



27/05/2020

File ref: LA021

Chris Dawson,  
By Email

Dear Chris

**Initial response of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga to an Application to demolish the “Blockplant”, a Hamilton City Council scheduled heritage item within Temple View.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your application for the demolition of the Hamilton City Council (HCC) heritage scheduled “Blockplant” . Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT) notes that there is also an s127 Variation application to vary a previous consent. This s127 application provides some the context to the demolition application.

HNZPT is an autonomous Crown Entity with statutory responsibility under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 (HNZPTA 2014) for the identification, protection, preservation and conservation of New Zealand’s historical and cultural heritage. HNZPT is New Zealand’s lead historic heritage agency. The HNZPTA 2014 also protects both recorded and unrecorded archaeology.

**Background**

The Blockplant is a scheduled heritage item in the HCC District Plan-Schedule 8A: Built Heritage (structures, buildings and associated sites). The Blockplant is the second blockplant on the site. Schedule 8A contains the following information in relation to this item: Name-Block Plant, Item H135, Category B, with the following recognised qualities: a) Historic Qualities, b) Physical /Aesthetic/Architectural Qualities, c) Context or Group Qualities, and f) Cultural Qualities.

The HCC heritage inventory form contains the following summary of the Blockplant's recognised heritage values:

“The place is scheduled in Category B. The Block Plant has significance locally as a source of cement blocks for Dinsdale Chapel and buildings at Temple View and Church College and as a site from which blocks were shipped to other LDS projects in the pacific. It has *high* or *moderate* value in relation to the following criteria:

a)Historic Qualities; moderate, b) Physical/Aesthetic / Architectural Qualities; moderate, c)Context or Group Values; high, e) Archaeological Qualities; (not assessed) f) Cultural Qualities, moderate”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton City Council-Built Heritage Inventory Form H135, pg.5

HNZPT staff met with Chris Dawson to have an initial discussion regarding the proposal on the 7th June 2019.

HNZPT has been supplied with a copy of the resource consent application and assessment of environmental effects: Land use application to demolish a block plant and concurrent s127 application to change a condition of resource consent 0.2016.8544.01.

The demolition application advises that the application will be publically notified and contains the following information relating to the demolition:

- The demolition of the Blockplant is a discretionary activity.
- The proposal is to demolish the Block Plant to make way for an integrated residential development. The cleared site will be re-purposed for residential development and associated infrastructure, including roading.
- Prior to demolition, it is proposed to make a detailed historical record of the Block Plant.
- Post-demolition, it is proposed to erect a memorial plinth in the vicinity of the former Block Plant, the purpose of which is to memorialise the form and function of the former building.
- It is also proposed to include some memorial elements associated with the Block Plant as part of the proposed rose garden memorial to be developed immediately north of the restored Mendenhall building.

On the 18 May 2020 HNZPT was also supplied with:

- A report from Telfer Young, Property Valuers and Advisors entitled “Market Valuation” at 465 Tuhikaramea Road, Temple View, Hamilton City.
- A s92 response by the applicant to Hamilton City Council dated 18 May 2020

## **HNZPT Response**

With respect to the current proposals HNZPT makes the following comments:

- HNZPT stance on demolition proposal:

The Application states in a number of instances that HNZPT is neutral with regard the demolition of the Block Plant. HNZPT seeks that their stance on this proposal is as per the comments in this letter.

- District Plan Objective and Policy Framework:

A range of Objectives and Policies of the HCC Operative District Plan (ODP) are applicable to the demolition proposal, in particular the Objectives and Policies of Chapter 19 Historic Heritage. While there is some consideration of the Objectives and Policies in Chapter 19, HNZPT considers that a more fulsome assessment should be made. In addition to those policies assessed in the AEE consideration should be given to other policies within the section, including but not limited to:

**Policy 19.2.1a** *The cities historic heritage shall be protected from the adverse effects of subdivision, use and development; and*

**Policy 19.2.1c** *Subdivision and development shall adhere to the conservation principles of International Council on Monuments and sites (ICOMOS) being the new Zealand Charter (2010) for the Conservation of places of Cultural heritage Value where applicable; and*

**19.2.2b** *The loss of heritage values associated with scheduled items shall be avoided. and*

**Policy 19.2.3b** *Demolition or relocation of buildings and structures ranked B in Schedule 8A should be discouraged.*

There would be benefit in the heritage impact assessment report being expanded to include consideration of these policies and the other policies from the historic heritage section, in addition to the focus that has already been undertaken on the assessment criteria.

