

## Heritage Buildings Report

**Site ID**

**Building/Site Name**

Waitara Lock-Up (1875)

**Address**

Memorial Place, Waitara



### Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1875, this building has considerable heritage significance as Waitara's first lock-up and as one of Waitara's oldest surviving buildings. During much of the twentieth century the building was used as a stable by Waitara's largest employer, Thomas Borthwick & Sons, and is a rare surviving structure associated with a firm whose premises at one stage occupied several town blocks. The 1875 lock-up was relocated from the former Borthwick's property to its present Memorial Place site in 1988 to form part of a proposed historical village, a concept reflecting late twentieth-century attitudes towards heritage preservation, public education and tourism. The former 1875 Waitara lock-up has strong contextual value for its close association with its successor, the adjacent former 1911 Waitara lock-up, with the building positioned in a publicly accessible location where it contributes positively to the character of the local streetscape. Although subject of modifications whilst in use at Borthwick's and upon relocation to this site, the building still retains its original exterior form and a considerable amount of original fabric.



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### Legal Information and Heritage Status

<b>Legal Description</b>	Section 2 Block 85 Town of Waitara West
<b>District Plan Item/ Map No.</b>	
<b>Heritage New Zealand List</b>	Not listed

### Construction Information

<b>Date of Construction</b>	Circa 1875
<b>Principal Materials</b>	Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel
<b>Construction Professionals</b>	Unknown

### History

#### Early History: Waitara's First Lock-up

Early policing work in the Waitara area was undertaken by the Armed Constabulary, with a permanent police station likely established because of its status as an important military post.<sup>1</sup> Waitara's first dedicated lock-up, almost certainly the present building, was constructed during 1875. The first mention of the construction of a lock-up at Waitara is in the Provincial Council's estimated expenditure for 1875, where £50 was set aside for a lock-up at Waitara.<sup>2</sup> Tenders were subsequently advertised by Deputy Superintendent Arthur Standish during May 1875 for building a lock-up at Waitara.<sup>3</sup> It is unclear when the lock-up was completed, however, during January 1876, James Nelson and James Adams pleaded guilty in the Resident Magistrates Court to breaking twelve panes of glass in the Waitara lock-up; both were subsequently being fined £1 15s.<sup>4</sup>



Panorama of Waitara River, circa 1877, [detail showing likely 1875 lock-up on original site (left) with 1875 railway station further right], Williamson & Co. PHO2010-0532, Puke Ariki (PA)

<sup>1</sup> Carr, Margaret. *Policing in the Mountain Shadow: A history of the Taranaki police*. New Plymouth: TNL Print, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 16 January 1875, page 2

<sup>3</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 26 May 1875, page 1

<sup>4</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 8 January 1876, page 2



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During March 1879, the Undersecretary for Crown Lands wrote to the Taranaki Land Board asking for recommendations for possible police station sites at Waitara as the Constabulary Department wished to construct one there.<sup>5</sup> It was noted that “by some mistake the present police building at Waitara [the lock-up] had been put on a private section”.<sup>6</sup> The Land Board suggested that part of Block CXVI [116] Town of Raleigh West would be a suitable police station site, and it was subsequently gazetted as a site for a police station in May 1879.<sup>7</sup> Tenders for the construction of a police station at Waitara were advertised by the Public Works Department during October 1879 and presumably erected soon after.<sup>8</sup> It seems the extant 1875 lock-up was relocated to the new site at the time of construction, with the new buildings likely comprising a residence, stables and other outbuildings. The 1908 Cyclopaedia of New Zealand described the Waitara police station as “an old building... [with] an office and two cells. There is also a residence for the constable”.<sup>9</sup>

