

Ballinger's Building
58-60 Victoria Street



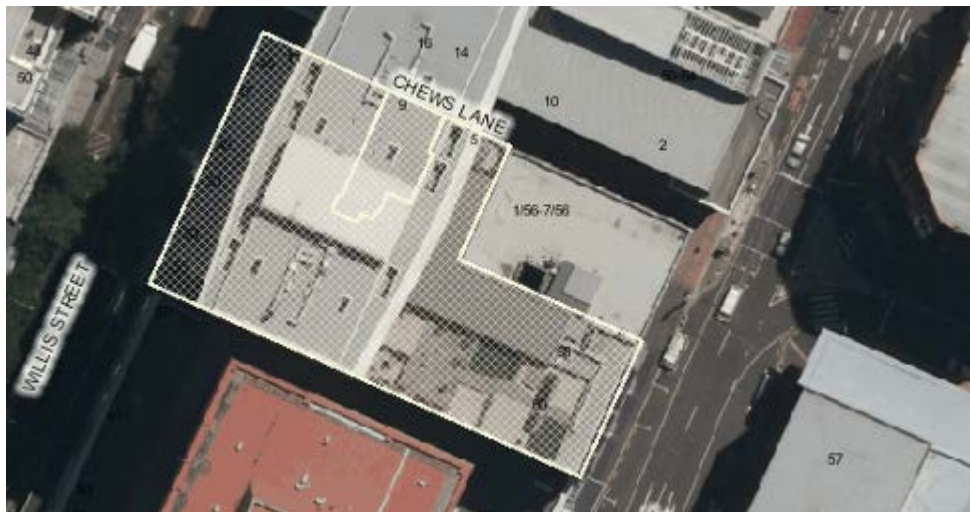
Photo: *Charles Collins (2015)*

Summary of heritage significance

- The façade of the Ballingers' Building is representative of the Classical Victorian and Edwardian commercial warehouses that once lined Victoria Street. The remainder of the original building has been demolished and only the Victoria Street elevation survives.

District Plan:	Map 17, reference 316
Legal Description:	Lot 2 Deposited Plan 389044
Heritage Area:	None 2012
HPT Listed:	None 2012
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 reclaimed land Central City NZAA R27/270 Note: the site was substantially disturbed by the c.2007 redevelopment of Chews Lane.
Other Names:	Empire Spouting and Ridging Manufactory and Curving Works, Victoria Street, Wellington
Key physical dates:	c.1903 construction 2007 Building was substantially demolished and only the façade was retained.
Architect / Builder:	Unknown (possibly Thomas Ballinger)
Former uses:	Plumbing and electrical supplies factory, warehouse and offices
Current uses:	Tenanted office building
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR263756 Building Strength Inventory "Outside Policy" 05/09/2012

Extent:



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

This building facade is named for Thomas Ballinger (1852-1929),¹ who was born in London and immigrated with his family to Victoria in the mid 1850s. From there the family moved to New Zealand, firstly Invercargill, then Dunedin and finally Wellington. His father, was a plumber and Thomas took up his father's trade. In 1877 Thomas founded a plumbing business in Ghuznee Street,² but the following year he purchased the stock and plant of W.H. Bragge and opened as a house and ship's plumber and coppersmith on Willis Street.³ His business expanded and by 1885 he was able to supply or manufacture a wide range of plumbing and roofing supplies that were exhibited at the Wellington Exhibition.⁴ He was also a member of the Wellington City Council (from 1905 to 1911), associated with the first Wellington Exhibition of 1885, was a member, and the first captain, of the "Wellington Volunteer Fire Police"⁵ and a vestry member of St. Peter's Church.

The land on which the building is sited was created as part of the 1874 Te Aro Reclamation within the 70 acres reserved for "The Mayor, Councillors and Citizens of the City of Wellington".⁶ It was only the second section of land sold by the "Corporation" when lot 20 of plan 331 was purchased in 1886 by Edward Pearce, and this possibly indicates the date by which this area of the reclamation was complete. Pearce almost immediately subdivided the land and sold half to Mary Kennedy, wife of Greymouth mining inspector, Martin Kennedy, and half to Ballinger. Ballinger purchased Kennedy's part of the subdivision along with a mortgage from Mrs Kennedy, but is likely to have defaulted on the mortgage as the land was returned to Mary Kennedy by the Supreme Court. He later re-purchased the land in 1897.

