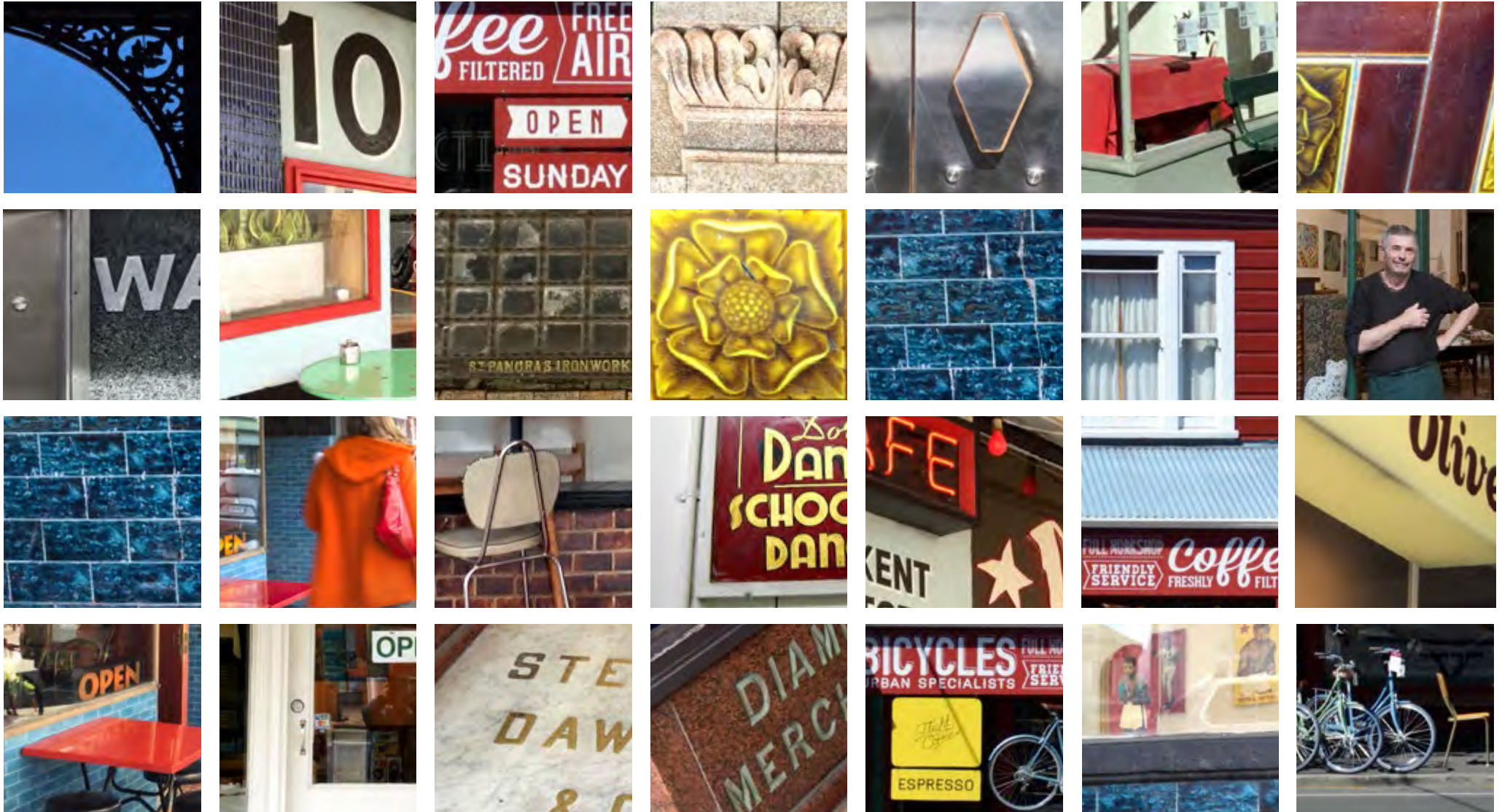


Heritage shop fronts

A guide to maintaining and enhancing Wellington's historic shops

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke



Kia whakatomuri te haere ki mua.

