AB Consulting Engineers

13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central

Structural Condition Assessment

Mr. Ray Pickett

25 July 2024

AB-AS-RP-010801- Rev C

Private and Confidential

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This document has 37 pages including the cover.

Document history

Revision	Purpose Description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised
Rev A	For information	HP 23-Jul-24	HP 23-Jul-24	AB 23-Jul-24	AB 24-Jul-24
Rev B	Included extract from Geotech Report	HP 24-Jul-24	HP 24-Jul-24	AB 24-Jul-24	AB 24-Jul-24
Rev C	Updated Report	HP 25-Jul-24	HP 25-Jul-24	AB 25-Jul-24	AB 25-Jul-24

Executive Brief

AB Consulting Engineers were appointed by Mr. Ray Pickett to undertake a Structural Condition Assessment of the property located at 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central.

The building was assessed based on AB Consulting Engineers interpretation of the information obtained from the existing documents, information shared by the client, and observations during site inspection.

Record documents and observations on site revealed significant structural cracks in the subfloor walls and near the base of buttress walls.

The plausible causes of these observed cracks could be (i) Foundation subsidence, (ii) Influence of large trees that were removed (iii) Damage triggered by seismic events, (iv) Foundation failure due to overloading, and (iv) other possible explanations or their combinations. Please refer Section 4 for more details.

Due to the limited nature of this investigation the evolution and propagation of cracks could not be observed. A study that involves observing the structure for a period of about 1 year would be needed to draw more definite conclusions on the reasons behind observed cracks.

This report also makes some recommendations on the proposed course of action. Please refer Section 5 for more information.

Please feel free to reach out for any further details.

Yours truly,

Avinash Bandaru
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

AB Consulting Engineers Limited (AB Consulting Engineers) has been engaged by Mr. Ray Pickett to undertake Structural Condition Assessmentof the residential building at 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central.

The existing building at 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central was built circa 1935[1] and is currently owned by Mr. Ray Pickett's family since early 2000. Hamilton City Council wishes to classify the building as a Heritage Building, since the construction of building was commissioned by the Ebbett family, associated with a well-known car dealership company founded in New Zealand.

Mr. Ray Pickett believes that the structure has deteriorated beyond the realm of reasonable protection and wishes to bring to the council's notice the poor condition of structure and associated risks so that he can make necessary repairs or modifications including demolition if needed without the restrictions that would apply to a protected building.

Figure 1 Record Photograph of the building[2]

1.2 Damage recorded by the owner

Mr. Ray Pickett reports that he and his family have been observing evolving and propagating cracks and leaks in the building for over 5 years. The following are extracts from the letter sent by the current owners (Refer Appendix A).

- Structure is supported on red brick piles

[1] Based on available information
[2] House at 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton West. Whites Aviation Ltd: Photographs. Ref: WA-22289-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22793675

- Roofing is relatively heavy and consists of terra cotta tiles
- Significant subsidence was observed on the south side of the house
- Additional piles were added before the current owner purchased the property; however, the underlining issue does not seem to have been resolved
- Alleged continued subsidence had resulted in highly uneven floor(45mm level difference over 1220mm length) as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Uneven floor as reported by owner

- The alleged continued subsidence has also caused major leaks which needed fixing by the current owner

It shall be noted that, many of the major cracks and defects that had developed had been sealed before site inspection by AB Consulting Engineers and hence could not be inspected during the site visit.

2 Geotechnical Investigations

A geotechnical investigation was carried out by GWE Consulting Engineers based on site conditions as observed by them on 21 June and 8 July 2024.

This investigation identified indications of several depressions on soil surface near the building. Boreholes also showed very low strength soil strata between 1 and 1.7m below ground level. Please refer section 6 of Geotechnical report reproduced below as Figure 3.

Results of their investigation and findings have been covered in their report dated 23 July 2024 (Reference Number J5545). This report suggests that several large trees which were present in the vicinity earlier may have contributed to observed settlement and relatively weaker soil strata.

Please refer the Geotechnical Report by GWE Consulting Engineers for locations of boreholes, their observations, and recommendations.

6. REVIEW OF SOIL CONDITIONS AND POSSIBLE CAUSE OF SETTLEMENT

The results of the testing indicate that the soils in the upper 2m of the site comprise of low to moderate strength silty Clay soils which in the location of Bore Hole No. 2 are less than what we would typically consider to be 'Good Ground' in terms of NZS3604:2011 the NZ for Timber framed buildings. Furthermore, organic material was encountered in BH01 at a depth of 1.1 to 1.3m.

Our review of the available aerial imagery indicates several large trees were located in the affected corner of the building which may explain the settlement and possibly the zone of very low strength soils encountered between 1 and 1.7m depth in Bore Hole No. 2.

Should the building be repaired then the area of foundations affected will require underpinning or re-piling. This will require a pile to be installed at a depth where the soils strengths achieve 300kPa. The bore holes indicate that this is in the order of 2-3m depth.

It should be noted that our assessment is based on information provided by the client. We have not carried out an assessment of the structure and understand that is being carried out by a structural engineer.

