staircase (and no lift), although it appears to have reasonable access and facilities for the ambulant disabled.

Dangerous, earthquake-prone, and insanitary buildings (Sections 121 – 132)

A dangerous building is one likely to cause injury or death in the course of ordinary use (excluding earthquakes), whether through collapse or fire. An insanitary building is offensive or likely to be injurious to health because of its condition or lack of appropriate facilities.
A territorial authority can, if it judges a building to be dangerous, earthquake prone or insanitary, require work to be done to reduce or remove the danger. Section 122 defines an

earthquake-prone building is one that will have its ultimate capacity exceeded in a moderate earthquake and would be likely to collapse causing injury or death, or damage to any other property, during or following a moderate earthquake.

The building has been temporarily flagged as 'dangerous and insanitary' by the NCC due to it being unoccupied and with some latent maintenance issues. It is, to the best knowledge of the authors, not currently identified as earthquake prone. The latter does not preclude the building being damaged, possibly severely, in a major earthquake (see *Risks* above).

6.5. Disaster risk management

As outlined in s6.3 above, the building faces a variety of potential risks to its future, including some that could potentially have disastrous consequences. To respond to these risks in a way that both mitigates impacts on heritage values and helps ensure the long-term survival of the place, this *Conservation Plan* outlines a general course of action for Disaster Risk Management (DRM).

All actions must be well-grounded in understanding the particular physical weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the place as well as what is most important to preserve from a heritage perspective. This determines the nature of risk reduction and readiness work that might be carried out, as well as to disaster response planning. Planning centres on the '4Rs':

Reduce risk – eliminate or minimise all manageable risks to the place;

Readiness – have a plan in place that prepares for a possible disaster;

Response – have an effective plan for the actions to be taken during and after an emergency;

Recover – plan for actions to be taken to recover heritage values in the aftermath of a disaster.

Reduction

The overall goal of risk reduction work is to improve the resilience of the place. This must aim to protect its heritage values and occupants, visitors and members of the public alike. Reducing risk includes:

- Undertaking regular maintenance to keep the building in sound and weathertight condition, and making repairs, when needed, without delay.
- Ensuring that all fire safety measures are up to date and that all potential fire risks have been identified and mitigated as far as possible.
- Considering the risks set out above (and any other risks to the building or place), and undertaking work to reduce those risks, as and when appropriate.
- Adopting and using this *Plan* as an aid to the ongoing management of the place.

Readiness

Preparation in readiness for a disaster should be done in parallel with risk reduction work. It is critically important to have both a realistic and achievable plan for response to different kinds of disasters as well as materials and equipment available to effect a useful response as soon as possible. Train staff or permanent occupants on how to handle a disaster response, including safely evacuating the building, and securing it where practicable and safe to do so. The training

must ensure staff have a clear understanding of how and when to hand off to emergency services (typically immediately after evacuation).

Examples of scenarios to consider could include serious storm damage, minor or major earthquake damage, or scenarios of a spectrum of levels of fire damage, as well as a flood or coastal inundation event. Consideration must be given to both primary and secondary hazards, including the potential for cascading and cumulative effects from combinations of disastrous events (e.g. a post-earthquake fire affecting the neighbourhood or wider city).

The building could be better prepared for a disaster by:

- Developing a simple and clear response plan for emergencies with staff or others on site who will have to implement the plan in an event. This will be important to ensure the safe and timely evacuation of the place in the event of an emergency, as well as actions to take before and after any emergency.
- Maintaining relationships with people and organisations who could assist in an emergency or as soon as possible after a disastrous event, including relevant construction trades (builder, roofer etc.), security, as well as consultants including project manager, structural engineer, conservation architect or building surveyor, etc.
- If feasible, maintaining a modest stock of temporary repair materials (timber, plywood, tarpaulins etc.) on site or nearby to enable short-term securing of the building in the event this becomes necessary.
- Liaising with insurers to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is provided, commensurate with the quality and significance of the place, and the importance of maintaining its current interpretative use.
- Developing and maintaining a partnership on DRM with key local stakeholders.

Response

Response work must aim to ensure the place can be safeguarded as quickly as reasonably practicable after the event of a major disaster. The first aim is to minimise the extent of loss or damage and to reduce the risk of further damage in the short term until stabilising work or more permanent repairs can be put in place. The response to a disaster should involve:

- Securing the building via the use of a cordon (e.g. have temporary fencing or hoarding available at short notice for this purpose) and security as appropriate.
- Effecting temporary repairs and weather protection, where feasible and safe, to head off further damage.
- Assessing and recording the condition of the building as soon as possible. This will likely require specialist consultant advice.
- Engaging expert advice as needed, including insurer advice, structural engineering and conservation advice, and project planning advice.
- Managing access to the site during the aftermath to ensure that urgent repair work on the building can proceed (if required).

Recovery

Post-disaster recovery can be supported by:

- Consulting with the building's insurers to ensure that future conservation / heritage-related work is properly supported in an insurance claim.
- Establishing an appropriate buffer around the building, removing debris and storing any heritage fabric that could be reinstated.
- Working with specialist consultants to establish and implement the disaster recovery plan for the building.

7.0 Conservation policy

This section outlines the general conservation philosophy that should be adopted for the former Custom House Hotel to best balance its retention and continuing use for the future with the need to maintain and enhance its heritage values. The advice in this section is informed by the heritage significance of the place (section 4), the evaluation of heritage values given in section 5 and the influences on managing the building described in section 6. The policies also inform the conservation recommendations given in the following section.

7.1. Philosophy for conservation

Although it has been much altered over time, the former Custom House Hotel retains a reasonable level of heritage significance, and it is good conservation practice that this should be retained, preserved and enhanced for present and future generations.

