

Port 29-32

# Heritage funding to protect landmarks

## Quake strengthening

Mike Watson

Two Taranaki heritage buildings have been granted Government funding for earthquake strengthening.

The 92-year-old St Aubyn Chambers apartments in New Plymouth, and the Messenger Building, on Rata St, Inglewood, built in 1910, have been given a total of \$29,670 by the Heritage EQUIP fund announced by Art, Culture and Heritage Minister Grant Robertson.

Both buildings were designed by New Plymouth architect Frank Messenger.

A concrete wall on the western side of the Messenger Building, owned by McDonalds Real Estate, will get \$11,750 for earthquake strengthening.

The grant will support detailed structural design and the preparation of consent documents.

Inglewood resident and New Plymouth District councillor Richard Jordan said the funding would be well received.

"It's marvellous to have the grant to preserve and protect the Messenger Building as it is a landmark in the town centre," he said.

The building was extensively damaged by fire in 1999 before being rebuilt and renovated by owner Peter McDonald, of McDonalds Real Estate, Jordan said.

One of the features is the main door constructed on the corner of the building, a characteristic of a number of old buildings in the township, Jordan said.

Meanwhile, St Aubyn Chambers, built in 1927 for builders Jones and Sandford, was the first in-situ concrete building in New Plymouth, and among the first in New Zealand.

Previously a petrol station and motel, it now houses six residential apartments.

The latest grant of \$18,010 to finalise the design upgrade is the second Heritage EQUIP funding for the building in 2019.

The first grant in May was used for structural assessment and early stage design advice, along with heritage impact analysis.



St Aubyn Chambers apartments in New Plymouth.



The Messenger Building in Inglewood.

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