Figure 3 Extract from Geotechnical report showing review of soil conditions and causes of settlement

3 Structural observations on site

AB Consulting Engineers conducted a site walkover and non-intrusive investigation consisting of visual inspections only on 16 July 2024. The following are our observations:

Figure 4 Crack in base of South-West buttress wall

Figure 5 South-West Buttress wall crack extending along base

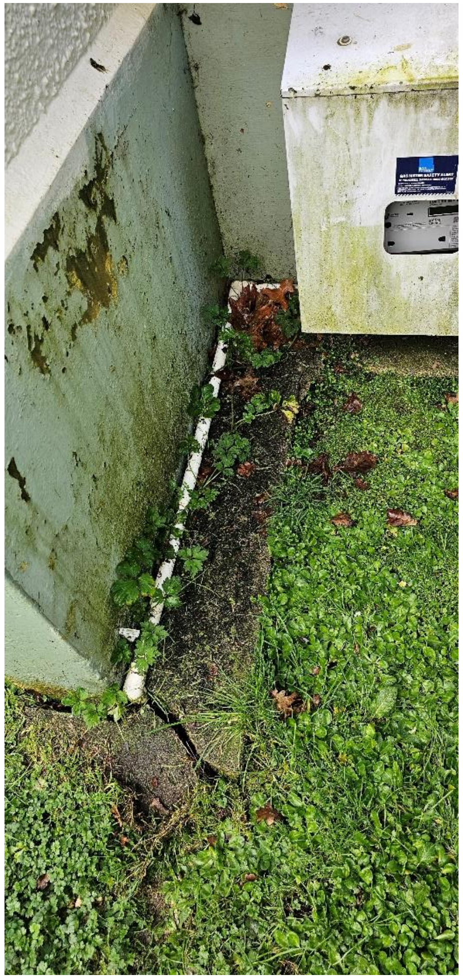


Figure 6 Crack at the base of South buttress wall

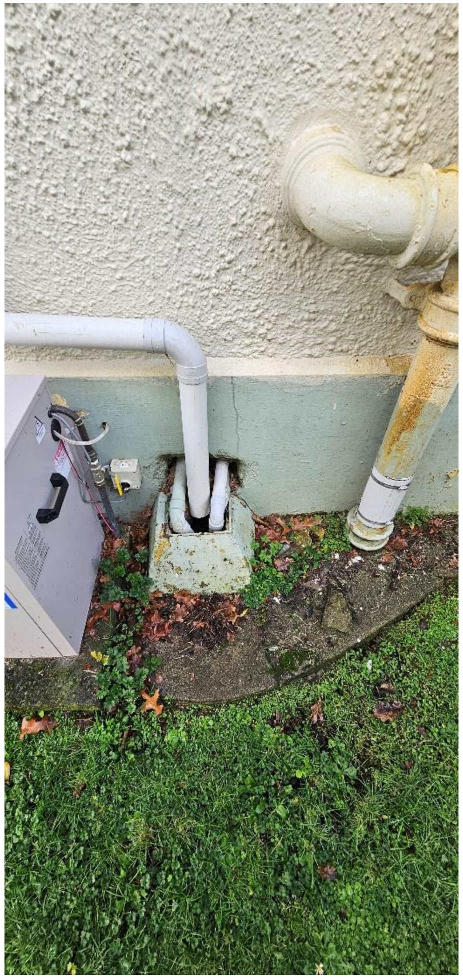


Figure 7 Crack near service penetration on South wall

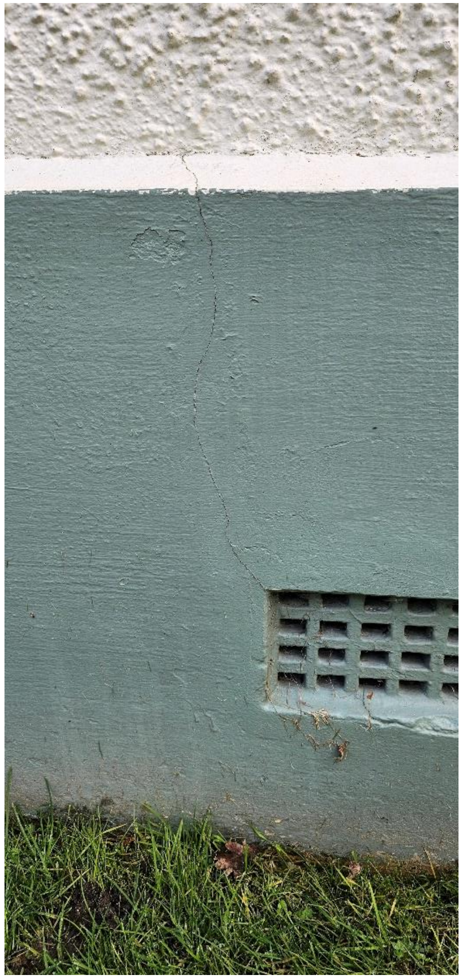


Figure 8 Crack on the subfloor wall on West


Figure 9 Crack on the sufloor wall on South

Figure 10 Retaining wall to the South of property

Figure 11 Crack along the base of North-West buttress wall

Figure 12 Chimney on top of building

Figure 13 Crack at the base of North-West buttress wall

Figure 14 Crack along the foundation wall of extension

Figure 15 South-East corner of extension showing cracks at base

4 Possible Causes

Based on the limited information available, the following possible causes are expected:

4.1 Foundation subsidence

The site slopes slightly towards the South-East. Figure 10 shows a short retaining wall with the adjacent property being about 500mm lower than 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central. One of the possible causes is that the founding soil has settle or slowly slid away towards the adjacent property.