In 1897 the company was listed in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* as...

"Thomas Ballinger and Co., Ltd (Thomas Ballinger, Managing Director; D. M. Fuller, Secretary), Sanitary Plumbers, Gasfitters, Electric Light Installers and Fitters, Electric and other Bellfitters, Coppersmiths and Manufacturers of Spouting, Ridging, Down-Piping and every description of Sheet Metal Goods, Lead-Headed Nails and Fine Corrugated Iron; Empire Spouting and Ridging Manufactory and Curving Works, 33 Victoria Street, Wellington. Telegraphic address, "Thomas Ballinger, Wellington."

And the *Cyclopedia* went on to note that the premises at Victoria Street were sixty feet by eighty feet with a floor area of 8000 square feet over two stories. The building functioned as a warehouse on the first floor with a factory on the ground floor. There was a travelling crane and a three cylinder steam engine powered various machinery that produced spouting and ridging, corrugated iron, and lead headed nails. The factory also tinned and galvanized metal products.

¹ Note: this report is based on Ian Bowman, "58-60 Victoria Street: Report on Heritage Values." Unpublished report, WCC, 2003; *Evening Post*, 19 February 1929, Page 11

² *Evening Post*, 22 February 1877, page 3

³ *Evening Post*, 15 March 1878, page 2

⁴ *Evening Post*, 3 August 1885, Page 2

⁵ The Fire Police Corps were a unit that was formed in 1899 to assist the Fire Brigade, Thomas Ballinger was their first captain from 1899-c.1903. *Evening Post*, Volume CXXXVII, Issue 36, 12 February 1944, Page 8

⁶ Grant 3866 under the Public reserves Act of 1854

The range of products at Thomas Ballinger and Co. Ltd were similar to those offered by a rival plumbing and plumber's manufacturing and importing business established by Thomas Ballinger's brothers William and Arthur Ballinger at the corner of Waring Taylor and Maginnity Streets.

Thomas Ballinger may have designed the c.1903⁷ building on the Victoria Street site of his original factory and warehouse, as his signature is evident on all of the surviving drawings and no other architect or engineer is associated with the design. The new building was used as head office for Thomas Ballinger and Co. Ltd. and housed a warehouse and shop on the ground floor, with machinery and equipment associated with Ballinger's business housed on the upper floors.

The building was fully occupied by Thomas Ballinger and Co. Ltd until about 1924 when parts of the building were let to various tenants.⁸ Thomas Ballinger and Co. Ltd sold the building in 1971 to the Prudential Assurance Company Limited of Wellington, and the company of Thomas Ballinger and Co Ltd was finally dissolved in 2004.⁹

The site passed through various ownerships until it was purchased in 1994 by the Wellington City Council and became part of the Willis Bond & Co. Chews Lane Precinct development.¹⁰ The WCC commissioned a report in 2003 to reconsider the building's heritage listing on the District Plan. The building was considered to be significant as the last of a group of late Victorian and Edwardian city warehouses that were once common on Victoria Street. The building's design style, and scale were thought to make a significant contribution to the Victoria Street streetscape, and the building was considered to be an important link with Wellington's commercial activities.¹¹ In 2007 the building was partially demolished and only the Victoria Street façade was retained as the street frontage to a new seven storey building. The site is currently let on a 250 year lease.¹²

⁷ The original plans are signed by Thomas Ballinger and the signature and WCC engineer's stamp on the drawings are both dated 1902. There is a surviving copy of a drawing with the notation "Amended plan, elevation of warehouse, Victoria Street, for Messrs T Ballinger" dated 28/05/03 and it is possible that the elevation was designed by another, unknown, architect or engineer.

