

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: Village Green (formerly the 'Stables')



### 1.0 Brief

The Heritage Studio Limited was commissioned by Remuera Heritage to undertake high-level research to gain an understanding about the history of the 'Village Green', 415 Remuera Road, Remuera. The principal aim of the study was to establish whether the group of buildings formerly known as the 'Stables' were built prior to 1900.

### 2.0 The place

The former Stables are a group of attached buildings that edge the southern boundary of 415 Remuera Road, currently known as the Village Green. Located behind the row of shops (nos. 405-411) fronting Remuera Road, the Stables are accessed via rights of way from Remuera and Clonbern roads and St Vincent Avenue. Comprising a strip of storey-and-a-half and two storey structures, principally of brick construction with corrugated iron roofs, the Stables are orientated to the north and have been modified and extended to accommodate new uses as shops, offices and restaurants.

For the purpose of this exercise, access to the former Stables was limited to the public spaces around the building, particularly from within the Village Green and on the approach from Clonbern Road. Access to the rear and interior of the buildings was not made.

### 3.0 Research undertaken

Research involved viewing online repositories such as DigitalNZ and Papers Past, reviewing local histories, journal articles, reports, and sourcing available information at LINZ and Auckland Council Archives, including valuation field sheets, surveyor files, cross lease applications, and building permits for 415 Remuera Road. Enquiries were also made into the records held by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. Research was relatively

extensive within the timeframe required by the brief. However, it is important to note that opportunities may exist for further research to yield more detailed information.

## 4.0 Summary of findings

### 4.1 Early landowners

The site of the former Stables at present-day 415 Remuera Road occupies parts of original Allotments 3 and 4, Section 12 Suburbs of Auckland, which formed part of two Crown grants made to James Wilcox in November 1847.<sup>1</sup> Soon after this time the land was purchased by Thomas Shipherd, who, in 1874, sold it to his son-in-law, William Francis (Frank) Buckland.<sup>2</sup>

A member of one of Auckland's leading farming families, Frank Buckland was the nephew of agriculturalist and auctioneer, Alfred Buckland. Soon after acquiring his Remuera property, Frank reputedly built a grand two-storey residence called 'Araroa'<sup>3,4</sup> An article written about the property in 1970 notes that it is "*probable that Mr Buckland kept a horse and cow on his land...and the old records mention a pig-sty.*"<sup>5</sup> It is known that during the 1880s, he was advertising "*Grazing to let, for horses or cows. Good land, water and shelter.*"<sup>6</sup>

Frank Buckland occupied the property until 1894.<sup>7</sup> Three years later, Allotment 3 and part of allotments 2,4 and 5, Section 12 were surveyed for D. E. Clerk Esq. This was followed in January 1898 with Allotments 3 and 4, and part of Allotment 3, Section 12, of the Suburbs of Auckland, containing 25 acres 2 roods and 23 perches being subject to a Land Transfer Notice by Duncan Edward Clerk. The same notice advised that the land was "*partly unoccupied and partly occupied by E. Bamford Esq.*"<sup>8</sup> Two months later, Edwin Bamford had acquired four acres of parts of Allotments 3 and 4, which extended to Remuera Road.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deeds index 3A 2070, Archives New Zealand; Auckland-Waikato Historical Journal, 'Early Auckland Homes V', by E. K. Ryburn and John Stacpoole, September 1970, 16-17; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, *A Fine Prospect*, 2011, 69.

<sup>2</sup> Deeds index 3A 2070, Archives New Zealand; 'Early Auckland Homes V', September 1970, 16-17.

<sup>3</sup> Later known as the 'Cropper Homestead', Araroa was relocated to the Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) in 1973.

<sup>4</sup> 'Early Auckland Homes V', September 1970, 16-17; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, *A Fine Prospect*, 2011, 69.

<sup>5</sup> 'Early Auckland Homes V', September 1970, 16.

<sup>6</sup> Papers Past, New Zealand Herald, 13 March 1888, 1.

<sup>7</sup> 'Early Auckland Homes V', September 1970, 16.