At present, several factors in combination present good opportunities to carry out work that would enhance the building's heritage value. Firstly, its current condition warrants some significant changes, such as replacement of the existing aluminium windows. Secondly, since the building is considered unlikely to return to its original purpose as a hotel, upgrading work for structure, fire protection and new amenities will be necessary to support a different use. Thirdly, the unsympathetic changes made over the last half-century have left considerable scope to enhance the building's heritage values. Once a new use is settled, the long-term aim should be to reinstate the building to its form and detail as it was in its heyday, circa perhaps the 1940s, before the major changes visible today were made (more research is needed to define an appropriate date), with the minimum necessary change needed to support the new use. This could be achieved step-by-step over time, or as a single major project.

7.2. Policies

1. Management

The building must always be managed as a coherent whole to avoid adverse effects on its existing sense of authenticity, its quality, its appearance, or its heritage values. No part or element should be considered in isolation from any other part when weighing up any potential changes.

Decisions affecting the care and use of the place should always be made with the protection or enhancement of heritage values at the forefront and with reference to the guidance in this *Conservation Plan*. Note that it is fundamentally counterproductive to preserve an important heritage building at the expense of its heritage values, but there is also little point in preserving it without carrying out essential work to help ensure its survival for the future.

Benefit for heritage values: Careful and knowledgeable management by the NCC will help ensure that the heritage values of the place are enhanced over time while continuing to support the ongoing use of the place.

2. Conflicts between heritage values and use

Any new use must be fully compatible with the building's heritage values. If any conflict between the use of the place and the preservation and enhancement of its heritage values arises

in the future, the preservation of heritage values should always be given first priority and, if necessary, the use modified or changed rather than the building.

Benefit for heritage values: This approach is critical to help ensure the building's heritage values are retained and enhanced rather than eroded over time (as has been the case through the building's hotel life).

3. Preservation

Take all actions necessary to ensure the long-term survival of the building and preserve it for present and future generations. These will include keeping up maintenance and repair work so that the building envelope remains sound and water-tight, carrying out any structural strengthening work as needed to minimise the risk of serious damage to the building in an earthquake, installing fire protection measures to minimise the risk of total loss in a fire, and ensuring the building always has a use compatible with its heritage values.

Benefit for heritage values: Preservation actions are at the core of all building conservation work.

4. Reinstatement

From a heritage perspective, the ideal long-term aim of work to the Custom House Hotel would be to reinstate it to its form and detail as it was circa the early 1950s, before the major changes visible today were made, which would present the building in an authentic and architecturally interesting state. Such work could be carried out progressively over time, or carried out as part of a major upgrading project. A sliding scale of possibilities for restoring its appearance (and for other changes that would enhance heritage values) is given in the heritage inventory, section 5.

Benefit for heritage values: Reinstating the building to its known previous form would significantly enhance its heritage values as well as the heritage values of the wider setting.

5. Limits to change to protect heritage values

As it stands, the heritage values of the former Custom House Hotel have been diminished by a succession of unsympathetic changes made over time, particularly in the second half of the 20th century. Presuming the place is given an appropriate and compatible use, this means the main implications for managing its heritage values are:

(a) As above, the long-term aim should be towards the reinstatement of the form and character of the place as it was before the major changes of the 20th century took place. This means that any interventions that enhance or uplift the building's heritage values are strongly encouraged.

(b) Any loss of original building fabric is to be avoided, so that the building's authenticity is not further impacted by future changes.

(c) Any work that could further cloud the understanding of the building's original plan form or elevations should be avoided.

(d) Interventions that improve the resilience of the place, enhance its sense of authenticity or improve its amenity and comfort for occupants – without impinging on heritage values – are encouraged.

(e) New building fabric must be compatible in materiality and quality with the original building fabric.

To maintain or enhance the heritage significance of the place, any proposals for work or change that could potentially impact on its heritage values, however small in scale, and even if only intended for a limited period of use, should be assessed against the principles, policies and recommendations contained in this *Conservation Plan* (including the limitations to change described in the inventory, section 5). In the event of any doubt consult conservation professionals for further advice.

Spaces, elements, and fabric of high heritage value should be protected from change that could adversely impact significance. Any change should always be designed and executed in a way that either keeps the place visibly unaltered (and without adverse impacts on heritage fabric or spaces) or that reinstates its original form.

Benefit for heritage values: Following these principles will ensure that the heritage values of the place are maintained and progressively enhanced for the future.

6. Setting and site

The setting and site of a heritage structure can have heritage values in its own right and would normally be regarded as integral to the structure. Here, although the site – and the immediate setting – has little to contribute to the heritage values of the building, the wider setting, which contains a collection of quite authentic 19th and early 20th century buildings, makes a strong positive contribution to the heritage values of the place.

Benefit for heritage values: The heritage value of the building is intertwined with its wider setting. Actions taken to preserve and enhance the heritage values of this setting will be positive for the heritage values of the place as a whole.

7. Maintenance and repair

The building must always be kept in good condition, as this is critical to its long-term preservation.

Maintenance and repair work should always be prioritised to both ensure the long-term survival of the place and its safety – and fitness – for people to visit and use. The primary focus should be ensuring that all aspects of the external envelope of the building are kept in sound and water-tight condition, which will in turn minimise the risk of any impacts on structural integrity, interior environment, or the risk of damage or loss of fabric of heritage value.

Implement a cyclical maintenance plan that addresses the ongoing needs of the building over a nominal 10-year period, and ensure the plan is properly funded. Alongside regular maintenance work, the plan should include a programme of condition inspections – for instance at annual and five-yearly intervals (each with a different focus and level of detail) – to help detect and attend to any faults before they develop into significant problems. Major inspections should include advice from building experts with a background in weathertightness and heritage and conservation work.