To walk into the future, our eyes must be fixed on the past. (Māori proverb)

We have such a rich and colourful history in Wellington, starting with the people of Kurahaupo descent, including Ngai Tara, Mua-upoko, Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Rangitane, and Ngati Tu-mata-kokiri. From the 1820s people from the Taranaki region settled in Wellington including Te Ātiawa, Taranaki and Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Tama and Ngāti Toa, then European settlement in the 1840s.

In 1865 Wellington became New Zealand's capital and, rather like today, it became a place of rapid growth. During the last half of the 19th century, the population grew from 7460 to 49,344 residents and the city became the hub of national trade.

Many buildings and shopping streets remain from this time, with shop fronts in different architectural styles adding to the heritage and vibrancy of the retail experience.

Well-cared for character shop buildings make Wellington a more attractive place for people to visit and spend time shopping. We want to help owners of historic shops to maintain them and proudly share their pedigree and heritage with visitors.

We are pleased to provide this guide to finding out more about your historic shop front and how to protect and upgrade it.

Council Heritage Advisors can help with drawings, photos and information on the history of your shop, and can also give free heritage advice on resource consent and funding applications.

Personally, I would like to thank you for adding to Wellington's magic and vibrancy by looking after your shop front. Caring for our built heritage helps make the capital a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Justin Lester
Mayor of Wellington

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Wellington has a significant collection of historic shopping streets that contribute to the commercial business and aesthetic character of the city.

Historic shop fronts are actively sought after in Wellington by businesses who want attractive retail spaces, offices and restaurants. Good shop front design enhances the retail experience for customers.

This guide has been put together to help owners of Wellington's historic shops to recognise, maintain and enhance the architectural heritage of their buildings. Well-cared for character buildings improve the visual appeal of the central city and suburban shopping centres, and provide a compelling reason for people to visit an area.

While it has been prepared specifically for shop fronts on listed heritage buildings and in heritage areas, its principles can be applied to other shop fronts elsewhere in the city and its surrounds.

It will help you:

- find out more about architectural styles and heritage characteristics
- learn how to maintain, repair and upgrade historic shop fronts in a manner appropriate to their character and age.

Group in front of the hairdresser and tobacconist shop L P Christeson on Willis Street, Wellington. Harkness, W E : Photographs of a barber in Willis Street, Wellington. Ref: 1/2-075776-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23147759>



Protecting Wellington's heritage

Wellington City Council's District Plan recognises Heritage Buildings with historic shop fronts, as well as Heritage Areas with collections of historic shops. Each of these Heritage Areas has a distinct character based on its date of development, location and topography, building use, social history and changes over time.

Wellington's Central Business District was surveyed in the 1840s. Lambton Quay, Cuba Street and Courtenay Place were significant early shopping destinations. As the city expanded, and transport routes made the suburbs more accessible, shopping precincts sprang up in inner suburbs like Island Bay, Newtown and Berhampore.

Groups of historic shops can be found in the following Heritage Areas:

- Courtenay Place
- Cuba Street
- Island Bay Village
- John Street Intersection Shopping Centre
- Newtown Shopping Centre
- Berhampore (Rintoul Street)
- Thorndon Shopping Centre
- Hataitai Shopping Centre
- Aro Street Shopping Centre
- Lambton Quay (BNZ/Head Office)

Altering your heritage shop front

The Council can help with drawings, photos and information on historic shops as well as providing advice on Resource Consent and funding applications.

Alterations to shop fronts in heritage areas and on individually listed heritage buildings may require Resource Consent. Before starting any work on a listed heritage building or building within a Heritage Area, you should discuss your proposal with planning staff at Wellington City Council, who can identify the rules in the District Plan for maintenance, alterations and signage.

Council Heritage Advisors can help you apply for a grant from the Built Heritage Incentive Fund for earthquake strengthening and conservation projects and advise what other sources of funding are available.

Many Wellington buildings are also on the New Zealand Heritage List, administered by Heritage New Zealand. Specialist advisors at Heritage New Zealand's Central Regional Office are able to provide expert assistance on heritage conservation issues.