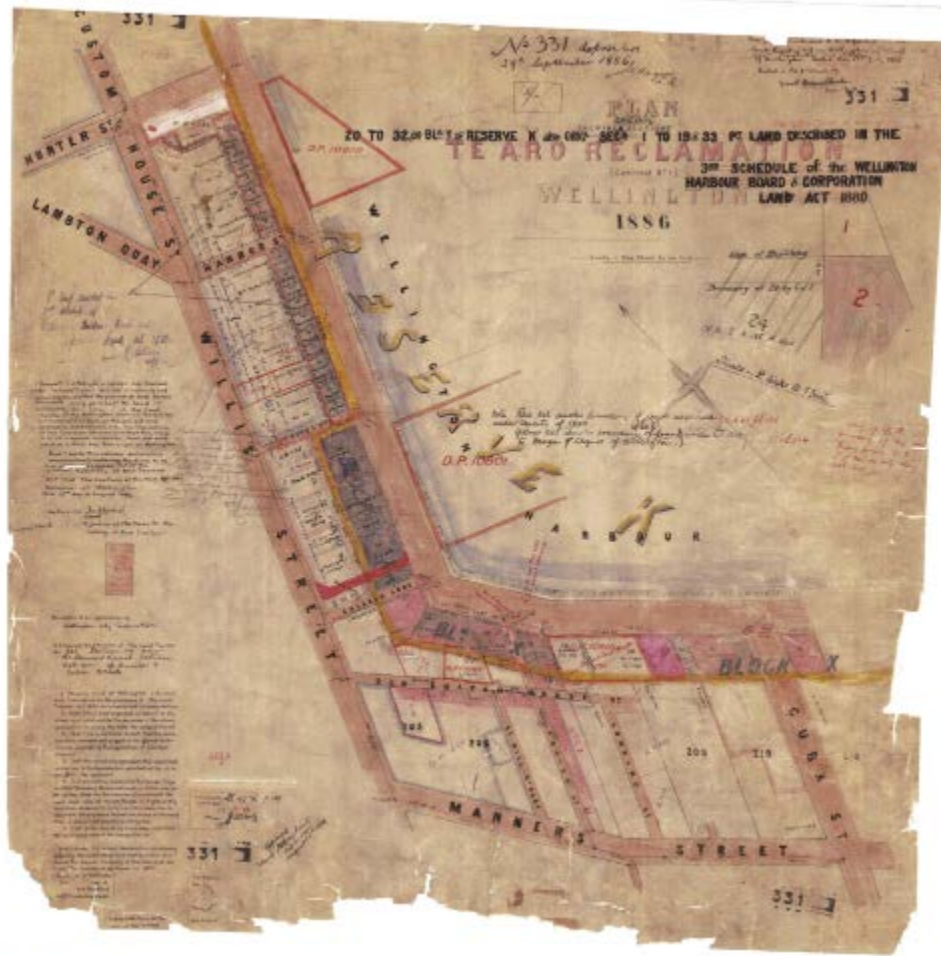
⁸ Ian Bowman, "58-60 Victoria Street: Report on Heritage Values." Unpublished report, WCC, 2003.

⁹ "Thomas Ballinger" Open corporates website accessed September 2012
<http://opencorporates.com/companies/nz/573>

¹⁰ Chews Lane Precinct website accessed September 2012 <http://chewslane.co.nz/the-project>
; Willis Bond website accessed September 2012 <http://www.willisbond.co.nz/projects-mixed-chews-lane.php>

¹¹ Ian Bowman, "58-60 Victoria Street: Report on Heritage Values." Unpublished report, WCC, 2003.

¹² CT356146



1886

DP331 – Te Aro Reclamation



Enlargement of DP331 showing Willis Street, Chews Lane and the harbour beyond.



A 1927 photograph of Victoria Street that shows the Ballinger Building to the left of the Colonial Carrying Company building.¹³



2007 – photograph of the façade of the Ballinger’s Building during works to construct the new Chews Lane Precinct.¹⁴

¹³ Colonial Carrying Company building, Victoria Street, Wellington. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968 :Negatives. Ref: 1/1-015387-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://beta.natlib.govt.nz/records/23072913>

¹⁴ WCC file “Ballinger 003”

1.2 Timeline

C.1900	Construction
C.2007	Building was substantially demolished and only the façade was retained.