The maintenance plan must cover all critical work that needs to be done frequently, such as clearing sumps, downpipes, and drains, cleaning the building and painting maintenance, as well as regular longer-term matters such as re-painting the building, and work that may occasionally arise, such as repairing the roofing, joinery or cladding. It should include appropriate technical

information to cover the particular requirements of the care of the old and original fabric of the building. The maintenance plan should be reviewed and updated periodically, as needed to keep up to date with the needs of the building.

The maintenance plan must be updated as and when changes are made to the exterior materials or details of the building.

Benefit for heritage values: This work is critical to preserving the heritage values of the place for the future.

8. Fire protection

Take all feasible precautions to protect the building against fire and prevent serious damage or even total loss. An automatic sprinkler system is the best way to protect the property against the spread of fire. This would be beneficial for the safety of occupants and would reduce the requirements for other fire safety precautions, and so save complexity and expense in any future development. Similarly, consider installing a sensitive fire alarm system to give the earliest possible warning of a fire developing.

Ensure alarms and fire protection systems are always in first class condition (a regular regime of BWOF checks will provide a useful baseline for this) and ensure the use of the building is closely managed to minimise any risk of fire. This includes preventing smoking and vaping on site, forbidding naked flames (e.g. candles) and strictly controlling the conditions for any physical work on the building.

If not already present, install arc-fault protection on the building's power supply to minimise the risk of an electrical fire. Should gas still be used on site, fit a seismic cut-off valve to the supply.

Benefit for heritage values: Positive – the alarm system is critical to the safety of occupants. An automatic sprinkler system would provide a very high level of protection for occupants and for the building itself.

9. Disaster risk management

The building has some vulnerability to disastrous events, as outlined in the preceding section. To ensure that it is protected as best as possible from such events and their consequences, prepare and implement a disaster risk management plan that deals with reducing risk, enhancing readiness, sets out a response plan to secure the place after a disastrous event, and deals with the subsequent recovery.

Benefit for heritage values: Positive – precautionary planning will give the NCC the best possible chance of recovering the building from a disastrous event and putting it back to use.

10. Records of the place

There is a limited amount of information on the building on record.

Collect copies of the records of prior work at the property into a single file, and keep a record of all future work, whether repairs or maintenance or new work, in the same file so that the history of work on the property can be quickly and easily understood and any persistent faults can be tracked over time. Similarly, document and keep detailed records of all decisions and actions that have affected the place or will affect the place in the future and the reasons for taking them,

including any justification on conservation grounds. This is to inform future decision-makers as best as possible.

Benefit for heritage values: Essential for the effective long-term management of the place.

11. Resilience and sustainability

Consider opportunities to enhance the resilience of the building, particularly in relation to power failure or the aftermath of potential disastrous events, where the building could be without power or water for an extended period of time. For instance, providing some on-site water storage and reducing overall water use or providing some on-site energy storage (such as battery storage, or vehicle-to-grid plug-ins to the power system) coupled with some on-site power generation, would significantly enhance the ability of the building to function in the aftermath of any serious event that affects the wider city, such as a major flood.

As and when opportunities arise, take actions that enhance the sustainability of the building and to reduce its energy use – and its operational carbon footprint – as far as practicable.

Benefit for heritage values: Measures to protect and improve the resilience of the utility services and to reduce the cost of occupancy will help keep it occupied over the long-term and will help the building support its occupants in the aftermath of a disastrous event.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1. General recommendations

1. Conservation policy

Appropriate actions shall be taken to comply with the policy statements given in section 7 of this *Conservation Plan*.

2. Management and use

The building has been used as a hotel for all of its life, until recently. Any new use for the building must be fully compatible with the heritage values of the building. Where any issues of conflict between use and heritage values arise, preservation of heritage values shall always take first priority, and the use modified or changed rather than the building.

4. Protect fabric

Always prioritise work that ensures the weathertightness, physical integrity and safety of the building (e.g. keeping it structurally sound and safe to visit or to work on) over any other work.

5. Record keeping

Collect copies of all records of prior work at the property into a single file, and keep a record of all future work, whether repairs or maintenance or new work, in the same place. Going forward, keep detailed records of all decisions and actions affecting the place (or which will affect the place in the future) and the reasons for taking them, including any justification for conservation reasons. Keep copies of the records off site and digital copies in the cloud, so that information remains available in the aftermath of a disastrous event.

6. Funding

Ensure an adequate long-term budget is kept to properly fund repairs and maintenance work on an annual basis. Ensure that there is a budget for additional major works expenditure over a nominal 10-yearly cycle (such as exterior painting and eventual replacement of the roofing). Also keep a further contingent budget both for unexpected repairs that fall outside the normal maintenance cycle and for emergency repairs.

7. Statutory requirements

Comply with all statutory requirements relevant to the ongoing use and care of the property. Any repair or maintenance work – and any other physical work – must comply with the requirements of the Building Act 2004 and all other relevant statutory requirements (including the relevant provisions of the NRMP in the case of any external alterations proposed to the building or changes to its use). Consult with heritage specialists and with HNZPT if any significant changes are proposed to the place. Obtain all necessary consents and approvals before carrying out any work, including consulting with mana whenua as needed.

8.2. Specific recommendations

1. Further research

Carry out further research to investigate the early European history of the site, including the preceding Custom House Hotel and the initial reclamations.

2. Mana whenua advice

Contact mana whenua to give a statement on the history and importance of the land and place, at their discretion.

Engage with mana whenua when working on the re-use of the place to develop awareness of cultural connections to the site and wider landscape, and to enhance the experience of the place.

