

ANNEXURE F – HERITAGE NZ EMAIL

David Harford

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Sent: Friday, 14 June 2024 1:02 pm
To: Thiblet, Jeremy AU-GE
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Subject: Ashburton Glassworks

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EXTERNAL EMAIL

Kia ora Jeremy,

Thank you for inviting Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga to meet with your team at the Ashburton Glassworks building last week. It was very beneficial to go through your proposed structural solutions and to have a guided walk around this wonderful heritage building.

The former Glassworks is one of Ashburton's most distinctive industrial buildings and has mostly retained its external appearance. Of note is the main section of the complex with the steeply pitched roof crowned by a tall, glazed clerestory, as well as its symmetrically ordered façade, detailed brickwork and 38.4m high chimney. The building is an outstanding feature in the Ashburton townscape and has been assessed to have historic, cultural, architectural, and technological significance. It was included on the New Zealand Heritage List Rārangī Kōrero as a Category 1 historic place (list number 7707) on 6th June 2007. It is also included in the Ashburton District Plan Schedule of Heritage Items as a Group A heritage item.

The building has been identified as earthquake prone and as such Malteurop have put forward an initial strengthening proposal for discussion. We thank you for approaching Heritage New Zealand at this early stage, to enable us to consider and discuss options that may work for both the heritage building and your company.

Seismic strengthening

Based upon David Bonniface's detailed seismic assessment from September 2023, Buildings One, Two, Three and Four at the Ashburton Glassworks have been rated as 15%NBS. The proposed seismic strengthening solutions for achieving either 34% (above EQ-prone status) or 67% (above EQ-risk status) NBS are similar, but the size and quantity of the materials differ. We consider both proposed solutions to be compatible with the existing 20th-century industrial architecture and materials of the Ashburton Glassworks. The proposal includes the addition of large steel portals and bracing to achieve the required NBS rating. Heritage New Zealand supports David's proposal to contain all the proposed engineering solutions in the interior of the Glassworks. This will ensure the addition of new materials doesn't detract from the exterior form of this large masonry building.

It is important that engineering solutions are compatible with not only the design and form of a heritage building but also current and future functions. David's proposal achieves this and will allow for the future adaptive reuse of the Glassworks.

Part demolition

Heritage New Zealand advocates for the retention and protection of listed heritage buildings, however we note these proposals include partial demolition. Our comments on this are as follows:

Building three (timber shed southwest of grid A):

This building dates from c1930 and is of timber construction with corrugated steel exterior wall cladding. It was deemed to be in a dilapidated condition during David's DSA visit. We agree that this building may be

considered non-contributory to the heritage setting and complex at the Glassworks. We consider its removal will not adversely affect the heritage values of the Glassworks.

Building four (workshop and railway siding roof):

This is an addition constructed in the 1950s to form a workshop and roof over the railway siding. We consider the removal of this section will have a positive effect in that it will provide increased visibility of the main building one. Its removal will not adversely impact the overall heritage values or setting of the Glassworks.

Chimney:

The chimney was constructed in 1928, at the same time as building one, of brick and reinforced concrete. It has a base area of 23.8m² and stands at a height of approximately 38.4m. The seismic assessment confirms that as no drawings can be found, the preparation of a detailed strengthening scheme for the chimney would require an exorbitant amount of intrusive investigations to establish the foundation size and structure, reinforcement lap lengths and compressive strength. Even with this costly investigation, there will still be doubt as to the construction e.g. reinforcement content and the extent of chimney wall bars into the foundation. The proposal is therefore to demolish the whole chimney.

This proposal poses a challenge in heritage terms as the distinctive form and height of the chimney, along with its original function, is an important part of the overall heritage item. However, we accept that we need to be pragmatic in our thinking – we understand the cost involved in strengthening buildings one and two (and demolishing buildings three and four as described above) to provide a safe and functional work environment. We also acknowledge that the chimney will not be a functional workable structure and therefore any funds spent to strengthen it, would only result in a museum piece.

At our meeting we discussed the potential for the top section of the chimney to be deconstructed down to the level of the existing rim/collar. This would enable the bottom section to be retained as a stabilised ruin, which still has the ability to tell the story of the original chimney. Such a proposal would also avoid any archaeological implications that may potentially arise if removing the foundations. Although it is undesirable to lose this landmark structure in its entirety, weighing up all of the circumstances, including the operational health and safety of the site, we consider partial deconstruction to be a compromise that Heritage New Zealand may be prepared to accept (pending details).

You mentioned at the meeting that only the main open sections of the building are currently utilised for malt storage and the rest of the building sits vacant. We were encouraged by Michael Wong's comment that the Council would be keen to promote greater use of the northern section of the building through sub-lease to another complimentary user, such as a boutique brewery. The retention of heritage structures is usually facilitated by their ongoing viable use, therefore we would be very keen to see the whole building used for a suitable purpose if possible.

I hope the above comments are useful at this early stage. We are available for consultation as you work through your proposals, and in particular we are happy to provide any conservation guidance you may require.

Thanks again for consulting with us and we look forward to working with you as your proposal progresses.

Ngā mihi,
Arlene

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