1.3 Occupation history¹⁵

1910	Ballingers
1924 – 55	Tenants included: Power and Associates; Electrolux Ltd; W&R Fletchers; Martin & Mainwarry, Architects; Property Trading Co.; Multi Print.;
1965-66	Tenants included: Coulls Somerville Wilkie Ltd – stationery; Phoenix Assurance; Provident Fire Insurance; Electrolux Ltd; Southern Lands Ltd;
1985	Tenants included: Advanced Information & Mailing Systems; Calder, Fowler Styles & Turner; Electrolux; Multi Print; Rembrandt Tailoring.

1.4 Architect

Unknown, but possibly Thomas Ballinger.

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The building was designed in c.1903 as offices and warehouses for Thomas Ballinger's plumbing and electrical business. The exterior is neo-Classical or neo-Romanesque commercial. The building was redeveloped in 2007 and a new seven storey building was built behind the existing façade.

2.2 Materials

Building façade only – rendered brick masonry.

2.3 Setting

The building is part of the Chews Lane Precinct development that runs from 44 to 60 Victoria Street. ¹⁶ At the north of the development is the fine 1927, almost Art Deco style, building designed by C T Natusch and Sons for the Colonial Carrying Company. To the south is the two storey podium to a c.1980s multi-storey tower that runs between Willis and Victoria Street.

¹⁵ Ian Bowman, "58-60 Victoria Street: Report on Heritage Values." Unpublished report, WCC, 2003.

¹⁶ "Willis Victoria Urban Design Brief", WCC website accessed September 2012
<http://www.wellington.govt.nz/projects/ongoing/pdfs/chews-design-brief.pdf>

3.0 Sources

- Bowman, Ian. *58-60 Victoria Street: Report on Heritage Values*. Unpublished report, WCC, 2003.
- *Evening Post*, 19 February 1929, Page 11
- *Evening Post*, 22 February 1877, page 3
- *Evening Post*, 15 March 1878, page 2
- *Evening Post*, 3 August 1885, Page 2
- *Evening Post*, 12 February 1944, Page 8

Primary Sources

- CT volume 43 folio 152
- CT volume 44 folio 145
- CT vol 142 folio 225
- CT356146
- DP331
- SO14413

Websites

- “Thomas Ballinger”. Open corporates website accessed September 2012 <http://opencorporates.com/companies/nz/573>
- Chews Lane Precinct website accessed September 2012 <http://chewslane.co.nz/the-project> ; Willis Bond website accessed September 2012 <http://www.willisbond.co.nz/projects-mixed-chews-lane.php>
- “Willis Victoria Urban Design Brief”, WCC website accessed September 2012 <http://www.wellington.govt.nz/projects/ongoing/pdfs/chews-design-brief.pdf>

Images

- Colonial Carrying Company building, Victoria Street, Wellington. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968 :Negatives. Ref: 1/1-015387-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://beta.natlib.govt.nz/records/23072913>
- WCC file “Ballinger 003”

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?*

The façade of the Ballingers' Building is a representative of the Classical Victorian and Edwardian commercial warehouses that once lined Victoria Street. The remainder of the original building has been demolished and only the Victoria Street elevation survives.

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?*

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 building is part of a pair of heritage buildings on Victoria Street that have been incorporated into the Chews Lane redevelopment that has refurbished the pedestrian walkway between Willis and Victoria Street.

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's history is typical of the warehouses and commercial premises that once lined Victoria Street.

Scientific Value:

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

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?*

The site is known to have pre-1900 human activity but was substantially disturbed by the 2007 redevelopment of Chews Lane.

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?

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?*

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 building was substantially demolished in 2007 with only the Victoria Street façade retained.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory	N	
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	None	
WCC Records – building file	Y	
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory	None	
Plan change?	N	
Heritage Area Report	N	
Heritage Area Spreadsheet	N	
Heritage items folder (electronic)	Y	
HPT website	None	
HPT files	N	
Conservation Plan	y	Report by Ian Bowman for Chews Lane
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)	y	

Background research