3. Maintenance plan

Prepare and implement a detailed maintenance plan for the building to cover its maintenance and inspection needs over a nominal 10-year time-frame. The plan must be periodically reviewed and adjusted to make sure that it is functioning properly to protect the place and its fabric and that it meets the needs of its users. Ensure inspection work involves a building conservation specialist and a building surveyor so that maintenance requirements, and any repair requirements that are particular to the preservation of its heritage values are properly documented, communicated and actioned.

4. Reinstatement

As and when the opportunity arises carry out work that contributes towards reinstating the internal form and external appearance of the building as it was in the early 1950s.

5. Seismic strengthening

Commission a detailed seismic assessment (DSA) from a structural engineer specialising in sensitive interventions to heritage buildings. This should include preliminary design advice on any strengthening work required and provide options for work to further limit damage in the event of a serious earthquake. Any interventions must be planned to be as discreet as possible and to have the minimum possible impact on the heritage fabric and heritage values of the building.

6. Fire protection

Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system throughout the building, in conjunction with any other upgrading work that may be planned for the building. This would provide a high level of property protection and also life safety protection. In tandem with this, fit a sensitive smoke detection and alarm system to give early warning of any fire.

Install arc-fault detection equipment on the main switchboard to minimise the risk of an electrical fire developing. Similarly, if gas remains in use on site, fit a seismic cut-off valve to the supply.

7. Disaster risk management plan

Prepare a comprehensive disaster risk management plan for the place. Ensure the DRM plan for the property is kept up to date, supported with preparedness measures including staff training, and is reviewed at regular intervals to make sure it remains relevant and can be put into play instantly if needed.

8. Resilience and sustainability

Consider opportunities to enhance the resilience of the building, particularly in relation to power failure or the aftermath of potential disastrous events, where the building could be without power or water for an extended period of time.

As and when opportunities arise, take actions that enhance the sustainability of the building and to reduce its energy use – and its operational carbon footprint – as far as practicable.

9. Archaeology

Seek archaeological advice from HNZPT when planning for any work affecting the ground at any part of the site. As the site was occupied in the 1860s or earlier, an Archaeological Authority approval may be required for any excavation work.

10. Review of Conservation Plan.

This *Conservation Plan* should be regarded as a dynamic document and updated as often as is necessary (and at no more than 10-yearly intervals), at the discretion of the NCC. It should be updated when new information comes to hand, after major work is carried out, or following a disastrous event, or as soon as any significant part of the plan becomes out of date (e.g. changing regulatory or statutory requirements that could affect the use of the place). It should only be updated with the assistance of conservation specialists who have the requisite skills or knowledge to do such work.