The Council has heritage advisors who can help with drawings, photos and information on historic shops

6 Heritage shop fronts | A guide to maintaining and enhancing Wellington's architectural heritage





These photographs show Cuba Street in 1920, 1970 and 2017. Although the fashions and technology have changed, many of the buildings are recognisable and this gives a sense of continuity to an ever-changing streetscape.

Conservation of old shop fronts can contribute to the character of places like Cuba Street. This helps make our heritage areas some of Wellington's most vibrant commercial and entertainment districts.

Top left: Cuba Street, Wellington.
Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972
:Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/2-048945-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23119940>

Bottom left: Cuba Street in c. 1970
WCA 4056.p

Opposite: Cuba Street in 2017

Why conserve traditional shops?

Historic shops and heritage areas are home to some of Wellington's most vibrant and vital businesses. Many of these shops have been in continuous use since they were built in the 19th and early 20th centuries and all are part of the history, culture and economy of Wellington. Historic shop fronts are a physical link between the past, present and future. They add interest and variety to the streetscape and help define the character of the city and its suburbs.

A well-maintained verandah, appropriate signage, inviting entrance and attractive window display all influence the potential shopper. Conservation of the original features of shop fronts enhances shopping districts and can bring economic benefits by encouraging tourists and increasing visitor numbers.

Shop fronts are designed to attract the attention of passers-by and encourage them to visit. This eye-catching display adorned David Taylor's butcher shop at 94 Wadestown Road in 1890.

David Taylor's butcher shop, Wadestown, Wellington. Halse, Frederick James, d1936 :Collection of negatives. Ref: 1/2-010345-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22870833>



How to conserve and enhance your shop

Heritage buildings are vulnerable to inappropriate changes and uncharacteristic alterations. Once their unique features are lost it can be difficult and expensive to reconstruct them. Regular repair and maintenance can save time and money in the long term.



- Research the history and significance of your building and understand which features need to be retained.
- Keep original materials in good condition with regular maintenance and repair.
- Retain details and unique features.
- Repair rather than replace, and restore damaged materials where possible.
- Do not paint or render over existing unpainted or unplastered surfaces (for example ceramic and faience tiles).
- Use colour schemes that are characteristic of the era and style of the building. Avoid bright corporate colour schemes.

Photos show Island Bay Village - one of the best preserved groups of early 20th-century commercial buildings in Wellington.

Adaptations and alterations

Most buildings need to be kept in use to ensure their ongoing relevance to their local community. New businesses and new types of retail activity can be attracted to historic buildings and heritage areas with sympathetic adaptation of existing buildings.

Alterations to heritage buildings should be based on research, as this helps to identify significant features that need to be kept. Council has prepared heritage reports for every heritage building, object and area listed in the District Plan. These are available online or by contacting our heritage advisors, who can also provide free advice to architects, designers and building owners.

Alterations and additions to shop fronts should avoid out-of-character designs and the introduction of inappropriate materials. New work should respect the design of neighbouring buildings and the character of the surrounding area. The reinstatement of original features can improve the appearance of historic buildings, but should always be based on careful research. A heritage specialist or architect can provide advice on sympathetic adaptations and alterations.

The following general principles apply to work on heritage buildings:

- use the same materials for replacement features
- avoid out-of-character alterations and additions
- follow the composition of the original design
- reinstate missing architectural details where possible.

Design influence

There are several factors which will influence the design of shop fronts:

- age and style of the overall building
- the age of the existing shop front
- quality and type of materials used to construct the shop and shop front
- the type of business and history of occupation
- location.

Most heritage shops in Wellington were built in the Victorian, Edwardian, interwar or early post-war periods. Each period produced a distinct architectural style and these are explained in more detail on the following pages.



Shop on Glenmore Street, Northland, Wellington. New Zealand Free Lance: Photographic prints and negatives. Ref: 1/2-099988-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23109078>

190 Glenmore Street is almost unchanged since this photo was taken in c.1925



5 Riddiford Street is a good example of a sympathetic infill. It was built in 1998 in similar materials and style to its neighbours in the John Street Intersection Shopping Centre (Newtown) Heritage Area.



