



Edmondston Building, corner Princes & Riddiford Streets c.1900-10?

Use	Legal Offices	Historic Value	2 out of 5
Materials	Plastered masonry, timber joinery, corrugated iron roof	Architectural Value	2 out of 4
NZHPT Registered	Not registered	Technical Value	1 out of 2
Valuation No	12340-378-00	Symbolic Value	- out of 3
Legal Description	Pt Lot 73 DP 9	Rarity	- out of 2
		Townscape Value	2 out of 2
		Group Value	2 out of 2
		Overall Cultural Heritage Value	9 out of 20
Map Reference	PW7		

Description

The Edmonston Building is two storey plastered masonry construction, with a narrow frontage to Princes Street; it may originally have had an entrance here, but there are now modern windows on the ground floor and the entrance is on the side of the building facing Riddiford Street. The front facade is nevertheless intact at first floor level, with two windows between paired pilasters, and above is a cornice with dentils and a parapet with a central ornament (an urn?) and acroterion on either side. The timber double-hung windows are still in place, and there are some original joinery items remaining inside.

History

The Edmonston Building was built for Mr H Caplen and Mr Cox for their land agency, although the date of construction is not known; it is possibly around 1900-1910. During their occupancy, Mr A M McSkimming, a tailor, had his shop there (1924); it was later occupied by the law firm Spratt and Matthews, and after them James and J W Edmondston, barristers and solicitors took over the building. The National Party had their meeting rooms upstairs at one stage.

Architect

Not known.

Builder

Not known.

Statement of Significance

This building has historical value for its association with an important early lawyer and Borough Councillor Harry Caplen, and as well as with other professional tenants and owners. It is a smaller and less authentic neo-classical building than its neighbour the Caplen Building, but it nevertheless has a compatible scale with its neighbours, and similar classical detailing, so that it contributes to the row of period buildings on the west side of Princes Street that - for its consistency, scale, decoration and style - is unsurpassed in Taranaki and which has national historical importance. This townscape quality is the most important value of this building.

Sources

Conversation with J Edmonston.

Date

June 1997