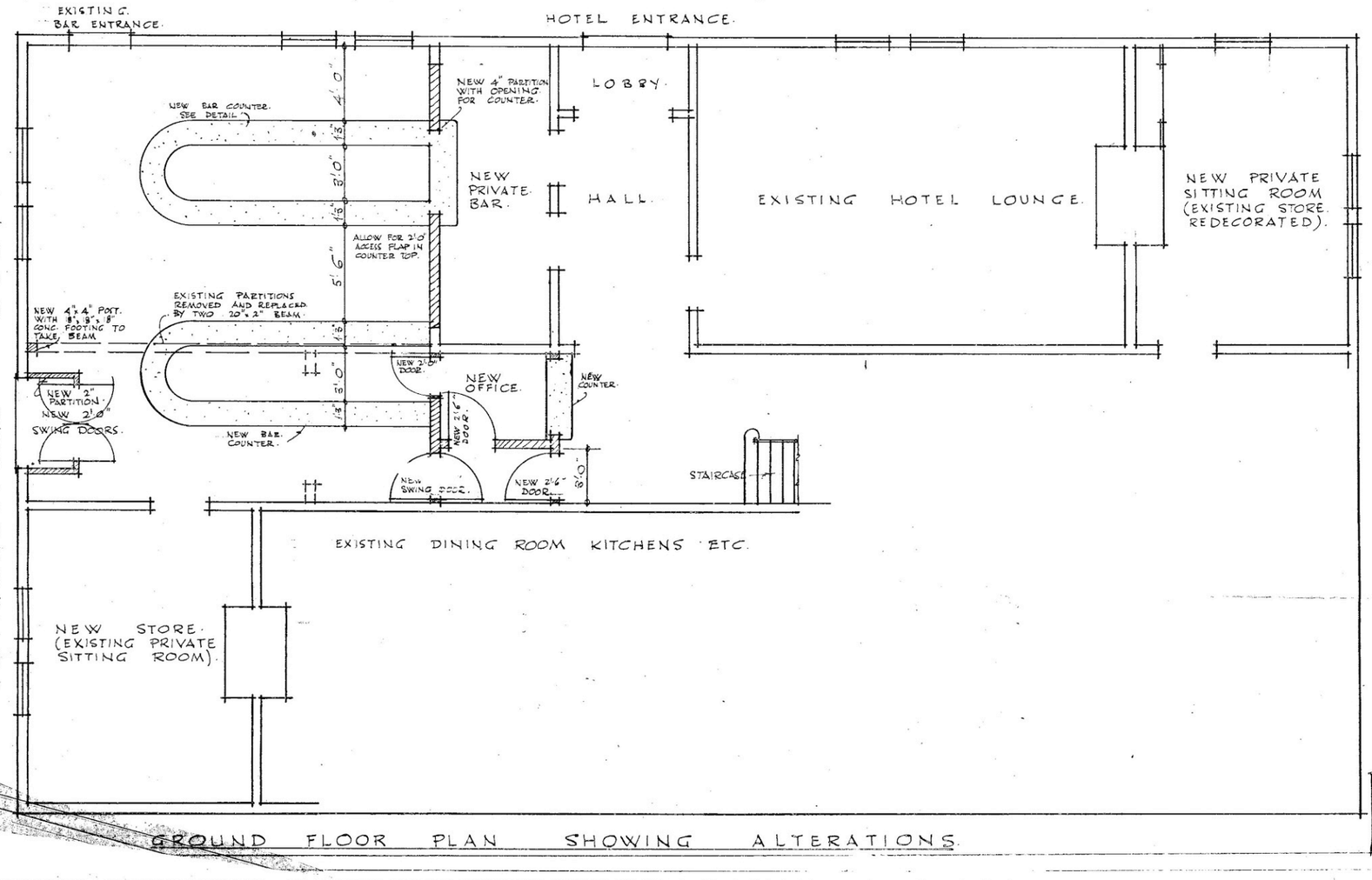
9.0 Historic plans

This section includes three drawings from the NCCs property file, which give a good indication both of the original plan layout of the building and explain how it was progressively altered towards the present arrangement.

1. 1950 alterations to expand the bar, architect Alex Bowman, one drawing sheet reproduced here at A3 size. The plan illustrates part of the ground floor plan of the hotel as it was prior to the work and indicates little substantive change from its original layout of 1904, although a number of the spaces are not drawn. (NCC file, permit 8987)

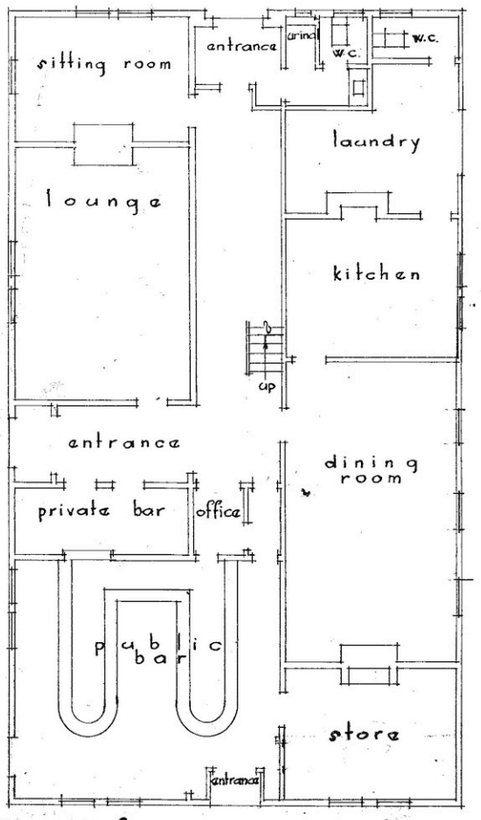
2. 1957 alterations, including the addition of the concrete store at the south-east corner of the building and expanded toilet facilities, architect Alex Bowman, one of two drawing sheets reproduced at A3 size. The plan shows the 'as-existing' ground floor layout of the hotel north of the bar at that time with all spaces drawn. This seems to have remained largely unchanged from the original layout described in 1904, except for alterations for toilets around the north entrance and laundry area. (NCC file, permit 3371)

3. 1966 alterations, architect Alex Bowman, one drawing sheet reproduced at A3 size. This is the earliest extant drawing of the first floor. It shows how the north verandah had been filled in, also and that alterations had been made to shoe-horn toilet and bathroom facilities into three of the former guest rooms. There is no sign of the small cantilevered shower room at the north-east corner, although aerial photography clearly shows it in place in 1962.
(NCC file, permit B058966)

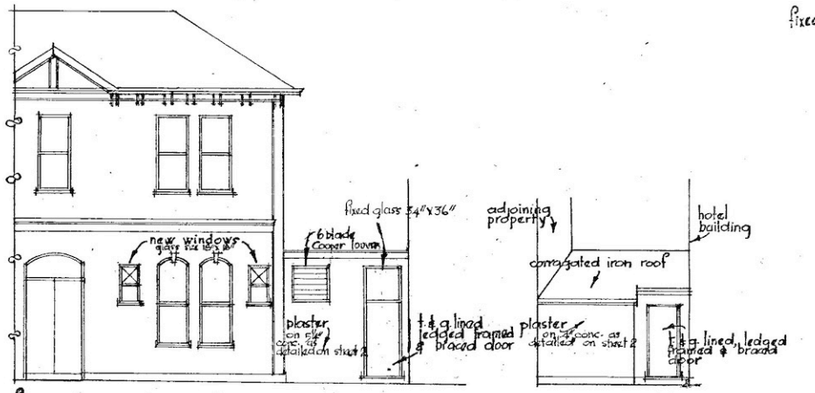


GROUND FLOOR PLAN SHOWING ALTERATIONS.

ALTERATIONS TO CUSTOMHOUSE HOTEL PORT NELSON.	DRAWING. No 1.	SCALES 4ft to 1in.	Alex Bowman. ARIBA AMNZIA AMTPI. C.R. DUKE AMNZIA REGD. ARCHITECTS NELSON.