This group of shops on Cuba Street were relocated and restored in 2005. The two-storey building was designed as a pair of dwellings each with a shop facing onto Cuba Street. The simple one-roomed shop to the left was built in 1896 for local business-owner Kate Tonks. It was used as a bootmakers until the 1950s.



Thistle Hall on Cuba Street was in a poor state of repair in this photograph from 1986. It has since been repaired and refurbished and is now a vibrant community venue and exhibition space.



Corner of Arthur and Cuba Streets, Wellington. Upper Cuba Street and Arthur Street, Wellington. Ref: PA12-1767-03. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23154278>

Historic shop front terminology



Interwar Art Deco

- 1 Cantilever verandah
- 2 Verandah soffit
- 3 Transom window
- 4 Display window
- 5 Tiled upstand or stall
- 6 Entrance lobby

Victorian

- 7 Cast iron verandah post
- 8 Display window
- 9 Pair of glazed timber doors
- 10 Rendered or timber upstand or stall
- 11 Entrance lobby

Edwardian

- 12 Cornice
- 13 Timber verandah posts
- 14 Decorative glass to transom window
- 15 Display window
- 16 Tiled upstand or stall
- 17 Entrance lobby

Victorian-style shop fronts (mid-19th century-c.1900)

The Victorian style of shop front was based on British retail practices and building methods. These shop fronts have a large street-facing display area to maximise the shop's window display, and often include the following design features:

Entranceways

- Timber single or double doors - usually half-glazed, with timber panels at the base - set into a recessed entrance lobby.
- The walls of the lobby are usually splayed and the floor is often tiled.

Windows

- A large timber-framed display window with a low stall below in timber panelling or rendered brick.

Verandahs

- Most shops have a verandah with a curved corrugated iron roof that is supported by simple timber or intricate cast iron posts.

Ornamentation

- There are Classical architecture inspired details incorporated into the shop fronts, such as a cornice, fascia, console brackets and pilasters.

Common types of buildings

- Shop residences are a common type of building. These are typically two-storied buildings with a verandah and shop front. Many shops had a door between the shop and the owner's living room on the ground floor, and there were often bedrooms for the owner's family on the first floor.



This well-kept shop front at 74 Constable Street is an almost intact example of a Victorian-style shop front with timber-framed windows.

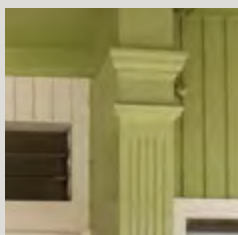


S Bredin's Chemist at the corner of Constable and Coromandel streets in Newtown in the c.1900s. The stationer's shop to the right of the photograph has a typical Victorian verandah and shop front.

S Bredin's Chemist and Druggist store, on the corner of Constable and Coromandel Streets, Newtown, Wellington. Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972: Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/1-024951-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22830783>



Recessed half-glazed and half-panelled timber doors



Classical pilaster



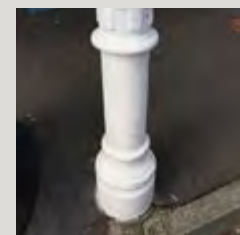
Cast iron verandah post



Timber panelled stall under the display windows



Reproduction timber verandah posts and fretwork



Cast iron verandah post



Large timber framed display windows



Bull-nosed veranda

Edwardian-style shop fronts (c.1890s-1920)

Often tall and elegant, the Edwardian style of shop front is influenced by Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts styles of architecture.

Entranceways

- The entrance lobby is deeper than in earlier shop fronts and the floor is often tiled with encaustic or geometric tiles.

Windows

- There may be a transom window of lead-lights, or patterned and stained glass above the main display window.
- The stall under the main display window tends to be tiled.

Verandahs

- Most shops have a verandah that is supported on posts.

Ornamentation

- The shop fronts feature a wide range of tiles including plain glazed tiles, encaustic tiles, geometric mosaics, Art Nouveau inspired tiles and illustrative tiles.

Common types of building

- There are fewer shop residences built in the central city, and multi-storey buildings tend to have a separate entrance to offices, hotel rooms or apartments on the floors above ground level.



Hill Bros. Ltd had branches on Lambton Quay, Willis Street, Cuba Street, Courtenay Place, Newtown and Hataitai, Aro Valley, Brooklyn and Lower Hutt. This photograph was taken in c.1940 and shows a typical Edwardian shop front.

