

Attachment 5
Heritage Assessment
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memorandum

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limited

for: bloxam burnett & olliver
from: archifact – architecture & conservation ltd
date: 8 october 2020
re: block plant, temple view
consideration of a further adaptive reuse option

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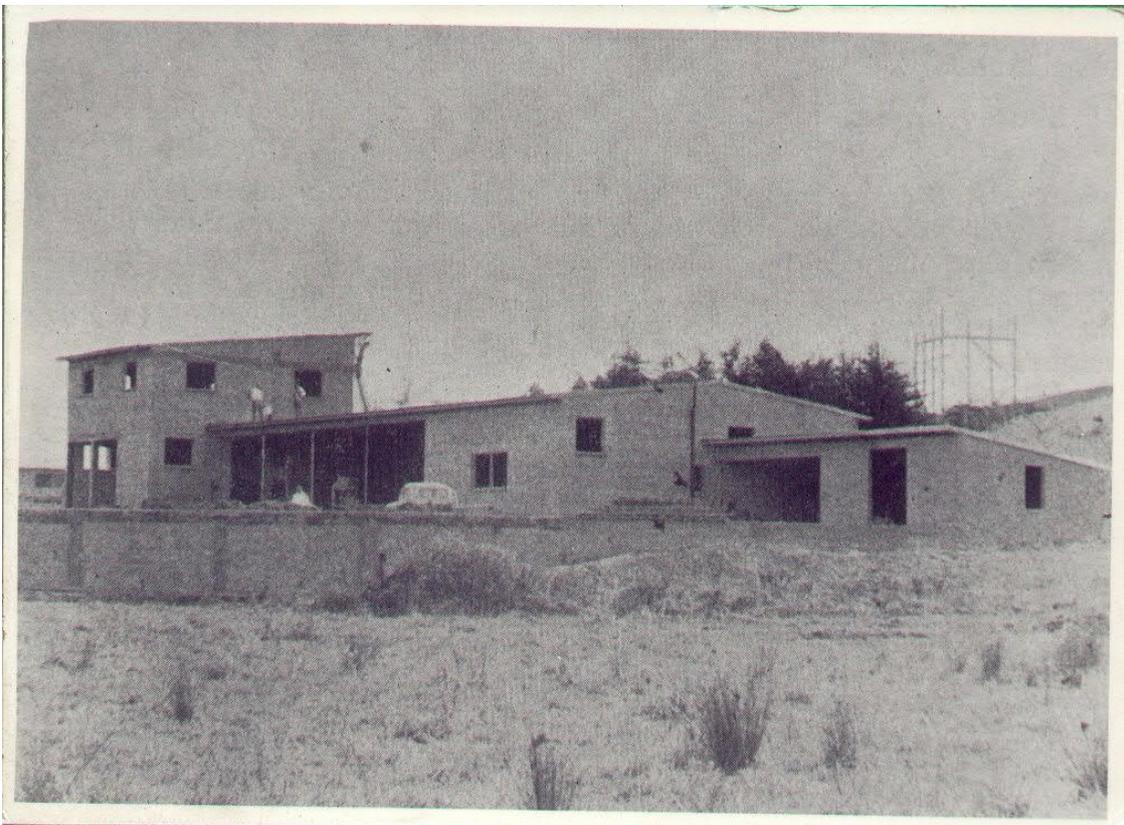


Figure 1: the Block Plant under construction in 1955

introduction

An exploration of conservation, through adaptive reuse, of the existing heritage-listed Block Plant building at Temple View has resulted in a number of options having been considered and of those options two tested in detail in a Memorandum I prepared on the 7th of May 2020. These options were:

- Residential (apartments); and,
- Commercial (offices).

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In order to consider these options reasonably, each option was considered in some detail through both architectural and structural lenses, and with likely costs and economic feasibility estimated. The extent of interior and exterior reordering required to enable the adaptive reuse options required significant additional interventions. These interventions in turn resulted in further architectural and structural considerations which gave rise to additional adverse effects to the original fabric and historic integrity of the building as a whole as recognised in the ODP. The effects arising from these interventions were also given careful consideration from an historic heritage effects perspective.

Since that Memorandum and those other associated documents were supplied to Council, a request for the consideration of further alternative adaptive reuse models associated with *Places of Assembly*¹ as defined in the Operative Hamilton City District Plan has been requested from Council. This Memorandum explores the implications of these further adaptive reuse options through an historic heritage effects' lens and focusses on two proposed adaptations considered as a conjoined facility offering gymnasium and 'men's' shed.

In consideration of these further adaptive reuse options this Memorandum should be read in conjunction with my previous report. As noted in that earlier memorandum, the structural analysis undertaken by Beca shows that the building currently conforms to somewhere between 40-50% new building standard (**NBS**). As this building falls below 67%NBS, it is categorised as an "Earthquake Risk" building in terms of the definition recommended by the New Zealand Society of Earthquake Engineering. Accordingly, if a decision was made to renovate the building to accommodate an "alternative use" there will be a statutory requirement to strengthen and equally one (driven by requirements of the Building Act) to meet current Building Code compliance triggered by the lack of any existing use rights. While this analysis shows that the building meets minimum standards for occupation in its current form, this does not necessarily equate to a desirable occupation amenity standard when measured against market expectations and this is well illustrated in the Telfer Young *Market Valuation* analysis report. I also agree with the considerations Mr Beer (Beca) has indicated in his email to you of the 29th of September 2020 where he states:

"these options all appear to be a "change in use" and therefore would require strengthening to at least 67%NBS.