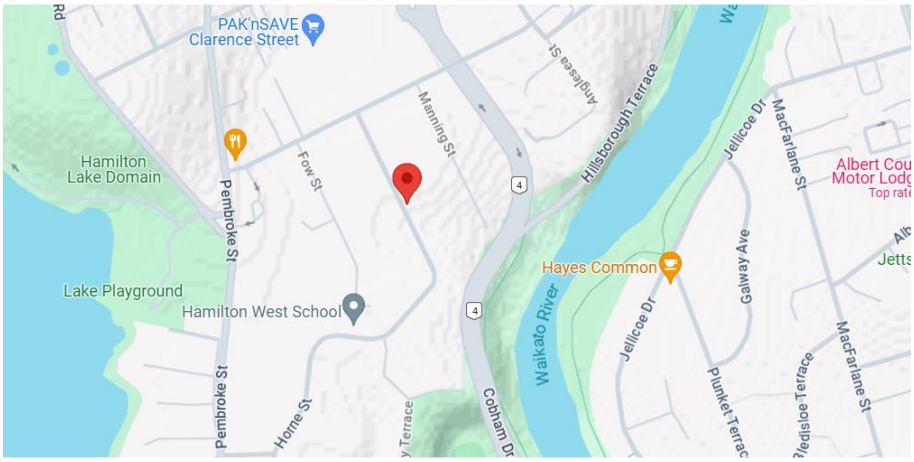


Figure 16 Topographic map showing slope towards the river

This can be one of the plausible causes as the nature of cracks observed on site and the presence of cracks even on the newer extension (Refer Figure 15) correlates well with this.

4.2 Influence of Large Trees

The Geotechnical report has identified large trees that were present near the building. These seem to have been removed in the recent past which may correlate well with the emergence of cracks as reported by the owner. (Refer Figure 17).

Figure 3. No. 13 Hammond Street 'Google Earth' Aerial Imagery from March 2015 and March 2016 depicting the removal of a large mature tree circled in red.

Figure 17 Removal of large tree as identified in the Geotechnical report

Large trees can have an elaborate root system that could extend a few metres from the main tree trunk. When such trees die or are removed, the root system may die over a period, leading to weakening of soil around.

The result of such weakening can be observed as depressions on the soil surface nearby as identified in the Geotechnical Report. The nature of cracks observed in the structure (Refer Figure 15) agrees with such settlement of soil. Hence, this also can be one of the plausible causes.

4.3 Damage triggered by seismic events

Though not precisely confirmed, the onset of cracks in the building seems to be after the M 7.8 Kaikōura Earthquake of November 14, 2016. Based on the information available through GeoNet, this earthquake was felt strongly[3] in the vicinity. This may have acted as a trigger which caused the base to slide.

Figure 18 GeoNet Map showing that 2016 Earthquake was felt strongly in Hamilton

The heavy construction of roof, (terracotta tiles) might have resulted in a higher base shear compared to other typical buildings in the vicinity.

4.4 Foundation failure due to overloading

There is a possibility that the a few piles on the South side of the building may have failed which is resulting in redistribution of loads towards adjacent piles resulting in the observed failure.

The presence of significant settlement of floor (Figure 2) is consistent with this possibility. However, since the site inspection was non-intrusive, the piles could not be observed to inspect their condition.

4.5 Other possible explanations

There are a few other possible causes which could result in a similar crack pattern, however; no evidence of their presence could be detected on site. Since, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, further studies would be needed to rule each one of them out completely. While these possibilities were explored, the owner could not recall anything that would align with these scenarios, however; they are mentioned below for completeness of the study.

These reasons which might need further investigation are:

[3] https://www.geonet.org.nz/earthquake/felt/2016p858000#

i. Sudden changes in water table. This could be caused by unusual weather incidents or dewatering in the vicinity resulting in an unusual lowering of water table. This will also need a soil stratum below that could undergo significant volume change, however; no such activity or presence of soil stratum have been reported. Perched water tables very close to ground level were observed in boreholes very close to the building, however; in the absence of any significant risk being identified by the Geotechnical specialist, this may not have contributed significantly to the observed damage.

ii. Excavations close to the structure resulting in movement of founding soil. There is no evidence of this either.

iii. Thermal and moisture movements of the structure. While the movements in the structure due to thermal and moisture movements could cause such cracks, their relatively recent origin makes them unlikely unless there has been any reason to have them triggered very late in their life. While the reported, leaks in the building in the recent years could be a possibility, further study comparing their commencement needs to be studied for a conclusive answer.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the information at the time of writing this report:

1) Roof tiles and other heavy items (e.g. chimney) if not properly secured, do pose major risk of objects falling from height. This needs to be addressed urgently.
2) The cracks observed are predominantly present in the lower part of the structure and there are no major cracks in the superstructure above ground floor level. Hence, there is no immediate life safety risk expected from these cracks.
3) Leaks in roof are to be inspected by a competent person. The issues may be related to dislodged roof tiles and failure of waterproofing. While they do not pose a life safety risk directly, they have the potential to adversely affect the functional use of the structure.
4) Reason for the cracks could be due to any of the reasons discussed under section 4 or their combinations. Further study would be needed for a conclusive answer.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the observations and possibilities discussed above, the following remedial measures are recommended.