### A New Police Station at Waitara

During March 1910, tenders for repairs and alterations to police buildings at Waitara were advertised by the District Engineer Mr G. L. Cook.<sup>10</sup> Despite the contract being let for this work, it was decided later that year to dispose of the Stafford Street property and construct a new police station on another site in the town; £750 was allocated in the 1910-11 Public Works estimates for the purchase of property and construction of a new gaol at Waitara.<sup>11</sup> A new police station site comprising lots 3 and 4 of block 107 Waitara West (present 1-3 Parris Street), was purchased from W. Wilkes during December 1910 for £700.<sup>12</sup> However, disposal of the old property was somewhat more complicated as it was gazetted as police reserve, meaning it couldn't be sold without being authorised by an Act of Parliament. Thus, a special provision was included within the *Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act 1910* to enable the sale of the Stafford Street land to multi-national meat processors Thomas Borthwick & Sons for £600.<sup>13</sup> The capital value of the property at the time of sale was £475, with a police station valued at £275, and outbuildings valued at £100, present on the site.<sup>14</sup>

Initially, it seems the old lock-up was going to be relocated to the new Parris Street police station site. However, during late-January 1911, it was reported by the local works engineer that it was not possible to remove the old lock-up to the new site as Mr Borthwick understood them to be his property.<sup>15</sup> Mr Borthwick offered to sell the lock-up back to the police department for £20, with the cost of removing the lock-up to the new site likely costing another £20.<sup>16</sup> The district engineer thought it better to build a new lock-up, with the under-secretary for police giving instructions that if Mr Borthwick would not sell the old lock-up for around £5, then estimates should be obtained for new lock-up.<sup>17</sup> With Borthwick unwilling to lower the sale price, the decision was made to construct a new lock-up at the Parris Street property. Tenders for the construction of the new lock-up and also alterations to an extant villa at the new station

<sup>5</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 11 March 1879, page 2

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> 'Lands Permanently Reserved', *New Zealand Gazette*, 31 July 1879, Issue 81, p.1054

<sup>8</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 6 October 1879, page 2

<sup>9</sup> Cyclopaedia Company Limited 1908, *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Taranaki, Hawke's Bay & Wellington Provincial Districts]*, Cyclopaedia Company Limited, Christchurch, page 140

<sup>10</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 8 March 1910, page 7

<sup>11</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 16 November 1910, page 2

<sup>12</sup> Waitara Borough Valuation Roll – Numbers 1-1293, circa 1910-1927, Item ID R16778512, Agency AELV, Series 19324, Accession W1175, Record Group V-NPW1175, Box 26, Record 2/70, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

<sup>13</sup> Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act 1910

<sup>14</sup> Waitara Borough Valuation Roll – Numbers 1-1293, circa 1910-1927, Item ID R16778512, Agency AELV, Series 19324, Accession W1175, Record Group V-NPW1175, Box 26, Record 2/70, ANZ.

<sup>15</sup> Carr, Margaret. *Policing in the Mountain Shadow: A history of the Taranaki police*. New Plymouth: TNL Print, 1989.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

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site (to be used as the police residence) were called during March 1910, with plans for this work surviving at Archives New Zealand.<sup>18</sup>

### From Lock-Up to Stable: Eight Decades at Borthwick's

Established in England during the 1870s, Thomas Borthwick & Sons quickly expanded to become leaders in the processing, transport and distribution of frozen meat. The firm established a number of abattoirs and freezing works in Australia and New Zealand during the early-1900s, purchasing the Auckland Freezing Company's Works' at Waitara in 1903.<sup>19</sup> Despite suffering two major fires in 1904, the works were quickly rebuilt and the facility greatly improved and expanded during the following decades. Processing large numbers of animals, Borthwick's was integral to Waitara's economic success and was the town's largest employer for much of the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> Borthwick's New Zealand operations, including the Waitara plant, were purchased by the Waitaki NZ Refrigerating Ltd in 1986, with the plant continuing to operate until 1997, when tough market conditions forced its closure.<sup>21</sup>