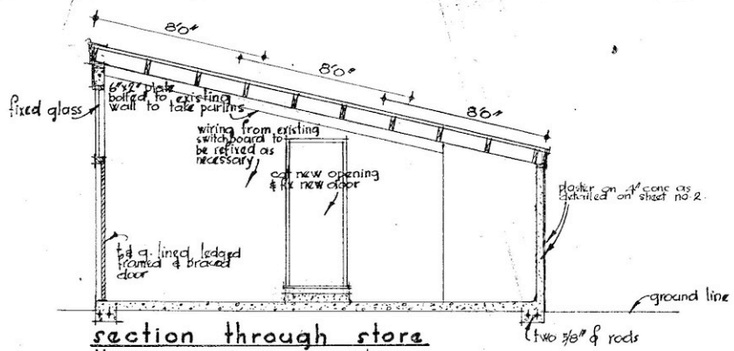


ground floor plan as existing

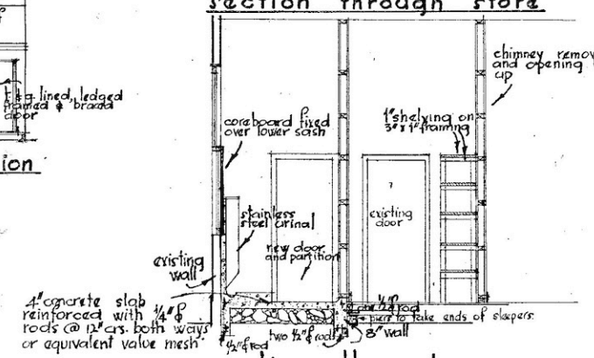


front elevation

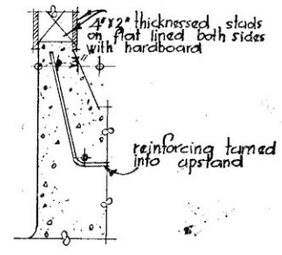
rear elevation of store



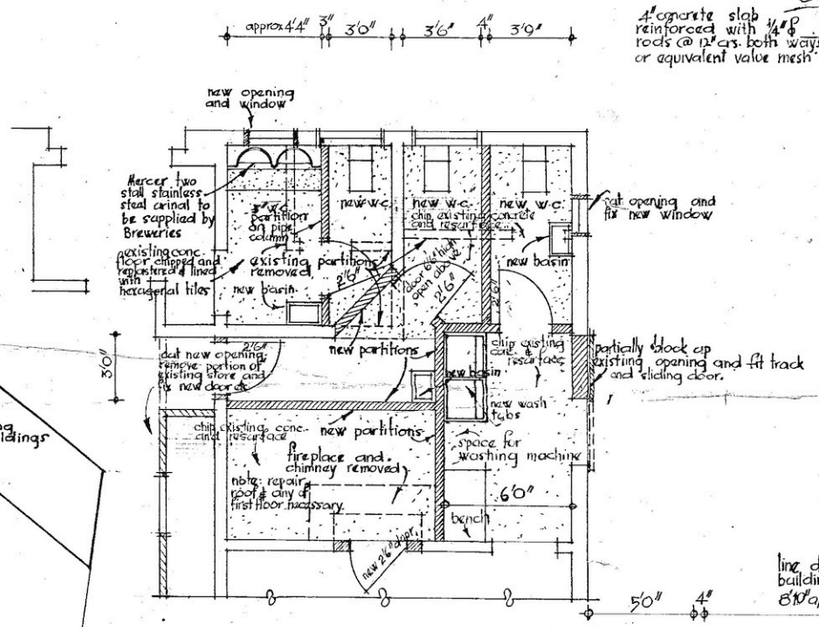
section through store

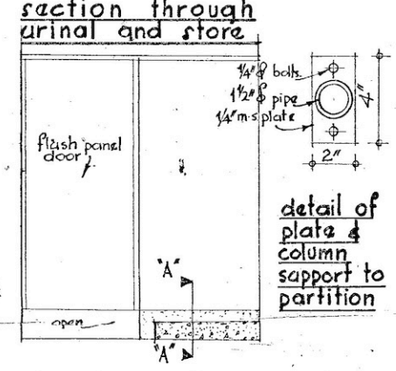


section through urinal and store



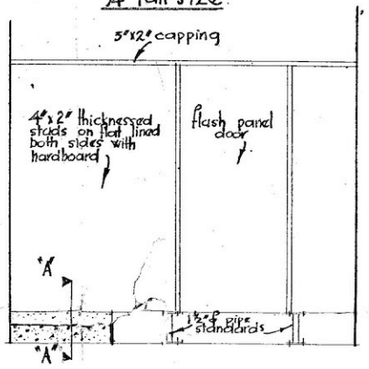
detail at A-A
1/4 full size



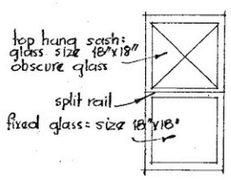


detail of plate & column support to partition

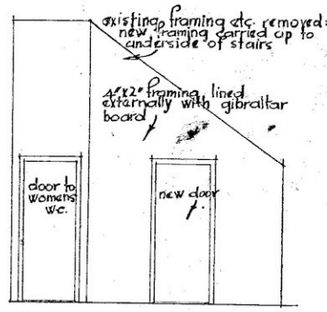
elevation of w.c. partition at front of building



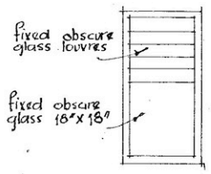
elevation of w.c. partition at rear of building



