



 Egmont Steam Flour Mill, 2 Courtenay St

1865

Themes in development: Maori, early settlement, farming, transport and trade, cultural and social.

Cultural heritage values: historical, architectural, technical, symbolic, rarity, townscape and group values.

Registered: Category II under the Historic Places Act, 1993.
 Category I on the New Plymouth District Planning Scheme.

Owner	Title	Use
Constellation Enterprises Ltd c/- Autolodge 393 Devon Street East	Lot 1 DP 4628 Pt Lot 1 DP 4945 - 1662 m ² - Egmont Steam Flour Mill	Tavern and nightclub

Description

The Egmont Steam Flour Mill is a rare building type, a three storey timber mill building, now used for the very different purpose of tavern and nightclub. It has a handsome Italianate facade to Courtenay Street, with three rows of ornate windows each framed with segmental arches over; a parapet reflects this shape over the main entrance. Inside a rustic, industrial character is more evident, with heavy timber construction of posts and beams supporting timber floors; foundations are stone and concrete. Although not apparent from the street, it is sited dramatically high above the Huatoki Stream on the south side. Concessions to the new use include modern fittings and a glazed conservatory-type addition to the east end.

History

The Mill was built in 1865-67 for Mssrs Webster and Hulke for the sum of £7,000, the last and most sophisticated of New Plymouth's five early flour mills. Although sited alongside the Huatoki Stream it was powered by steam, and used rollers rather than grinding stones. It continued to operate as a mill until around 1896. It was owned by the produce merchants Collet and Co from 1905-28; they altered the original board and batten facade to Courtenay Street to the present much more ornate design. Between 1928 and 1965 the Farmers' Co-op operated a retail outlet and produce store from the building. The building underwent major conservation work in 1986-87 in a three-way arrangement between Fletcher Development and Construction, Lion Breweries and the Maori Trustee, fitting it for its present use and ensuring its continued life.

Architect

George Robinson, with designs supplied by Mssrs Bull and Bond, England.

Statement of Significance

The building has very great historic importance. It is the only survivor of five mills that were an important part of the commercial activity of the young town, and it is the oldest surviving industrial building. Its technological value is high for this reason, and is so nationally as well as timber buildings of this scale and early period are rare anywhere in New Zealand (it pre-dates the Government Buildings, Wellington, by some ten years). Purpose-built flour mills of this early period are likewise very rare. The architectural and townscape values are high, particularly for the ordered north elevation that closes the view south along Currie Street.

Sources

Taranaki Museum, photos, architectural drawings and measured drawings.
Taranaki Museum, heritage trail file C7020048.
NZHPT building file no 906.