<sup>8</sup> Papers Past, Observer, Volume XVI, Issue 994, 22 January 1898, 3.

<sup>9</sup> NA87/74, LINZ.

Bamford, who was a solicitor and Registrar of Lands and Deeds, occupied Araroa with his family.<sup>10</sup>

In November 1898, the (Remuera) roadside portion of the property was transferred to Auckland seed merchants, Edward Charles Pilkington and George Sinclair.<sup>11</sup> Comprising two roods and 13 perches of parts of Allotment 3 and 4, the land was acquired three years later by Shipping Agent, Henry Winkelmann and Land and Estate Agent, Edgar William Jennings.<sup>12</sup>

#### **4.2 Remuera Road Board and Auckland City Council**

The land upon which the former Stables stand was first linked to the Remuera Road Board on 15 July 1902, when the Board acquired the land fronting Remuera Road from Henry Winkelmann and Edgar William Jennings.<sup>13</sup> By September that year, purpose-built timber offices had been erected close to the Remuera Road boundary near the present-day entrance to the Village Green.<sup>14</sup>

In a New Zealand Herald article dated 22 October 1902, former Chairman of the Remuera Road Board, Thomas Buddle, wrote to the Editor of the newspaper about the acquisition of the site by the Board, mentioning the erection of “buildings”:

*“The purchase of a valuable building site, and erection of expensive buildings may or may not have been a prudent thing, but I was alone in urging that it was too large an expenditure for the purpose...”*

In retort, Board members W. J. Parker and Arthur C. Whitney explained that the Board was unanimous in choosing the site opposite Victoria Avenue as the most suitable and central, but mention no buildings other than the office on the site.<sup>15</sup>

In November 1912, another newspaper article made reference to buildings on the Road Board site. The subject of the article centred around the need for greater fire protection in the district, and the formation of a volunteer fire brigade. It documented that *“a temporary stable and reel house be put up so as to afford accommodation for the Board’s horse reel and trained horse, which will eventually be housed in the buildings which are to*

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Early Auckland Homes V’, September 1970, 17. The property later became known as the ‘Cropper Homestead’.

<sup>11</sup> NA90/186, LINZ.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> CT 90/186, LINZ; Remuera Road Board Minutes, July 1902.

<sup>14</sup> Papers Past, New Zealand Herald, Volume XXXIX, Issue 12075, 19 September 1902; Remuera Road Board Minutes, October 1902; Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, *A Fine Prospect*, 2011, 271.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

*be erected near the present Road Board offices.*<sup>16</sup> Six months later, a number of buildings, including a *“new fire station and store”*<sup>17</sup>, had been constructed on the site.

In 1915, an annotated map recorded the buildings, both temporary and permanent, on the site (Figure 1, below). They were also documented in the earliest 1915-16 Valuation Field Sheets held by Auckland Council for the property (part 3/4 of 12), in which they were described as a *“Wood Library and Brick Fire Station, Sheds etc.”*<sup>18</sup>. Also recorded were the calculations of costs associated with the ‘office’ and ‘brick’ buildings on the site, including costs for fire brigade purposes.

By c.1918, stables had been established on the site. At this time, the property description in the Valuation Field Sheets was amended, replacing the reference to the *“Brick Fire Station”* with *“Stables”*.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, a letter addressed to the City Engineer in 1918 drew attention to the *“inadequate ventilation”* of the ‘stables’ at the Remuera Depot with the suggestion of airbricks being inserted into the walls.<sup>20</sup>

