

Commercial Building

221-225 Cuba Street



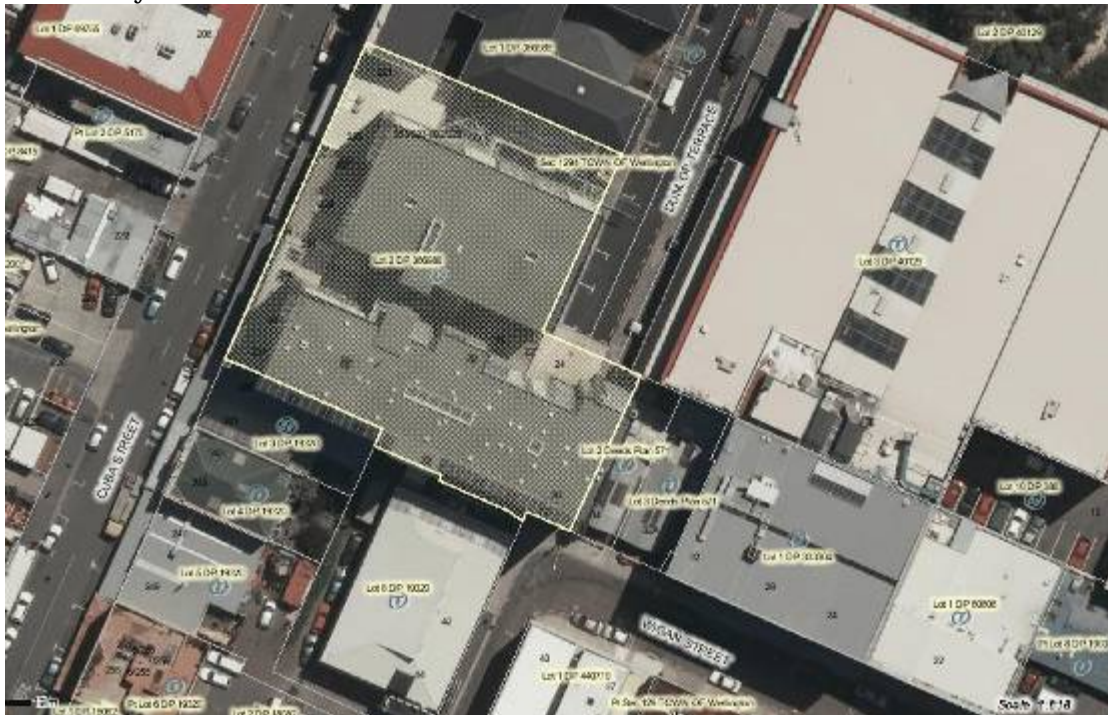
Images: *Charles Collins, 2014*

Summary of heritage significance

- 221- 225 Cuba Street is the remnant façade of an 1896 row of three two-storey shop/dwellings and is a good representative example of Victorian Classical architecture. The timber façade is graceful and well-proportioned and the reproduction shop-fronts and tiled shop entrances are pleasant modern interventions.
- The building also has historic value for its association with the strong growth and development of Cuba Street during the Edwardian period, which resulted in the building of many fine commercial buildings.
- Although the majority of this building was demolished in 2004, the façade has some heritage value for its contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area streetscape.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 89/5 <i>Front façade</i>
Legal Description:	Pt sec 128 Town of Wellington, Lots 1 & 2 DP 366988
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Not Listed. <i>Removed from register in 2006 due to demolition</i> <i>Previous ref 5358 Historic Place Category II</i>
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	Capital Music
Key physical dates:	Built: 1896 Facade retention scheme: 2004
Architect / Builder:	Unknown
Former uses:	Commercial – retail
Current uses:	Commercial – hotel
Earthquake Prone Status:	Outside Earthquake Prone Policy – SR 266651

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

The commercial building is situated at 221-225 Cuba Street is located on part of section 128 of Wellington, an original section that was subdivided in 1864 and again in 1865. The 1891 Thomas Ward map of Wellington indicates that the site had been built upon prior to the construction of the current building. The current commercial building was built in 1896 for P.D. Davis, a popular figure from Upper Hutt who founded Maidstone Park.² The lower storey of this two-storey timber building was used for retail and commercial purposes, and the upper storey was used as a residence.³

This building was one of a number of small retail outlets constructed in the late nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries in the Upper Cuba Street area. Then a thriving retail centre, the Upper Cuba Street area became progressively less prosperous as the twentieth century advanced. The area escaped any major redevelopment until the early twenty first century.

In 2004 this building was incorporated into the large two-hotel 'CQ' development. This development included the former northern annexe of the People's Palace Hotel (WCC 16/89.3), the former Railton/People's Palace Hotel (WCC 16/89.4), this timber façade at 221-225 Cuba, and the façade of a pleasant c.1920 two-storey stripped Classical commercial building (WCC Cuba St Heritage Area – contributor). The front façade of 221-225 Cuba Street was removed and placed in storage, while the remainder of the building was demolished. Following the construction of the new hotel, the timber façade was reinstated into the new development.

Following the building's demolition it was removed from the NZHPT register.

1.2 Timeline of modifications

- 1896 Probable original construction
- 2004 Majority of building, except Cuba Street façade, demolished
- 2007 221-225 Cuba Street, for café to open to the public once construction work is complete (00078:2650:171320)
- 2008 221-237 Cuba Street, fitout and plumbing of retail tenancy 5, textile art gallery and book shop (00078:2686:177823)
- 2008 221 Cuba Street [213-233 Cuba Street], enlarge existing bathroom and minor adjustments to apartment 4G Street (00078:2697:180461)

1.3 Occupation history

Not Assessed

¹ History adapted from Historic Places Trust, "Commercial Building – 221-225 Cuba Street", unpublished classification review report, 2012.