Following Borthwick's purchase of the old Stafford Street police station site, Waitara's first lock-up was promptly relocated to a new location on their property to enable additions to their factory.<sup>22</sup> For much of the first half of the twentieth century the lock-up was positioned against the manure shed and used as a harness shed to store drovers' gear.<sup>23</sup> During the 1950s or 1960s the lock-up was shifted again, this time to Borthwick's horse paddock in Grey Street, near the site of the later truck wash.<sup>24</sup> It seems during these later years the jail was actually used as a stable, perhaps explaining the loss of its original floor and addition of a stable door. The old lock-up remained in the Grey Street horse paddock, its historic significance largely unknown, until 1983, when it was re-discovered by members of the Waitara Historical Society.<sup>25</sup> With the demolition of almost all buildings associated with the Waitara freezing works completed during the early 2000s, Waitara's original lock-up is a rare surviving structure associated with a firm whose premises once occupied several town blocks.

### Relocation and Preservation

Established during the 1980s, the Waitara Historical Society was formed with the aims of preserving Waitara's heritage and setting up a small museum. The first building to be acquired by the society was the 1911 Waitara lock-up, which was relocated to its present site adjacent to Memorial Place in mid-1983; it being donated to the society by New Zealand Police during extensive alterations to the Parris Street police station.<sup>26</sup>

Not content with just one lock-up, the Waitara Historical Society soon entered into talks with Borthwick's to acquire the 1875 lock-up to form the nucleus of a proposed historic village in Memorial Place.<sup>27</sup> The establishment of the Waitara Historical Village followed similar trend in other small towns and reflected late twentieth-century attitudes towards heritage preservation, public education and tourism. Upon the

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<sup>18</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 10 March 1910, page 7; Waitara Police Station alterations and new lock up including block plan, Arthur Thomson Ford, 1910, Item ID R25349001, Agency ABZK, Series 24411, Accession W5433, Box 21, Record PWD 28777, Part X, ANZ.

<sup>19</sup> Cyclopeda Company Limited 1908, *The Cyclopeda of New Zealand [Taranaki, Hawke's Bay & Wellington Provincial Districts]*, Cyclopeda Company Limited, Christchurch, page 140; *Taranaki Herald*, 14 April 1903, page 4

<sup>20</sup> *The Daily News*, 23 March 1996, page 3

<sup>21</sup> *The Daily News*, 22 February 1986, page 1; *The Daily News*, 16 December 1997, page 2

<sup>22</sup> *Waitara and Inglewood Press*, 5 May 1984, page 1

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> *Waitara and Inglewood Press*, 24 August 1983, page 1