- Heritage significance:

The Block Plant, which housed the machinery for the manufacturing of concrete blocks which were produced and used for the construction of many of the buildings that comprised Temple View - the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints temple, school, and community - is a significant heritage structure. Moreover, the association of the structure goes beyond the establishment of the buildings at Temple View, but extends to the production of blocks for many other church buildings in New Zealand, and more further reaching locations in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji. The Block Plant was also the site of the curing of the blocks and the place of cement storage, and it comprised generator rooms, a plumbing shop and a place of paint storage, making it meaningful as a place that housed wider service operations.

As the Block Plant is a physical and tangible link, and also a symbolic one, connecting to the labour and construction of the buildings which established the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints community at Temple View, its demolition would adversely affect the significant heritage values associated with the place and beyond. Heritage New Zealand therefore does not agree with the applicant's view of the values of the Block Plant being diminished as outlined in the Block plant Heritage Assessment found in Appendix C<sup>2</sup>.

- Architectural values:

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in Appendix D<sup>3</sup> notes that the Block Plant in appearance is a utilitarian and functional building that has a common resemblance to other buildings on the site which represent the international style favoured during the 1950s. In the HIA discussion there is a distinction made however between its utilitarian architectural expression and that of the more major and institutional buildings on the site. HNZPT considers this to be true although we do not agree that this necessarily diminishes its architectural importance. For example it was a building of production and its plain-ness reflects its industrial nature and it is distinct from the temple or library. HNZPT believes its utilitarian nature is confirmed by it having its form defined by the construction around the machinery, reflecting the inside-out functional approach. While noting its material and overall consistency of style with other buildings at Temple View, the contrast with other buildings retained on site is in our view a point of interest and reflects the different expression for a service-oriented function.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix D-Block Plant Heritage Assessment-Archifact Limited, dated Final November 2019

<sup>3</sup> Appendix C-Block Plant Heritage Assessment-Archifact Limited, dated Final November 2019

There is an important link to the context, not only with the original buildings of Temple View which are retained, but its position marks an extent of the Church College which enables an appreciation of the geographic breadth of the Church College. If the Block Plant is demolished, the remnant component of the college will be constrained to the Temple end of the site and focussed along Tuhikaramea Road only.

- Effects of demolition:

HNZPT agrees with the HIA acknowledgement that demolition would have an adverse effect on the historic values of the place. However HNZPT does not agree this view that the broader public benefits arising from the wider proposed development, combined with the memorialisation of the Block Plant by a plinth somewhere in its vicinity, mitigates for its loss. In fact we consider that there are more meaningful public benefits in its retention, and that the plinth is no substitute for the structure itself.

The HIA also suggests that there is no practical function for the building in this location and it is claimed it does not fit the vision for the new neighbourhood planning. With the large community envisaged for the area in the future, it is hard to envisage that there cannot be some useful purpose for the building; or that could not be adapted in some way given its scale, form and disposition.

- Economic analysis of adaptive re-use:

While HNZPT appreciates that there may be significant costs associated with the retention, upgrade, conservation and adaptation of the Block Plant to a new use, as has been analysed in the Telfer Young report. It is not the only factor to be considered, especially considering the cultural values maintained by retaining and adapting the Block Plant, an acknowledged important heritage structure. The economic commitment to an adaptive re-use of the Block Plant also needs to be seen in proportion to the overall economic benefit of the whole Masterplan redevelopment of the extensive school site at Temple View.

- Cumulative Effects:

It is acknowledged that the Church has undertaken significant work to re-envisage Temple View in a way that supports the ongoing and evolving needs of the community since the closure of the CCNZ School, and it has conserved significant buildings on the site such as the Temple, Library, First House, Kai Hall and GRB. But there has also been loss of a great number of structures that comprised and completed the school such as the David O McKay Building, classrooms, dormitories, workshops etc. The Block Plant is one of the last of the prosaic school buildings that remain and links very directly to the school's construction.

- Seismic strengthening:

The seismic assessment<sup>4</sup> of the Block Plant, at an estimated at 40-50% NBS, means that while it may be desirable to increase the seismic rating to a higher percentage, it is over the Building Act 34% threshold. HNZPT does not regard the seismic rating in this case as an impediment to its survival. Although no design to strengthen it has been presented, our experience with similar buildings and projects demonstrates that a seismic upgrading could be achieved without irrevocably destroying the heritage values of the place.

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<sup>4</sup> BBO to HCC s92 response (18 May 2020) Attachment 1 Beca Siesmic Assessment 2020

## Summary

HNZPT does not support the demolition of the Block Plant. We support and recognise its significance as identified by Hamilton City Council through their scheduling of the structure as a Category B heritage item and part of a larger group of heritage buildings recognised at Temple View. HNZPT advocates for the retention and adaptive reuse of the Block Plant building.

HNZPT would welcome further discussion on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Pick', is centered on a light grey rectangular background.

Ben Pick  
Area Manager - Lower Northern