² Upper Hutt Leader, Volume IX, Number 29, 24 July 1952, accessed 26 July 2013, <http://newspaperarchives.uhcc.govt.nz/cgi-bin/upperhutt?a=d&d=UpperHuttLeader19520724.2.20#>

³ Wellington City Council, "221-225 Cuba Street", *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory: Non Residential Precincts 2001*, (Wellington City Council, 2001), CUBA 33.

1.4 Architect

Unknown

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

221- 225 Cuba Street is the remnant façade of an 1896 row of three two-storey shop/dwellings.

This building was originally constructed in timber framing on concrete foundations and piles, clad in rusticated weatherboard, with a corrugated iron roof. It was designed to house three shops on the ground floor with residences above, a common feature of Edwardian Cuba Street. The façade is very plain and features three pairs of arch headed windows in the first floor that were once separated by concrete fire walls. The building is capped by a standard bracketed cornice and timber parapet. There is no ornament on the façade and its simplicity is a strength, with the uncomplicated character of the building providing a degree of contrast to the Cuba Street townscape. The façade has some rarity value as one of the few remaining timber commercial facades of this type, style and size, in the central business district.

In 2004 this building was one of several on Cuba Street to be included in a hotel redevelopment. The front façade of this building was removed and placed in storage at this time, while the remainder of the building was demolished. Following the construction of the new hotel, the timber façade was reinstated into the new development.

The reproduction shop-fronts and tiled shop entrances are pleasant modern interventions, as is the somewhat over-scale modern verandah.

2.2 Materials

- Timber

2.3 Setting

221-225 Cuba Street is part of a large two-hotel development that also incorporates the northern annexe of the former People's Palace Hotel (WCC 16/89.3), the former Railton/People's Palace Hotel (WCC 16/89.4), and the façade of a pleasant c.1920 two-storey stripped Classical commercial building (WCC Cuba St Heritage Area – contributor). The two retained facades form part of the street-edge of the southernmost hotel in this development. The bulk of the hotel is set back from the street in the form of two, tall, towers that are somewhat taller than their neighbours. The jumbled grey modern shop-fronts to the south complete the hotel development and are, along with the functional Ellmers building (with its distinctive concrete 'shod' verandah posts), non-contributors to the Heritage Area.

The CQ hotel development is set in the Cuba Street Heritage Area on a section of Cuba Street between Vivian and Abel Smith streets. This stretch of Cuba Street has a startling entrance at the southern end of great architectural and cultural contrast. It sets the extremely dignified former National Bank building (now up-market restaurant Logan Brown) opposite the simple, if dignified, Morgan's building. The remainder of the block has undergone considerable change in the last 20 years which

has impacted on the overall integrity of the heritage streetscape. The scale of the block is predominantly two and three storeys, with the notable exception of the current and future hotel complex and Booth House. The street edge line is fragmented in this block with many gaps and breaks and the heritage character of the street is undermined with many poorly-considered modern buildings. There are, however, some individual buildings that have high heritage value and remain a strong presence in the streetscape.⁴

The building makes a positive contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

The timber façade of 221- 225 Cuba Street is sited in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and makes a positive contribution to the significant collection of heritage buildings that form the Cuba Street Heritage Area. The scale, materials and style of this building contribute to the townscape of Cuba Street.

3.0 Sources

Historic Places Trust. "Commercial Building – 221-225 Cuba Street", unpublished classification review report, 2012.

Upper Hutt Leader, Volume IX, Number 29, 24 July 1952, accessed 26 July 2013, <http://newspaperarchives.uhcc.govt.nz/cgi-bin/upperhutt?a=d&d=UpperHuttLeader19520724.2.20#>

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings*. Wellington City Council, 2001.

Wellington City Archive

00078:2650:171320
00078:2686:177823
00078:2697:180461

⁴ Adapted from Kelly, 2006

Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: *Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?*

221- 225 Cuba Street is the remnant façade of an 1896 row of three two-storey shop/dwellings and is a good representative example of Victorian Classical architecture. The timber façade is graceful and well-proportioned and the reproduction shop-fronts and tiled shop entrances are pleasant modern interventions.

Townscape: *Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?*

The scale, materials and style of this façade contribute to the townscape of Cuba Street and it has townscape value for the role that it plays in the streetscape and as a part of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Group: *Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?*

The façade has some group value as one of four heritage buildings that form part of the large, c.2004, two-hotel 'CQ' development.

Historic Value:

Association: *Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?*

Association: *Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?*

The building has historic value for its association with the strong growth and development of Cuba Street during the Edwardian period, which resulted in the building of many fine commercial buildings.

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: *Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?*

Pre- 1900 building (most demolished in c.2004 for modern development) Central City NZAA R27/270

Educational: *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

Technological: *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:
Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?
Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

This building is part of a group of Edwardian commercial buildings on Cuba Street which contribute to the sense of place and continuity of the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Sentiment/Connection: Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?

Representative: Is the item a good example of the class it represents?

The building is representative of the architecture and history found on Cuba Street. It has a distinctive character and adds to the variety of Cuba Street as a contrast to the more elaborate and ornate buildings.

Authentic: Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?

The majority of this building was demolished in 2004 and only the façade has been retained. It has some authenticity as a representative of a simple commercial Edwardian timber building.

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

This building is of local importance for its contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area. It is a modestly scaled timber façade that retains economic and functional uses.

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

Background research

Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*