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

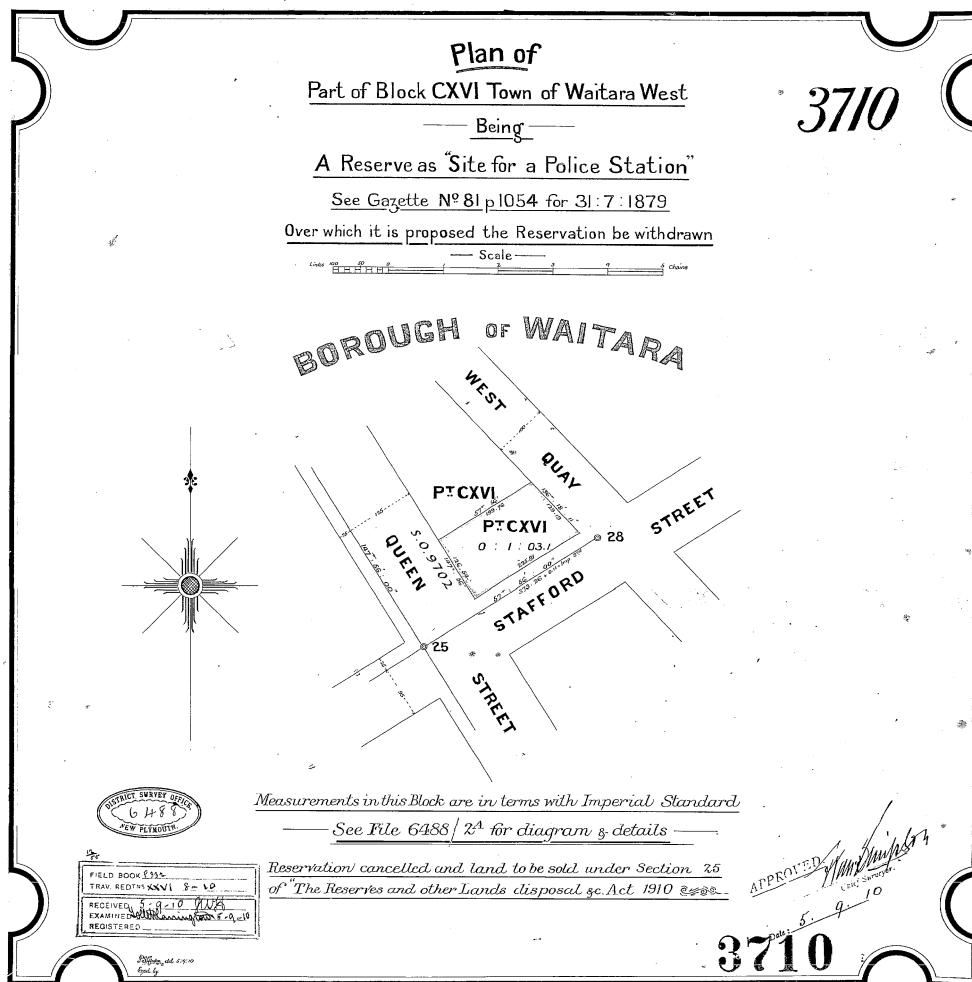
<sup>27</sup> *Waitara and Inglewood Press*, 5 May 1984, page 1



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creation of the New Plymouth District Council in 1989, a lease was granted to the Waitara Memorial Village Trust Inc. for the lease of land in Memorial Place.

Whilst it seems that the Waitara Historical Society was gifted the former 1875 lock-up by Borthwick's, during 1984, it wasn't until 1988, following the purchase of Borthwick's Waitara plant by Waitaki NZ Ltd, that the lock-up was actually relocated to Memorial Place. The lock-up was placed on a new concrete slab foundation and the exterior restored upon relocation; a small bathroom was also added at this time. The Memorial Village Trust was dissolved in 1999, with its assets (buildings and research materials) later transferred to the Waitara Districts History and Families Group Inc., who were granted a \$1 concessional ground lease for the site in 2018. The 1875 lock-up has latterly been used as storage space for archive materials.

