



Hooker's Building, 32-34 Egmont Street
and 32-36 King Street

1926

Themes in development: transport and trade, cultural and social.

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

Not registered.

Owner

Leslie Forsyth
60 Celia Street, Stratford

Title

Lot 2 DP 4853
ID: 015090

Use

Retail and offices

Description

Hookers Building on the Egmont Street / King Street corner is now used by a mix of tenants. It is a two storied reinforced concrete building with timber floors and cast iron columns. It is a good commercial building of its time, prominent in the townscape because of its long elevations to two streets, the corner emphasised by a composition of gable and raised parapets. The windows are timber casement with small-paned fanlights above.

History

The business was founded by John Hooker in 1871; he began as a general carrier with two horses and an "express" wagon. In 1890 he built a large travellers' sample room on this site, handing over the business to his sons in 1914. The firm's slogan was "Anyware to anywhere".

The building was built for Mssrs Hooker Bros, the original drawings being dated November 1926; tenders closed on 20 December 1926. The original layout was an office in the corner of the building, shops along Egmont Street, with a cart dock on King Street and sample rooms right through the top floor. These had folding doors between them so large spaces could be created. The State Advances Corporation had offices in the building for a long time. There are documents in the Council records relating to seven alterations carried out between 1972 and 1987, major work being the remodelling in 1972 by Bruce Henderson and Associates. There have been alterations to the ground floor on Egmont Street, including new windows and a verandah, but elsewhere the main elevations are intact.

Architect

The architect was T H Bates. Copies of the original drawings are held by the Council and the Taranaki Museum.

Statement of Significance

The building has importance as an example of the commercial architecture of the 1920s and the work of T H Bates, an important local architect. It has historic interest for its association with an important New Plymouth business enterprise and its principal function as piece rooms, and high townscape value as a well proportioned and prominent building on the Egmont Street / King Street corner.

Sources

New Plymouth District Council building file 152/90.
The Industrious Heart, J S Tullet, 1981.