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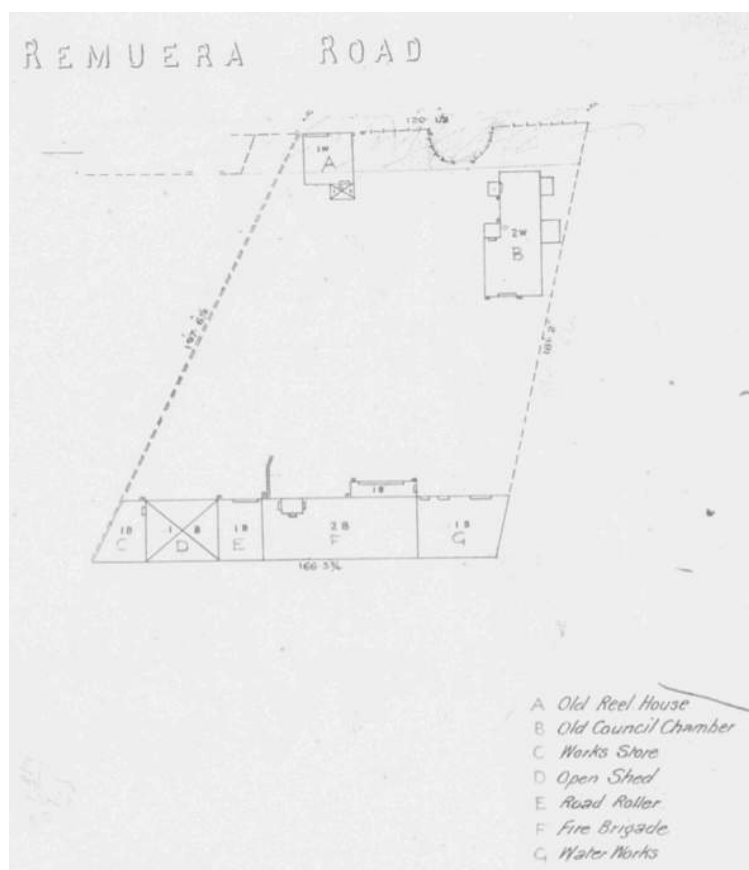
<sup>16</sup> Papers Past, Auckland Star, Volume XLIII, Issue 277, 19 November 1912.

<sup>17</sup> Papers Past, Auckland Star, Volume XLIV, Issue 107, 6 May 1913.

<sup>18</sup> ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives.

<sup>19</sup> ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives.

<sup>20</sup> ACC 219 Works Department Classified Subject Files 1912-1995, Auckland Council Archives.



**Figure 1:** A plan showing the then Auckland City Council Corporation Yard/Works Depot and the buildings that occupied the site in 1915. Note the description of the subject building as single and two-storey brick structures, which largely align with the building as existing. Note also the uses of the different parts of the building at this time (refer to Appendix 1, Figure 9 for a fully referenced plan).

By 1928, the depot site was subdivided into six lots, which incorporated a series of brick shops already established along the northern edge of the site fronting Remuera Road. Lot 6 of the subdivision (present-day 415 Remuera Road) captured the subject brick buildings, which were recorded a year earlier as being in use by the City Engineer’s Department and the Waterworks Department as Depot Stores.<sup>21</sup> During the 1920s, 30s and 40s, Lot 6 was consistently described as “Sheds and dwelling and stables at back” in the Valuation Field Sheets.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.3 Later references

In 1974, a ‘Planning Assessment Study’ was prepared for the development of a shopping centre between Clonbern Road, St Vincent Avenue and Remuera Road on behalf of James Wallace Pty Ltd.<sup>23</sup> New Zealand historian and heritage architect, John Stacpoole contributed to the study by way of an architectural and historical buildings assessment, which included the subject buildings. Stacpoole described the structures as ‘stables’ built in the 1880s by the Crowthers, who ran a transport business.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> JASMaD, Remuera Village Green Shopping Centre: Planning Assessment Study, May 1974, 2.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 12-15.

Five years later, in 1979, a letter from the City Architect following a recent inspection described the buildings as “...single-storeyed, subdivided into small compartments with one small section of 2 storeys. Construction is unreinforced brick, with stone or concrete ground floors, timber first floor and a corrugated iron roof, supported on timber trusses and purlins. A timber lean-to projects from the West end.”<sup>25</sup>

In 1981, a scheme to redevelop the site was prepared. A contemporary newspaper article described the subject buildings as structures built for the Council’s work depot in the 1880s.<sup>26</sup> At this time, the buildings were reportedly in a derelict state and it was the aim of the project to transform them into a shopping centre called ‘Victoria Mews’. The buildings were adapted to accommodate nine shops and a café.<sup>27</sup>

Further modifications occurred over the years, including the addition of the two-storey building partially occupied by Ray White. The buildings currently remain in use as shops, offices and restaurants, known as the ‘Village Green’.