Shop front window of Hill Bros Ltd, grocer, Wellington. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968 :Negatives. Ref: 1/1-015399-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22827981>



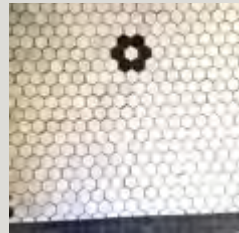
This Edwardian shop front at 168-174 Cuba Street retains the Hill Bros Ltd mosaic to the splayed entrance lobby. The display window has glazed transoms with coloured and obscured glass panes, and the interior is panelled with tongue and groove timber.



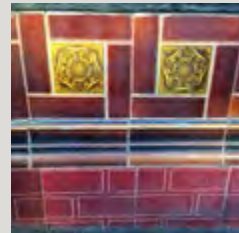
Rendered stall



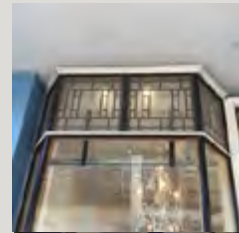
Pavement lights



Mosaic tiled entrance lobby



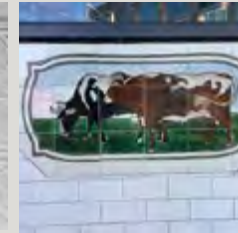
Glazed tiles to the display window stall



Lead lights



Pressed metal tiles verandah soffit



Decorative ceramic tiles



Ornate cast iron verandah post



The building at 2-12 Riddiford Street has tiled plinths below the display windows, window and door joinery and mosaic tiled entrance lobbies.

2-12 Riddiford Street was built in 1903. The building has a near-complete row of Edwardian shop fronts.

Interwar and early post-war shops (1920s-1940s)

Interwar shop fronts tend to be simpler and have less ornamentation than Victorian and Edwardian shop fronts.

Entranceways

- Entrance lobbies may be very deep and sometimes have a complex arcaded layout.

Windows

- Shop fronts in the Art Deco or Moderne style can have a horizontal emphasis to glazing bars, particularly in the transom window above the main display window.
- Glazing may be held in place with bronze or chrome glazing systems.

Verandahs

- Tend to be cantilevered or suspended rather than supported on posts.
- Soffits can be decorative pressed metal panels.

Ornamentation

- Tiles tend to be plain or have simple geometric patterns.
- Shop fronts are built from smooth, glossy materials such as Vitrolite, polished granite, faience or glazed terracotta and terrazzo.

Common types of building

- “Lock-up” shops are much more common than shop-residences, and rows of single-storey shops are a feature of suburban shopping centres.



Terrazzo entrance lobby



Entrance lobby



Ceramic tiles



Art Deco-style tiles



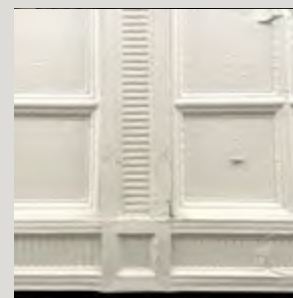
Display window



Horizontal glazing bars



Tiled stall



Pressed metal tiles verandah soffit



Window display cases



McKenzies J R Messrs, department store, shop front, Wellington. Crown Studios Ltd :Negatives and prints. Ref: 1/1-032696-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22825035>

The McKenzies department store at 116 Cuba Street was an example of a complex arcaded shop front. The building at the centre of the photograph was demolished in 1999 to make way for the Left Bank development.



284-286 Cuba Street has two almost unaltered Art Deco/Modernist shop fronts.



This attractive 1920s café at the corner of Waitoa Road and Moxham Avenue is a good example of a late Edwardian/interwar shop front.

Post-war style shop fronts (1940s-1960s)

Early post-war shops tend to be simple and have very little ornamentation. Their design is more varied than for earlier shop fronts.

Entranceways

- Shops may not have an entrance lobby.
- Entrance doors sometimes slide open.

Windows

- Shop fronts may have floor-to-ceiling glazing.
- Most shop fronts are made from proprietary metal glazing systems.