1) Roof tiles and other heavy items on roof like chimney need to be inspected by a competent professional (roofer) and suitably restrained as required.
2) Leaks in the roof are exasperated by the heavy roof tiles as they are not suitable for accommodating large deformations in the supporting structure. A lightweight roof sheeting or other suitable roofing solutions that are more accommodating of deformations might be needed.
3) The existing soil on site does not meet the 'Good ground' requirements as specified in NZS 3604 as per the Geotechnical Report. Hence, the existing building foundations

need to be suitably strengthened by underpinning and by providing pile foundations that are founded on suitable stratum. The Geotechnical report identifies that this stratum may be 2-3m below existing ground level (refer Figure 3).

4) Levelness of floor shall be inspected by a competent professional. If the underlying cause seems to be structural, the engineer shall be informed of the same and advise sought.
5) The heavy nature of roof construction increases the weight on foundation and seismic demand on the structure. Suitable weight reduction measures such as replacing it with a lighter alternative can be explored. However, this needs to be done with careful consideration for wind uplift, connection details and stability of the structure by a competent professional.
6) No major excavation or dewatering shall be carried out near the building without guidance from a qualified geotechnical engineer.

5.3 Limitations

This study and hence this report has the following limitations:

1) No original record drawings or council records were available to study the structural system in detail.
2) This study was very limited due to the short duration of observation and non-intrusive site investigation (only external visual inspection).
3) Precise location and nature of previously reported defects could not be verified as they had been repaired and could not be observed on site.
4) The possibilities are assessed based on the information shared by the client (Mr. Ray Pickett). The accuracy and details of previous sighting of cracks, leaks and slope of floor is based solely on the information provided by the client.
5) If the client has any information that would alter the conclusions of this study, the same shall be shared with the engineers for assessment and incorporation into the study.

Appendices

Appendix A. Client's Letters to Council

A.1. Letter Dated 27 August 2023

27th August 2023

15 Prospect Place
Western Heights
Hamilton 3200

To whom it may concern,

Re: Proposed scheduling of our property as built heritage

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to provide an explanation for the delay in our submission and to express our position regarding the proposed heritage listing for our property.

Property address

13 Hammond St, Hamilton
Valuation No.: 04165-751-00
1249sqm

Reason for Submission Delay

We were recently made aware, by a family member, of the proposed classification of our property as built heritage. On August 15, 2023, we received a copy of the original letter dated July 25, 2022, from the Hamilton City Council concerning the Plan Change Notification.

In late July 2022, we relocated from a unit on Victoria St to a residence in Western Heights, we were in the process of shifting homes during the time the letter was sent to our Victoria St address. It was only because of a family member that we became aware of the plan change. Otherwise, this information would have gone unnoticed.

Built Heritage listing

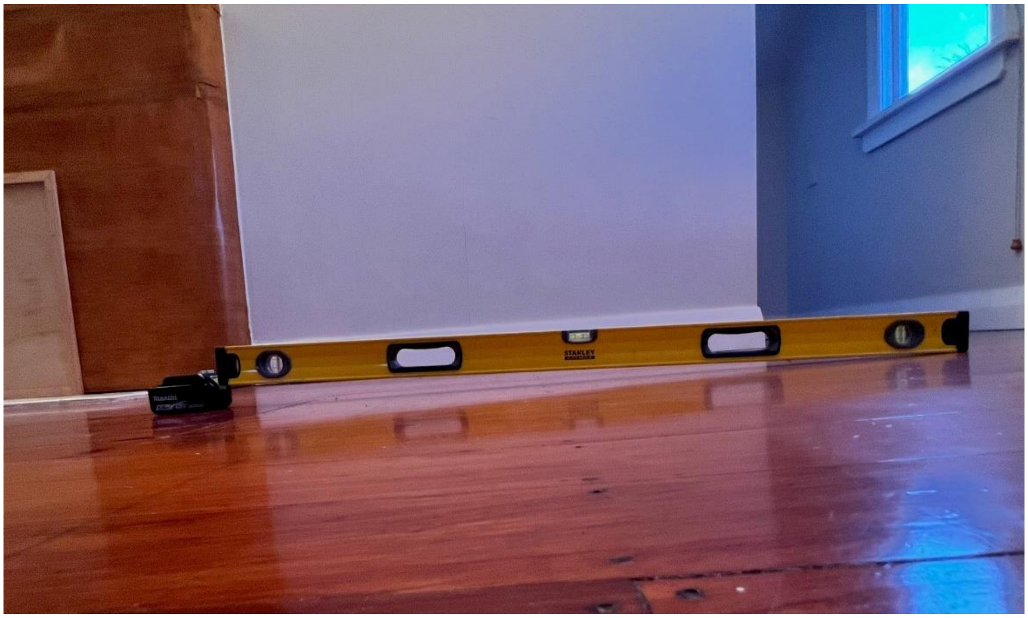
While we acknowledge the intrinsic heritage and aesthetic value of our Spanish Mission property's architectural design (see photo below) we oppose its heritage listing due to significant and compelling maintenance issues and financial challenges to made the necessary investment