Subject to Council's policy when the conversion occurs, those uses with higher occupant densities are likely to require a higher standard of at least 80%NBS is met. This would include a Theatre, Public Hall and Education, but perhaps not Gallery/Museum.

A Display Gallery/Museum may have enhanced climate control requirements.

A Theatre/Cinema will have enhanced acoustic treatment requirements (walls/ceilings/HVAC/rain noise absorption to roof).

Any usage that could result in more than 50 people in the upstairs area will trigger the requirement for a second means of escape"

¹ Places of Assembly: means land or buildings which are used principally for the public or private assembly of persons for cultural, entertainment, recreation, leisure, education or similar purposes. They include conference centres, seminar rooms, gymnasiums, public halls, theatres and cinemas, display galleries and museums.

Gymnasium and 'men's' shed

The further adaptive reuse option considered in this Memorandum is based on an indicative occupation of the southern two-thirds of the existing building with a gymnasium and the northern third of the building providing space for the "men's" shed. I am not especially concerned with the internal fit out implications from an historic heritage effects position per se as the interiors are not afforded "protection", although perhaps the most distinctive element of the building (the double height block machinery space, remains uninterpreted as a double-height volume).

This option for the adaptive reuse of the existing Block Plant brings with it requirements under the Building Act (as noted above by Mr Beer) that require degrees of intervention to the existing built heritage fabric that risk lessening the values for which the building was first entered on the HCC ODP schedule of heritage items in order to meet health and safety requirements.

With the possible exception of 'education' options the conventional spatial requirements for other 'Place of Assembly' options tends towards larger, more open, and consequentially more flexible space. The inherent qualities of the Block Plant lend itself to smaller and less flexible space without significant intervention and this is evident in the latest Walker Community Architects scheme. Provision of additional windows results in loss of original fabric on the western elevation particularly while the amount of glazing to the proposed 'men's' shed area seems almost under-developed as work in this area will require a high degree of daylighting and task lighting to the point that even more intervention of the western elevation and / or roof might be anticipated.

Any adaption of the existing building from a heritage perspective in this option is more particularly concerned with changes made to the existing external building fabric in response to requirements generated from a structural, architectural, and building services perspective. Seismic strengthening, provision of daylight and natural ventilation, and means of escape are all essential drivers required to ensure the viability of any adaptation and each may cause direct and consequential effects on the historic heritage values of the Block Plant. In addition, requirements for the provision of carparking, waste collection and disposal, and landscaping (particularly when considered in light of the immediate surrounding consented residential context and its associated topographic remodelling) add to inappropriateness of "fit" of this adaptive reuse model in its wider setting.

Equally, the already realised central location of existing theatre, galleries, museum, public halls and education facilities found in the Mendenhall Library, the Kai Hall, and the GRB align with both the Church's Envisaging Project for the Temple View Area and with a clear and simple urban design approach to gather places of public assembly in a central hub supported by the provision of adequate carparking and the interconnectedness of each of these facilities. As an outlying place of assembly, as the adaptive reuse of the Block Plant would be, risks diluting the clarity of the Envisaging Project's already realised provision of these facilities for public assembly while risking, at the same time, being a poor 'neighbour' to its emerging and anticipated surrounding residential activity.

conclusion

The potential for adaptive reuse of the listed Block Plant building has been recognised, explored, and further tested with the work commissioned by the Church in consideration of *Places of Assembly* in the guise of a combination of Gymnasium and 'Men's' Shed.

The multidisciplinary approach to testing the appropriateness of the previous options has been applied to this adaptation and has resulted in a detailed exploration of this hybrid option of Gymnasium and 'Men's' Shed. That analysis has recognised that the degree of intervention required to ensure the structural resilience of the building, the compliance with provisions of the Building Act, the consented surrounding context, the relevance of the adaptation in the current market, and the place of this adaptation within the wider Temple View Envisaging Project context results in degrees of physical intervention to the heritage fabric that adversely affects the historic heritage values for which the Block Plant was originally included in the ODP.

The Telfer Young *Market Valuation* (7 October 2020) report analysis acknowledges that the suggested repurposing of the Block Plant in this suggested form would be "*economically unfeasible*" as indicated by the differential between the valuation of some \$2.1M measured against the total development cost of \$4,081M as indicated in the Telfer Young report dated 8 October 2020 .

Notwithstanding that economic differential, from an historic heritage value and effects perspective, the consented surrounding enabling and development works associated with the Comprehensive Development Plan for the area has already shifted the values and significance of the Block Plant. This is addressed in my memo considering the cumulative effects of removing the Block Plant on the Temple View area.

In conclusion, and from an historic heritage effects position, I do not consider that this further adaptive re-use option of a Gymnasium and 'Men's' Shed should be preferred over the application for demolition in this case. In this instance this option is no more appropriate than demolition given the significant further alterations to and resulting loss of heritage building fabric that would be involved beyond what has already occurred over many years, and the incompatibility of the adaptation and the activities supported in the consented residential context.

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