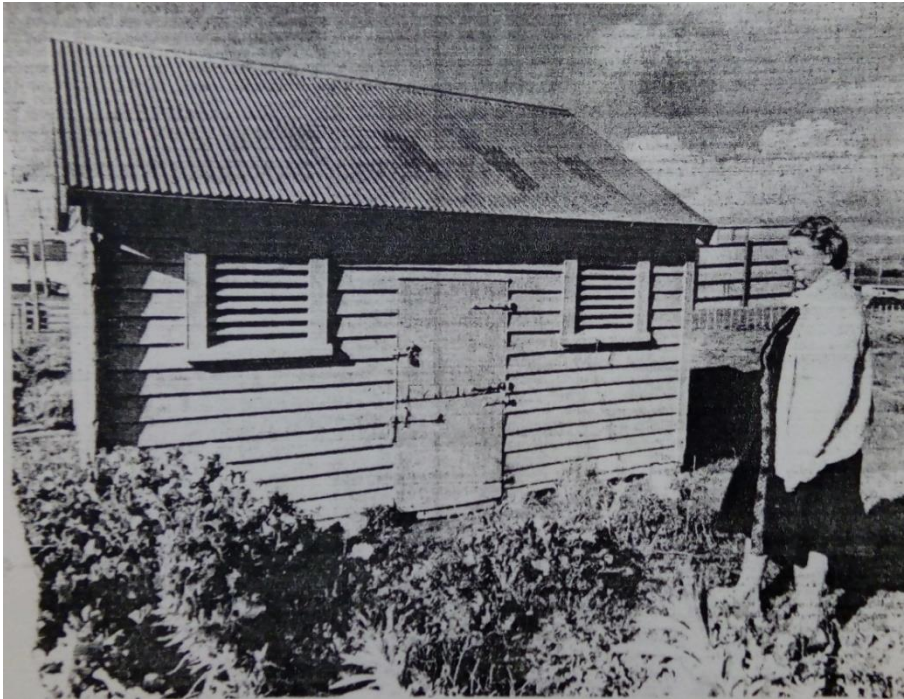


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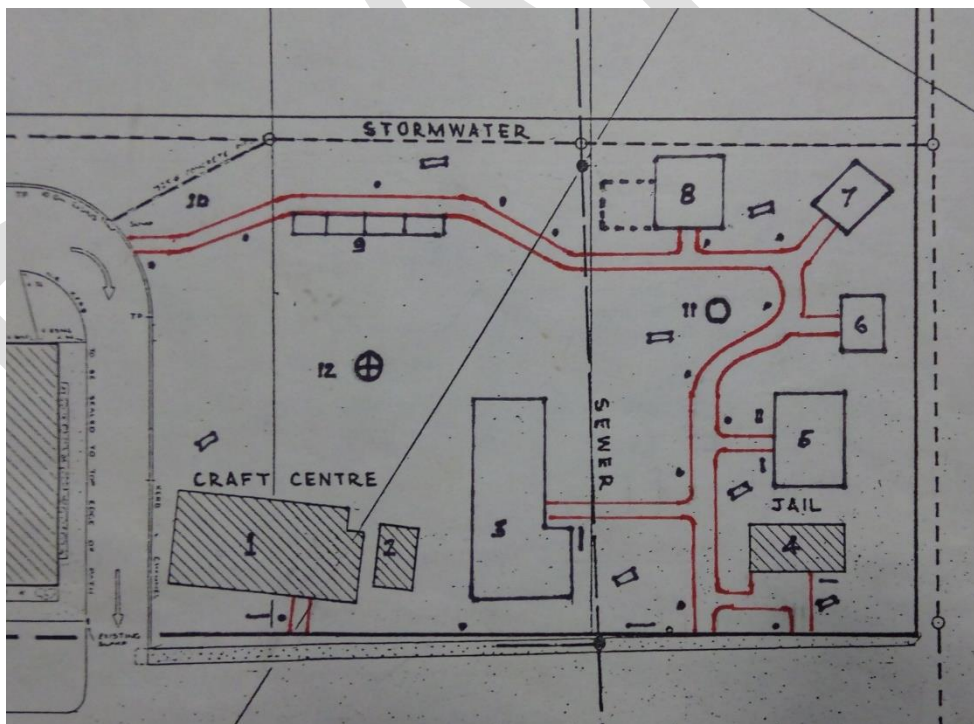




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Mrs Pearl Fraser of the Waitara Historical Society stands outside the former 1875 lock-up on Borthwick's Grey Street property, from *Waitara and Inglewood Press*, 24 August 1983, page 1



Proposed plan of Waitara Historical Village, from Waitara & Districts Historic Building Action Group. *Waitara Memorial Village Proposal*. Waitara: Waitara and Districts Historic Building Action Group, 1988

### Reference Sources

See footnotes.



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### Description

The 1875 Waitara lock-up is located in the North Taranaki town of Waitara, about 15km northeast of New Plymouth. The building is sited on a portion of NPDC-owned reserve near the intersection of Whittaker Street and Memorial Place which is presently leased to the Waitara Districts History and Families Group Inc. On the northern side of Whittaker Street is Pukekohe Domain, originally the site of the pre-European Pukekohe pa and later Camp Waitara, established during 1860.

The relocated 1911 Waitara lock-up is positioned a few metres east of the 1875 lock-up, whilst the nineteenth century Rose Cottage, also relocated, is positioned about 15m to the south; together these buildings form the nucleus of what was to be the Waitara Historic Village. Beyond Rose Cottage is the relocated former Tariki Railway Station (circa 1960s) and the large Waitara Memorial Hall (1959).