The array of maintenance issues is as follows:

a) Piles:

Our stucco-clad property, constructed in 1935, stands on red brick piles, supporting a terracotta tile roof weighing over 7 tonnes. The excessive weight of the roof, coupled with inadequate piling, has resulted in significant subsidence on the right side of the house, leading to an uneven floor. While additional piles were added before we acquired the property, the subsidence continues to persist despite remedial measures. The cost estimates for re-piling, as assessed by a builder approximately 5 years ago, far surpassed our budgetary constraints. A new quote has been requested and I expect to forward a copy within the next three weeks or so. This subsidence has also caused cracks in internal walls, necessitating recurrent repairs and repainting.

The photo below illustrates the subsidence. The level is 1220mm long and the fall is 45mm. The "unevenness" is very noticeable when walking on floors.



b) Roof:

The roof needs to be replaced to alleviate stress on the foundations. The subsidence on one side of the house has led to misalignment and movement of the roof. Moreover, the absence of building paper between roofing tiles and internal ceilings has led to frequent leaks, causing damage to internal ceilings. A major repair was recently undertaken on a front bedroom ceiling and kitchen area due to roof leaks. Given these maintenance concerns, the property is currently unoccupied as it requires significant repairs.

The tiles immediately below the chimney have slipped and exposed areas cause leaks. Also visible is corrosion in the guttering.

The subsidence has caused displacement on the tiles immediately below the window and this increases the risk of leaks and consequential damage.

c) Exterior Foundation:

The exterior foundation walls at the front of the house are marred by severe cracks, a direct consequence of the subsidence.

Also, there are cracked in the stucco at the back door of the property.

Because of the subsidence the door does not fit properly in the door jam. Further photos are available on request.

d) Water Pipes:

Original galvanized water pipes running into the property and beneath the floor have corroded, resulting in leaks. These leaks, often hard to detect, can lead to substantial consequential damage.

e) Windows:

Many windowsills are deteriorating, due to dry rot, and in some cases need to be replaced. Some stained glass windows in the front lounge are cracked due to the subsidence. The cost to replace these is very expensive. For example, a small window approximately 15 x 20cm was quoted at over $2,000 to replace. Photos of cracked windows are available on request.

f) Internal fitout:

Before we purchased the property, much of the authentic fitout was removed and replaced with more modern décor losing its intrinsic heritage value.

Due to the gravity of these issues, we made the decision in 2019 to sell the property for redevelopment. We also contemplated relocating the house. However, we were advised against this as the property would be cut into at least six portions and major issues would likely occur with the re-assembly of the building due to mis aligned walls/floors and ceilings due to compromised structural integrity caused by subsidence.

The COVID-19 pandemic and a cancer diagnosis with life-threatening surgery in 2021 coupled with my subsequent recovery compelled us to put our development plans on hold. We had intended to take advantage of the high-density zoning as per the Operative District Plan, which has now been further supported by Plan Change 12’s rule changes to enable the Medium Density Residential Standards within the walkable catchment from the Central City.

Proposed Remedial Action:

We will provide supplementary cost breakdowns for the significant maintenance issues. This includes:

- A quotation for re-piling the property
- A quotation for re-roofing, both in terrcotta tiles and coloursteel.
- Additional quotes may be required for strengthening the building.

If additional expert advice is required, we are open to your recommendations. Please advise.

For example, we are in the process of obtaining a quotation for the replacement of the roof with new terracotta tiles. While this solution undoubtedly enhances the intrinsic heritage value and authenticity of the property, it raises concerns about exacerbating the existing subsidence issue due to the weight of the terracotta roof. Furthermore, adopting this approach would likely necessitate further strengthening of the building, entailing the incorporation of trusses and joists. Notably, the effectiveness of this strengthening would be contingent upon concurrent re-piling, an undertaking marked by significant challenges and costs.

An alternative approach, for instance, would be to re-roof using colour-steel. This option offers the distinct advantage of a considerably lighter roof, alleviating stress on the foundations. However, it does compromise a key element of the property’s authentic heritage a terracotta roof.

Concerns and Implications:

Our concerns are, if this proposal to designate our property as built heritage proceeds, then:

- The required maintenance issues, we believe, are beyond our financial capacity to meet. The forthcoming quotations will clarify this.
- If we are unable to provide the necessary remedial action, the house will continue to deteriorate with the risk of it becoming an eye-score and a major aggrievance to my wife and I. Rather than a property the city can be proud of.
- The house is currently untenanted, and the issues with dampness and drafts through misaligned doors and windows compromises healthy home standards.
- We have a substantial mortgage and a built heritage status effectively means we will not be able to sell our property at fair market value. The opportunity to sell to developers would be out of the question. Or worse still, the saleability may be so impacted that we may not be able to purchase another home. This would be totally untenable.