Ornamentation

- Stainless steel, chrome and aluminium glazing systems, glass mosaic tiles, timber tongue and groove panelling, and neon signs are often associated with post-war shop fronts.



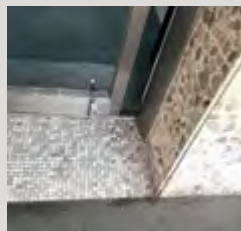
Post-war shop front at Pacific Fisheries Ltd on Courtenay Place in 1967.

Photo reference: WCA ref 2968_c



The Milk Bar at the Opera House on Manners Street in 1962.

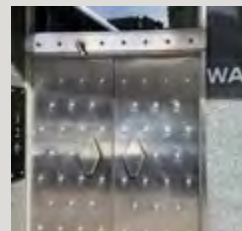
Milk Bar at the Opera House, Manners Street, Wellington. Burt, Gordon Onslow Hilbury, 1893-1968: Negatives. Ref: 1/1-015555-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22312711>



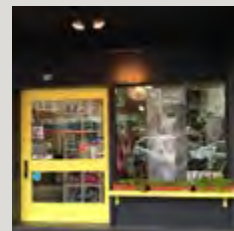
Terrazzo tiles



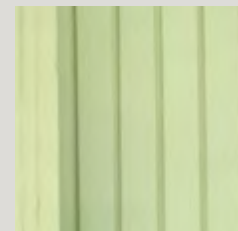
Mosaic tiles



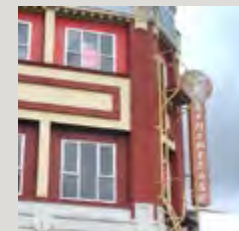
Stainless steel / aluminium joinery



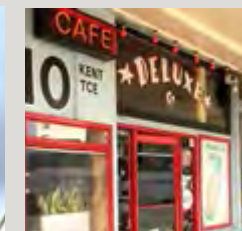
Sliding doors



Tongue and groove panelling



Neon sign



Neon sign



The Mibar Building at 85-87 Victoria Street was built in 1960. With its wave form canopy it is one of the most distinctive and well-known Modernist buildings in Wellington.

Verandahs

Verandahs are an important feature of Wellington's streetscape. They provide a roofed footpath in front of shops and add to the comfort of pedestrians by providing shade in summer and protection from wind and rain.

To begin with, few shops had verandahs but by the mid-1860s they became a fashionable feature. The first verandahs were supported on timber or cast iron posts, but in the 20th century these were often damaged by cars, trucks and buses. From the 1910s local councils began to require the construction of cantilevered verandahs on new buildings.

If you have a verandah that extends over a public place, such as a footpath, it's important you keep it in good condition. Your verandah should be weathertight, well-maintained and safe. Regular maintenance is cheaper overall than one-off large repairs.

For more information go to wellington.govt.nz/services/how-can-i/check-my-public-verandah

If you have a verandah that extends over a public place, such as a footpath, it's important you keep it in good condition.



A bull-nosed verandah with clerestorey glazing



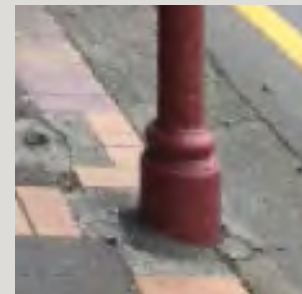
Cast iron post



Barleytwist posts



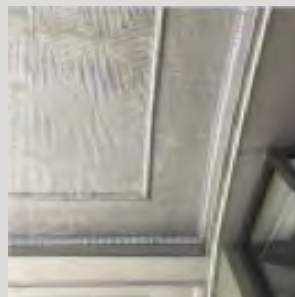
A bull-nosed verandah with cast iron posts



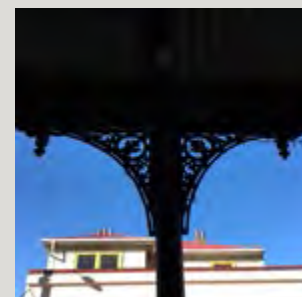
Cast iron post



Decorative verandah ties



Pressed metal soffit



Decorative fretwork



Pressed metal soffit



Mitchell & Mitchell, T & G Building. K E Niven and Co Commercial negatives. Ref: 1/2-215037-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22355749>

This photograph of Lambton Quay from 1967 shows the verandah and shop front at the T & G Building and Hamilton Chambers. The cantilevered verandah with its pressed metal soffit is typical of an inter-war commercial building.