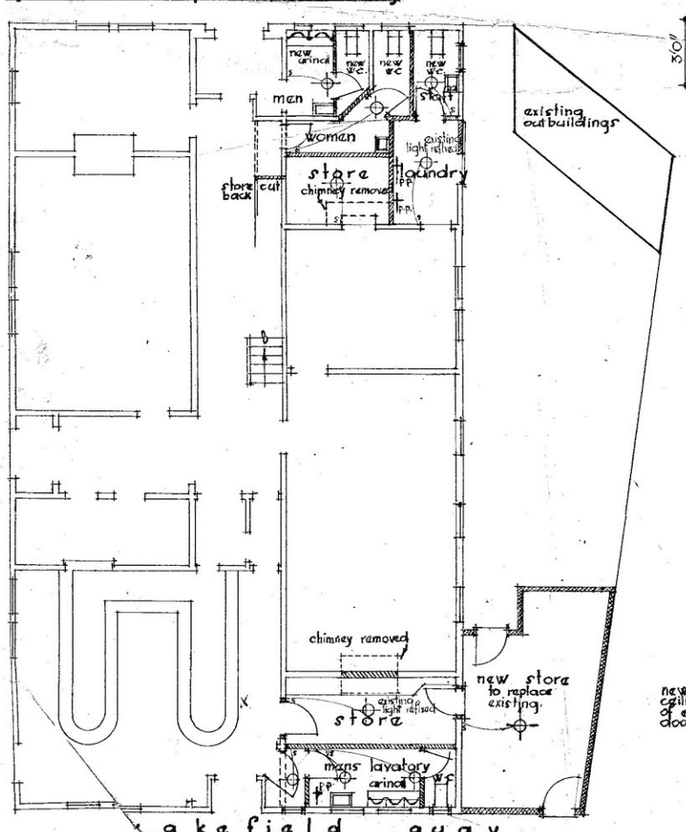
elevation of new windows in lavatory and w.c. at front of building



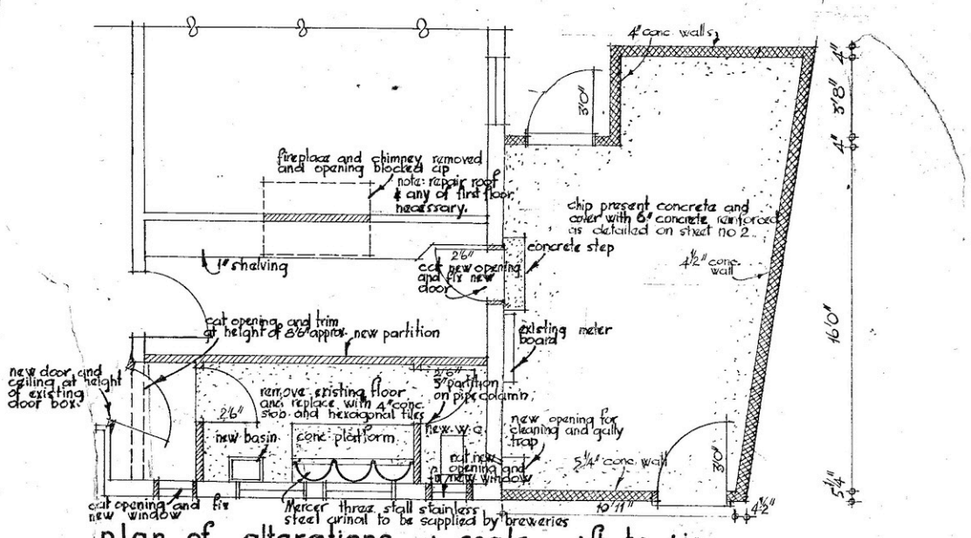
elevation of store cupboard in hall



elevation of new windows: urinal and staff w.c.



ground floor plan showing alterations



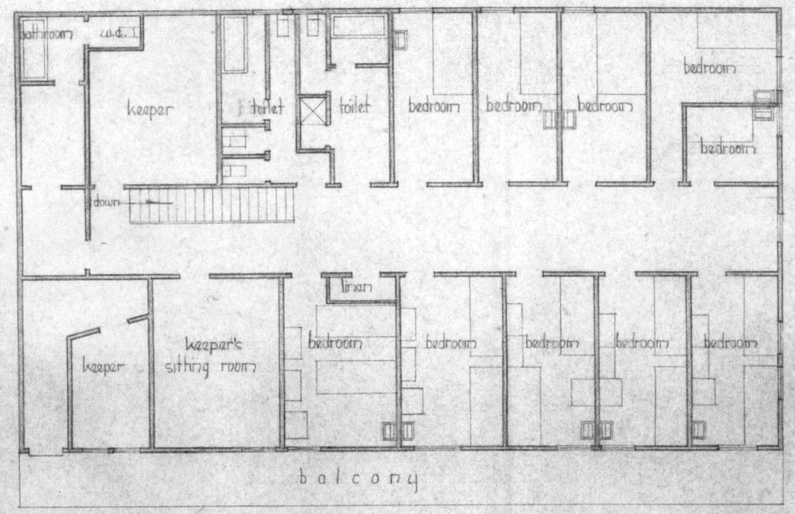
plan of alterations : scale 4ft to 1in.

ALTERATIONS TO CUSTOMHOUSE HOTEL, PORT NELSON FOR NELSON HOTELS LIMITED.

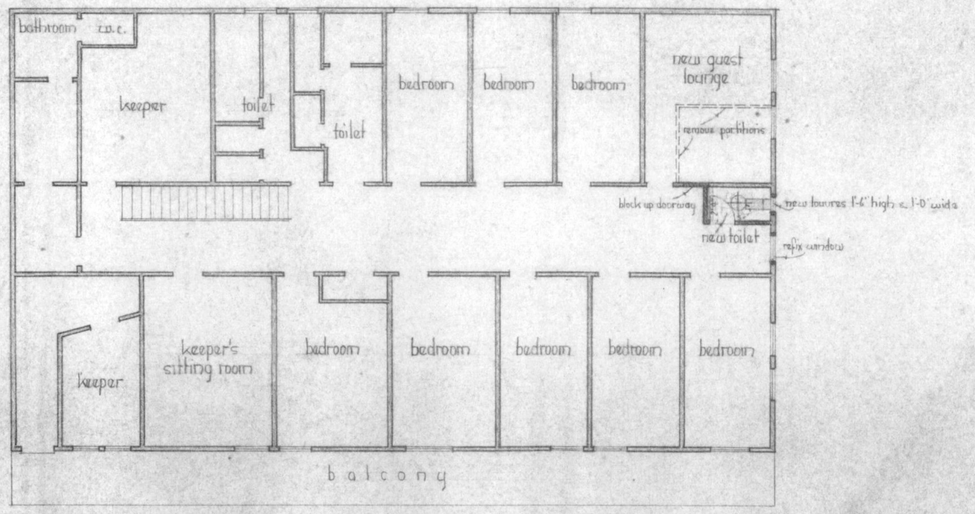
drawing no. 1. plans, elevations, details etc.

scales: 1/4 f.s., 2ft to 1in, 4ft to 1in, 8ft to 1in. etc.

