



This sequence of pictures shows the shell of the building in Robe Street, New Plymouth, collapsing. The front wall was pulled with a cable by a bulldozer from behind. The machine at the left pushed the side wall to ensure the crumbling concrete fell inwards on to the building site and away from neighbouring premises.

Building makes way for cars

New Plymouth demolition contractors reduced an almost 100-year-old Robe St building to rubble in a few seconds today.

Powderham Petrol Station manager Mike Brinsley said the station bought the former New Plymouth Operatic Society building about two weeks ago.

The site would be used to park rental cars on, he said.

The building took two days to demolish and three concrete walls were all that were left at 11 a.m. today.

A cable looped around the front wall was pulled by a bulldozer and the walls fell inwards causing the ground to shake and clouds of dust to rise.

Operatic society secretary Mr Kevin Landrigan said the society had used the building for rehearsals of about 30 productions during the last 25 years.

The building was about 99-years-old.

Deburgh Adams Lodge bought the site in 1882 from Mr F. A. Carrington for three pounds a square foot.

The building was erected by William Brooking at a price of 500 pounds.

The building was sold to the New Plymouth Operatic Society in 1956.

Mr Landrigan said the building needed substantial renovations to bring it back to standard.

The society moved to new premises at the Opera House where it had four times the floor space of the Robe St building and rehearsals and productions could be held under the same roof.

More power to committees

More power would be given to council committees in future, Egmont County Council decided at its annual meeting in Opunake today.

"It is common practice among all other local authorities in Taranaki to do the bulk of work at committee meetings and forward resolutions to council," said county clerk Mr Alfred McCall.

"You should have faith in the committee you appoint," he said. "You should be able to accept the recommendations they present."

At the moment there was continuous duplication of discussions, being held first at committee level then repeated at council level.

Mr McCall said it was council policy to have one

year, while the position of county chairman is filled for three years.

Council residents would have to wait for two years for a 111 emergency dialling system if a move to install one was not made before Christmas, chairman Mr Geoff Johnston said.

A meeting of interested parties was held yesterday in Opunake to discuss installing such a system for police, firebrigade, doctor and ambulance.

Representatives from the Post Office, Ministry of Transport, Opunake St John Ambulance Association, the Opunake Fire Brigade and a local doctor attended the meeting.

All parties had good callout systems, but there was confusion when outsiders got no answer on 111, Mr Johnston said.