Te Aro House, Cuba Street Wellington, in the late 1870s. James Smith Ltd: Photographs of personnel, activities and shops. Ref: PAColl-3332-11-3. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22333607>

Verandahs are an important feature of Wellington's streets. These photographs show the verandahs at Te Aro House on Cuba Street in c.1878 and the Coronation Bakery on Adelaide Road in 1909.



Horse drawn carts outside Taylor's Coronation Bakery, Adelaide Road, Newtown, Wellington. Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972: Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/1-019735-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23148082>

Signs

Signs are an established part of the urban environment and play a role in helping people understand what goods and services are on offer and finding their way around the city. Signs can also add clutter and visual confusion to the street scene and adversely affect the attractiveness, character and appearance of buildings and streets. This is why you may need resource consent to add, alter or remove signs from a heritage building or in a heritage area.

When designing new signage, the form of a building and shopfront indicates the appropriate placement, scale, proportion and character for signage and this will be considered in a consent application.

Fixed metal or raised render signs indicating previous occupants or businesses should not be removed and early painted signs should be preserved in their existing condition. Gilt lettering on windows was frequently used, especially for Chambers, surgeries etc. Some premises had the names of former businesses in leadlight above the windows. These are significant and should be preserved.

Contact the Council's planning helpdesk for advice on which sign rules apply to your building.

You may need resource consent to add, alter or remove signs from a heritage building or in a heritage area.



Gilt lettering on a glass sign



Suspended metal sign under a verandah



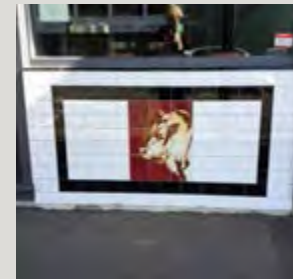
Painted sign on the side of a building



Neon sign



Historic signs on the facing of a verandah



Decorative tiles



Signage on the entrance lobby and window stalls



Te Aro Seed Company at 58 Courtenay Place c.1914 with its many signs

Where to get help

If you own a building or object that contributes to a Heritage Area or is individually listed in the Wellington City Council District Plan you may be eligible to apply for funding from the Built Heritage Incentive Fund.

Visit the Council's website wellington.govt.nz/services/community-and-culture/funding/council-funds/built-heritage-incentive-fund or contact the Funding Team or Heritage Team

Funding Team

Email: funding@wcc.govt.nz
Phone: 04 803 8562

Heritage Team

Email: heritage@wcc.govt.nz
Phone: 04 499 4444

Heritage advice is available from the Council's Heritage Team.

For Heritage Building, Heritage Object and Heritage Area reports visit the database wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz or contact the Heritage Team.

For help with the resource consent process and advice on pre-application meetings, contact the Planning Help Desk.

Planning Helpdesk

Email: planning@wcc.govt.nz
Phone: 04 801 3590

For copies of plans and specifications of your building visit the Council's website at wellington.govt.nz/archives or contact Archives

Wellington City Archives

Phone: 04 801 2096

This guide can be downloaded from the Council's website at wellington.govt.nz

With thanks to:

Mount Alexander Shire Council, Castlemaine, Victoria, Australia
Wellington City Archives
National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

Extra thanks to:

3 chairs Antiques and Vessel for letting us use their photos in this brochure

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Hastings CBD Architectural Heritage Design Guide

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ICOMOS New Zealand: Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value. ICOMOS New Zealand (Inc) / Te Mana O Nga Pouwhenua O Te Ao - The New Zealand National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, 2010. ISBN 978-0-473-17116-2 (PDF).

Wellington City Council District Plan

HARBOUR CITY CENTRE

HULLABALOO

HULLABALOO

WOMEN'S CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES

HULLABALOO

WOMEN'S CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES

HULLABALOO