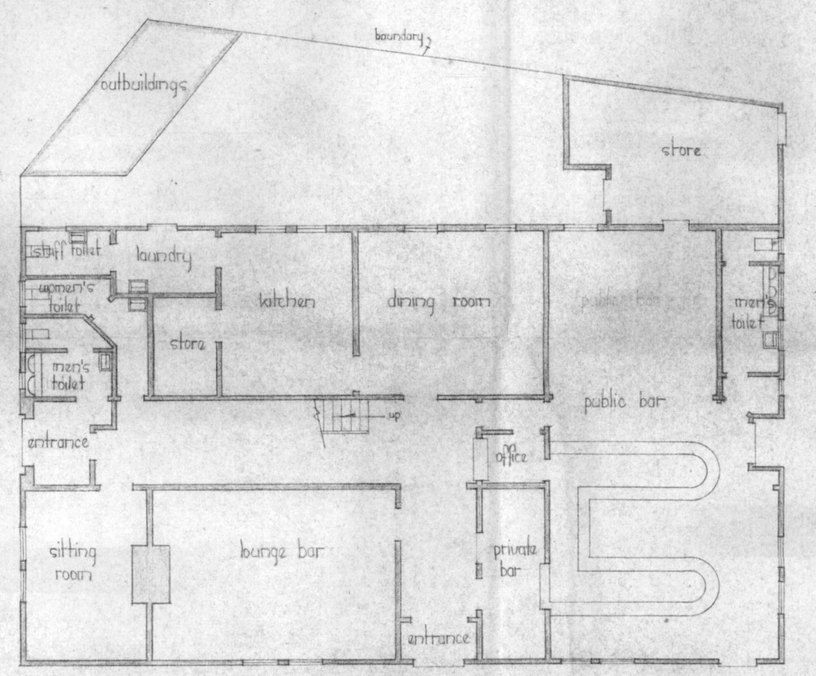
alex bowman, arihq, anzia, amtpi registered architect, c.m.l. building, nelson.



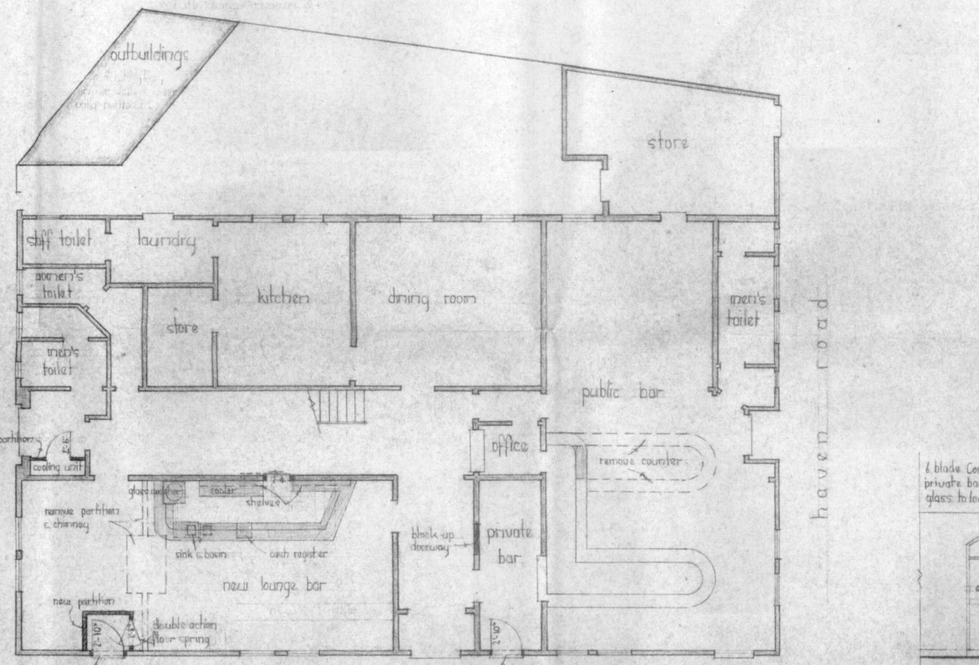
existing first floor plan



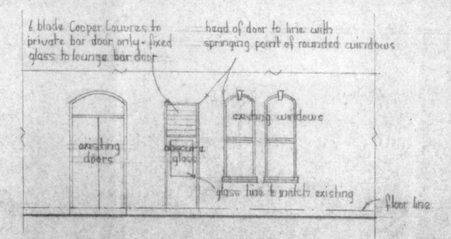
alterations to first floor plan



existing ground floor plan



alterations to ground floor plan



part elevation of south wall showing new door to private bar
(similar new door to be provided for lounge bar)

ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS to the CUSTOMHOUSE HOTEL for NELSON HOTELS LTD - PORT NELSON

plans of existing & alterations
scale: 8ft. to 1in.

january 1966

alex bowman - ariba - anzia - amtpi
regd. architect & town planner - nelson

drawing no 1