The main form of the 1875 Waitara lock-up is a simple gabled structure, timber-framed, clad with wide rough-sawn horizontal weatherboards (likely Kauri), mild corrugated steel roof, with a modern reinforced concrete foundation floor. The building follows a similar form to the adjacent 1911 lock-up, although is slightly deeper in width and shorter in length. It is readily identifiable as a lock-up and is representative of the types lock-up's constructed in small towns throughout New Zealand during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The main front elevation faces roughly southeast and is symmetrically composed with central entrance door flanked either side by large louvred vents. The present entrance incorporates a stable/Dutch door (split horizontally) and may be a product of the building's association with horses whilst located at Borthwick's; the door has recently (2018) undergone significant repairs following vandalism. The principal feature of this elevation, the oversize vents, are constructed of angled timber slats, with more modern glass windows now fitted behind.

At the southwestern elevation is a small timber window, waste trap, and uPVC vent pipe; all being added at the time of relocation. The north-western rear wall is presently devoid of any openings, although the pattern of replacement boards may indicate an historic opening (possibly a window) near the centre of this elevation. The north-eastern elevation is fitted with an old timber door (appears nineteenth century in origin) incorporating four panels, each flush with the frame and surrounded by timber beading.

The 1875 Waitara lock-up is one of only two known timber lock-up's of this style to survive within New Plymouth District, the other being the adjacent 1911 Waitara lock-up. The only other known surviving lock-up's within wider Taranaki area is the former Kaponga lock-up (1914), now relocated and restored at Stratford's Pioneer Village, and the HNZ Category 2 former Pungarehu lock-up (circa 1885), adjacent to the former Pungarehu Blockhouse.

### Assessment:

#### Historical

The 1875 Waitara Lock-up (former) is one of Waitara's oldest surviving buildings and is strongly associated with the theme of law enforcement and incarceration in Waitara during the second half of the nineteenth century. The building served as the Waitara lock-up for a period of 35 years, and when viewed together with the adjacent 1911 lock-up, utilised until the 1970s, cover a significant period in the history of policing in Waitara. The lock-up's association with Borthwick's is also significant, with the firm being the largest employer in Waitara for much of the twentieth century. Almost all buildings associated with the Borthwick's have now been demolished, and the lock-up

✓✓





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	<p>is a rare surviving structure associated with a firm whose premises at one stage occupied several town blocks.</p>	
<b>Importance to Community</b>	<p>There was a clear and deliberate action taken to relocate and restore the 1875 Waitara lock-up during the 1980s. This was driven at least in part by a clear historical and social value being placed on the building by members of the Waitara community.</p>	✓
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	<p>The former Waitara lock-up is a good example of an 1870s utilitarian building utilising using basic construction materials and techniques from the period. The two large louvred vents are distinctive and rather uncommon architectural features.</p>	✓
<b>Setting and Context</b>	<p>The former 1875 Waitara lock-up has strong contextual value for its close association with its successor, the adjacent former 1911 Waitara lock-up. Although relocated from its original site, the former 1875 Waitara lock-up remains within Waitara township and is positioned in a publicly accessible location where it contributes positively to the character of the local streetscape.</p>	✓
<b>Archaeology</b>	-	
<b>Representativeness, rarity and integrity</b>	<p>This building is representative of the types lock-up's constructed in small towns throughout Taranaki (and New Zealand) during the second half of the nineteenth century. One of only two known surviving lock-up's of this type to survive in New Plymouth District; the other being the adjacent 1911 Waitara lock-up. Although now with concrete floor, and the subject of modifications whilst in use at Borthwick's and on relocation to this site, the building still retains its original exterior form and a considerable amount of its original fabric; it is still readily identifiable as a nineteenth century lock-up.</p>	✓
<b>Meets threshold for listing</b> (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