If the plan change proceeds, then the unintended consequences would be substantially detrimental to our wellbeing, financially stability and future housing opportunities, let alone the inability for us to make the necessary investment to address the maintenance issues to keep the property in a reasonable condition.

We welcome the opportunity to present at the hearing in November and thank you for considering our proposal.

Kind regards,

R Pickett W. W. Pickett

Ray and Wendy Pickett.

A.2. Letter Dated 22 March 2024

22nd March 2024

C/-15 Prospect Place
Western Heights
Hamilton 3204

Attn: Ms M. Walmsley and Built Heritage Commissioners

Re: Built Heritage – 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton

Dear Mary and Commissioners,

Thank you for your email dated 1st March 2024, re Plan Change 9 – Memorandum of Counsel for HCC and your later email dated 13th March 2024 granting an extension for responses.

We note in Appendix B of the Memorandum of Counsel for HCC our property – 13 Hammond St. Hamilton is listed in "Appendix B – Built Heritage Items HCC will pursue" – see below.

As previously stated in our submission of 27th August 2023 – copy attached - we opposed then and continue to strongly oppose the scheduling of our property as Built Heritage.

To provide some context, 2019/2021 – we were exploring options to sell our property for development. Most of the properties in Hammond Street, have undergone redevelopment and we intended to do the same. A significant factor in our decision to sell was the increasing deterioration of our property. It was built in 1935 with inadequate piling for a two-story home with a heavy terracotta roof.

However, our plans were abruptly put on hold when I underwent life-saving surgery after a cancer diagnosis in late 2021. During my lengthy recovery, we suspended our development plans. It wasn't until mid-2022 that we became aware, through a family member, of the proposed scheduling of our property as Built Heritage. This knowledge came as a total surprise, and I promptly prepared a submission – dated 27th August 2023 outlining our opposition to including our property on the Built Heritage schedule. It later came to my attention many developers were aware of the pending Built Heritage scheduling and swiftly sought demolition notices to avoid inclusion of their properties on the schedule.

The proposed Built Heritage scheduling has completely upended our retirement plans and caused immense anguish and stress for my wife and myself. My wife has been so distraught by the situation she has undergone counselling therapy and is on medication.

Presently, we are not living in our own home, we are currently staying with our daughter and son-in-law. Our residence at Hammond Street has six-bedrooms and is too large for my wife and I to live in and manage as it also has an attached granny flat and studio unit on the section.

Given these circumstances, the reasons for our opposition to the scheduling of our property as Built Heritage are as follows:

Maintenance and repairs

In my report dated 27th August 2023, I outlined maintenance and repair concerns, these include:

- Piles – the property requires re-piling. The piles are insufficient to support the weight of a seven-ton terracotta roof. This has resulted is subsidence, uneven floors, cracks in the exterior cladding and foundation mortar.
- Roof – The roof is in a state of disrepair, with leaks and dislodged tiles. Internal wires holding the tiles in place are corroded, posing a risk of tiles falling during or after an earthquake event. It's worth noting that the government is replacing steep terracotta roofs on hospitals and schools to mitigate such risks. Added to the need to urgently replace the roof, there is corrosion in the internal gutters – see photo below.
    - As I outlined in my submission on 27th August 2023:
      The roof needs to be replaced with a lighter roofing material, such as colorsteel, to alleviate the stress on the foundations. The subsidence on one side of the house has led to misalignment of the piles, timber framing and roof. Moreover, the absence of building paper under the tiles has resulted in damaged internal ceilings due to leaks. A major repair was recently undertaken on a front bedroom ceiling and kitchen area due to roof leaks."
- Exterior foundation – cracks are observable in the exterior foundation.
- Water pipes – leaks occur under the house due to corroded galvanised water pipes. These are the original water pipes. While some pipes have been replaced, all galvanised water pipes require replacing.
- Windowsills – there is dry rot in many windowsills, needing repair.

The estimated cost to repair the above is in the order of $200,000 + GST.

This photo shows dislodged tiles at the base of the chimney. Leaks are problematical across parts of the roof, with many of the ceilings showing watermark damage.

Here is further evidence of tile dislodgement.

Below is a photo showing a corroded internal gutter. Similar corrosion is seen in other parts of the roof. This corrosion is also a source of leaks.

Based on the many maintenance issues, I think you can appreciate how this led us to the decision to sell the property for development purposes. In our view, the property is beyond its use by date. The house has serious structural problems, and we believe the most pragmatic way forward is to demolish it and redevelop, even despite its historical value. Redeveloping the site, has the added advantage of contributing to the housing needs of the city, especially as Hamilton is now the fastest growing city in the country.

Financial burden

In my presentation dated 12th November 2023, following Hearing Session 2, I quote:

"The Built Heritage designation lacks sufficient consideration for the financial burden it may impose on certain homeowners. This concern is particularly evident in the Hearing Session 2 report of October 27, 2023, which acknowledges additional financial responsibilities for landowners with structures listed as Built Heritage items.

The report emphasizes Council's commitment not to create a financial burden on ratepayers, this is explicitly referring to ratepayers whose homes are not listed as Built Heritage. However, homeowners with such designations seem to be excluded from this statement, posing questions of equity."

It's reassuring to learn of Council's intention not to impose financial burdens on ratepayers. However, it's disappointing this consideration does not extend to us, as a ratepayer who has owned 13 Hammond Street for 24 years. Aren't we deserving of fair and reasonable consideration regarding the financial burden this situation places upon us? Or is this only granted for ratepayers whose homes are not on the schedule! If this is the case, then it is grossly unfair and inequitable!

As outlined in my submission dated 27th August 2023, and detailed above, there are numerous issues with our property that necessitate significant maintenance and repair.

- The property remained unoccupied from July 2023 until January 2024. The loss of rental income during this period has been substantial, not to mention the costs incurred to repair the house to a habitable standard.
- The need for roof repairs is urgent, particularly due to damage caused to ceiling and walls by leaks. The advice I've received strongly recommends replacing the terracotta roof with colour steel or a similar substrate. Reasons for this recommendation are:
    - Iron roofs are lighter than terracotta roofs, alleviating stress on piles and the timber framing and stucco cladding.
    - Iron roofs provide better watertightness reducing the risk of leaks, especially given the current structural issues caused by misaligned piles and roofing joists.
    - Addresses the risk of falling tiles and debris during and after an earthquake event, especially considering the steep pitch of our roof.

Immediate action needs to be taken to address the roof issues if we hope to prevent further deterioration of the property. The material of choice is colorsteel, however replacing the terracotta roof with colorsteel compromises an unique heritage feature of the property, meaning the heritage value of the property diminishes and consequently, I argue the property should be removed from the schedule if such a replacement occurs.

Alternatively, replacing the roof with a new terracotta roof would address the leaks but not alleviate the weight-related stress on the piles and house framing. Re-piling the house would incur additional costs and expenses. Furthermore, central government is replacing the roofs of its buildings with steep terracotta roofs. Is local government expected to follow this lead? Would you please advise.

The repairs conducted thus far have been costly and time-consuming and do not address the fundamental issues with the roof. And the thought of spending another $120,000 – 150,000 + GST to resolve the maintenance issues and bring the property up to a reasonable standard is currently beyond our capacity. Compounding our financial challenges is the current cost-of-living crisis and high interest rates. These increases have placed significant financial strain on us, exacerbated by the impending 19.9% rate increase in the next financial period, followed by four years of 15.5% increases. Over this period, the compound rate increase exceeds 110%. While I understand the need for rate increases to address the city's debt, it further erodes our capacity to maintain the property.

If Council proceeds with scheduling our property as Built Heritage, noting that it is beyond our financial capacity to re-pile, fit additional framing for strengthening, and install a new terracotta roof, then are Council willing to be responsible for any injury caused by falling tiles or debris during and/or after an earthquake event? As I mentioned above the roof needs to be reclad in colorsteel, as this is a cheaper option the re-roofing with terracotta tiles and also avoids the need for re-piling. The roof needs to be replaced with urgency. Is there any reason why we cannot proceed with replacing the roof now, in colorsteel? Please advise.

Property description

Our property is listed in Appendix B (see below, highlighted in yellow) as "A. Ebbett's residence 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central".

NB: The Ebbett's are not the current residents of the property, nor have been since 1957. The property was built by Mr A. Ebbett, who establish Ebbett's automotive business and died in 1951. The property was later sold in 1957 to Mr G. Burtenshaw, a dental surgeon.

We are the current owners and bought the property 24 years ago, the longest tenure of any owner. The table below shows the owners and length of their ownership since the property was built in 1935.

Year	Owner	Tenure of ownership
1935 – 1957	Ebbett's	22 years
1957 – 1980	Burtenshaw's	23 years
1980 – 1995	Barrett's	15 years
1995 – 2000	Melson's	5 years
2000 – current	Pickett's	24 years and counting

Saleability of property

A higher sale price would be obtained from a developer rather than a resident. Noting the 1249sqm central city section could easily accommodate nine units or even more as the property is designated High Density. However, developers have advised they have no interest in properties that are on the Built Heritage schedule. Hence, we have no means to realise the financial advantage of selling to a developer.

If we sold to a purchaser who intends to use the property as a residence, the sale price would need to be severely discounted or expensive repairs carried out before sale. The house has none of the modern nor expected features of new homes such as an ensuite, walk in wardrobes, indoor/outdoor flow, etc. The kitchen is small and inadequate for a six-bedroom home. The laundry/wash house is outside the house – across from the back door. Also, a purchaser may have concerns about obtaining consent for alterations. In our minds, there is no question of the negative impact a Built Heritage status would have on selling our property and realising market value. NB: There is little authentic architecture remaining inside the property, such as the rimu doors, skirtings, etc. These were stripped out before we purchased the property in 2000 and replaced with MDF doors and pine skirtings.

Again, if it is confirmed that our property is placed on the Built Heritage schedule, then $100,000s would be wiped off the value of our property due to the limitations placed by the Built Heritage status. I hope you can appreciate the desperation of our plight!

Communication

In addition to our mounting frustrations, we have been met with a lack of effective communication throughout this process. Despite conversations, previously with Steve Rice and more recently with Mary Walmsley from HCC, there has been a deafening silence on timelines, dates and next steps with no detail on when this process might conclude. Requests for critical information have been met with responses such as, "I don't know!". Nor is any indication given on when we might know. This lack of clarity leaves us in limbo, having to pay a mortgage and rates with no clear way forward while Council displays a dismissive disregard to ratepayers affected by this situation. The frustration this creates cannot be overstated. Following my attendance at the Hearing on 7th November 2023, I submitted what I believed to be fair and reasonable recommendations for consideration. However, to date I have not received any response. Can I expect one? For the sake of completeness I reiterate the recommendations below:

a. Earthquake risk:

Older homes featuring steep terracotta roofs should be excluded from the Built Heritage schedule due to significant health and safety concerns, specifically the risk of falling tiles during and after an earthquake event.

b. Financial impact:
   Establish a fair and equitable maintenance threshold assessment to prevent certain ratepayers from shouldering excessive financial burdens. If anticipated maintenance costs surpass an established threshold, consider removing these homes from the Built Heritage schedule. This ensures that financial costs are distributed more fairly and equitably among ratepayers.

c. Wellbeing
   Integrate a comprehensive well-being assessment into the existing criteria to evaluate the outcomes for both homeowners and the city as a whole. This assessment should be carefully balanced and incorporate considerations of financial impact, as mentioned in point b.

If our property is not removed from the list, I've been advised we can engage experts to challenge the judgment, however the costs are likely to exceed $50,000 with no guarantee of a change in the Built Heritge status. The thought of this is so discouraging and would further highlights the inequity and injustice of this process.

This process has placed our lives in limbo with no timeline on a resolution. I appeal to you to embrace commonsense and pragmatism in scheduling properties as Built Heritage. We are not against Built Heritage, but we are fighting to reduce the risk of financial ruin and avoid excessive maintenance and repair costs that are beyond our capacity to bear. The approach to date feels heavy handed with no regard to our wellbeing, despite this being one of Council's key goals listed in the Housing Strategy. In light of this above I propose the following recommendations:

Recommendations

1. Health and Safety Risk:
   We recommend, Council removes our property from the schedule – due to health and safety risks regarding the terracotta roof, and ongoing structural integrity issues. I appeal to your sense of pragmatism and reasonableness, please remove our property from the Built Heritage schedule.

2. Financial impact:
   We recommend, Council sets up a fair and equitable maintenance threshold assessment to prevent certain ratepayers from shouldering excessive financial burdens in maintaining heritage homes. If anticipated maintenance costs surpass an established threshold, and/or become an excessive burden for ratepayers then consideration needs to be given on how to either better support these ratepayers or remove their homes from the Built Heritage schedule.

3. Council to Purchase the property:

We recommend, Council purchase our property so the burden of repairs and maintenance can be spread across all ratepayers and not just ourselves. There is a significant financial and wellbeing injustice in this situation if all the cost to maintain and repair the property remains with us. This needs to be recognised and addressed. Please advise how this will be addressed.

4. Property description:
   We recommend, the property is described as:
   13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central, or
   A. Ebbett's former residence, 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central

5. Communication:
   We recommend communications with ratepayers improve to reduce the uncertainty and stress on homeowners adversely affected by Built Heritage. For example, this could be done through the provision of regularly updated guidelines on hearing dates, milestones, and outcomes. Regular updates would easily address delays or changes to the schedule.

If you require any clarification on the above, please let me know.

I look forward to presenting at the next hearing. Would you please advise when this is scheduled.

Regards,

Ray Pickett
021 942 694

APPENDIX B - Built Heritage items HCC will pursue

Address	Schedule 8A ID#
Former National Insurance Company Building, 137 Alexandra Street, Hamilton Central	H148
18 Anglesea Street, Central City	H149
Central Police Station, 12 Anzac Parade, Hamilton Central	H153
3 Balloch Street, Fairfield	H154
Former United Evangelical Church, 2 Bettina Road, Fairfield	H157
Ruakura Homestead and Agricultural Research Station, 10 Bisley Road	H158
10 Boundary Road, Claudelands	H167
65 Braid Road, St Andrews	H168
St Joseph's Church and Spire, 86-88 Clarkin Road, Fairfield	H173
Fairfield Primary School, 260 Clarkin Road, Fairfield	H174
83 Cook Street, Hamilton East	H185
Nawton Hall, 4 Crawford Street, Avalon	H186
Former Ammunitions Store, 60 Dey Street, Hamilton East	H188
74 East Street, Enderley	H190
106 Forest Lake Road, Forest Lake	H197
3 Frances Street, Hamilton East	H199
Former Guardian Royal Exchange Building, 14 Garden Place, Hamilton Central	H206
Former MLC Building, 20 Garden Place, Hamilton Central	H207
14 George Street, Claudelands	H208
'Cluny', 103 Grey Street, Hamilton East	H210
Egan's Chambers, 379 Grey Street, Hamilton East	H212
707-711 Grey Street, Hamilton East	H214
A. Ebbett's Residence, 13 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central	H217
Hamilton West School Main Classroom Building, 36 Hammond Street, Hamilton Central	H218
Fairfield Buildings, 1004 Heaphy Terrace, Fairfield	H220
Gosling & Higgins Building, 62 High Street, Frankton	H221
Richmond House, 29 Horne Street, Hamilton Central	H222

Built Heritage
Assessment Method

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