## 5.0 Discussion

Given that the land upon which the former Stables stand formed part of a larger landholding during the late nineteenth century, it is possible that a portion of the buildings were built as ancillary structures for the ‘Araroa’ estate or other neighbouring houses. This has, however, not been substantiated. Whilst it has been confirmed that outbuildings were constructed to serve the estate, these were located in much closer proximity to the south (rather than the north) of the homestead.

In terms of the buildings’ association with the Crowthers, as indicated in the Planning Assessment Study, this has also not been confirmed. In the book, ‘A Fine Prospect: A History of Remuera, Meadowbank and St Johns’, the Crowthers are documented as operating a twice-daily horse-bus service between Auckland and Remuera by the early 1870s.<sup>28</sup> However, there is no mention of the location of the stables. It is possible that these were located close to William Crowther’s house at 511 Remuera Road, which also represented the end of the Crowther bus-route to the area.<sup>29</sup>

The reduced portion of land fronting Remuera Road changed hands a couple of times between 1898 and 1901, suggesting that the principal aim of the owners was to achieve a swift profit from the property. If this is the case, investment in the construction of stables or any other structures on the site during that time would seem unlikely.

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<sup>25</sup> ACC 208 Valuation Department Subject Files 1904-1900, Auckland Council Archives.

<sup>26</sup> East City News Advertiser, ‘Derelict will become shops’, 1 July 1981.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Jenny Carlyon and Diana Morrow, *A Fine Prospect*, 2011, 276.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

This is supported by the lack of any reference to existing buildings when the Remuera Road Board acquired the roadside portion of Allotments 3 and 4, Section 12 in 1902. Whilst a newspaper article from this time refers to the erection of “buildings”, no further evidence has been found to suggest that any structures other than the Road Board offices existed (or were built) on the site at this time.

The first time the construction of other permanent buildings on the site is mentioned appears to be in 1912, with verification of their completion in 1913. The description of these buildings partially align with those shown in the plan above (Figure 1), which generally correspond – in footprint, height and construction material – with the buildings that exist today. This is also confirmed by the c.1915 photograph of the fire station (refer to Appendix 1, Figure 10). Interestingly, no part of the subject building appears to have been in use as stables at this time.

It is not until c.1918 that ‘stables’ are recorded on the site, and it is possible that the former fire station building and adjacent stores were converted to accommodate this use. Reference to stables within Lot 6 (present-day 415 Remuera Road), a portion of the land subdivided by Auckland City Council, continues until at least the 1940s.

When options for the redevelopment of the site were considered during the latter decades of the twentieth century, the subject buildings continued to be known as ‘the stables’. During this time, at least two separate documents record the buildings as being built in the 1880s, but this has not been substantiated. The 1981 newspaper article refers to the stables as being built in the 1880s for the Council’s work depot. Although the buildings were connected with Council, as noted above, their association with the place occurred some decades later.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

The principal aim of the study was to establish whether the group of buildings formerly known as the Stables were built prior to 1900. Whilst it is not entirely implausible that aspects of the buildings existed before this time, no evidence has been found to date to support this.

Based on the research undertaken for the purpose of this study, it appears that the most likely date for the buildings is 1912-13. At this time, buildings were constructed for the Remuera Road Board, including a fire station and store. Evidence suggests that they were not purpose-built stables, but modified to accommodate this use when fire services relocated to an alternative Remuera site. Nevertheless, it would seem that the buildings were in use (at least in part) as stables from as early as c.1918 and continued to be utilised as such well into the twentieth century. Despite changes over the years to accommodate alternative uses, the recognition of the buildings as the ‘former Stables’ has endured.

The Heritage Studio  
Carolyn O’Neil | Heritage Consultant  
August 2019

## Appendix 1: Historic maps, photographs and aerials

### Cadastral plans

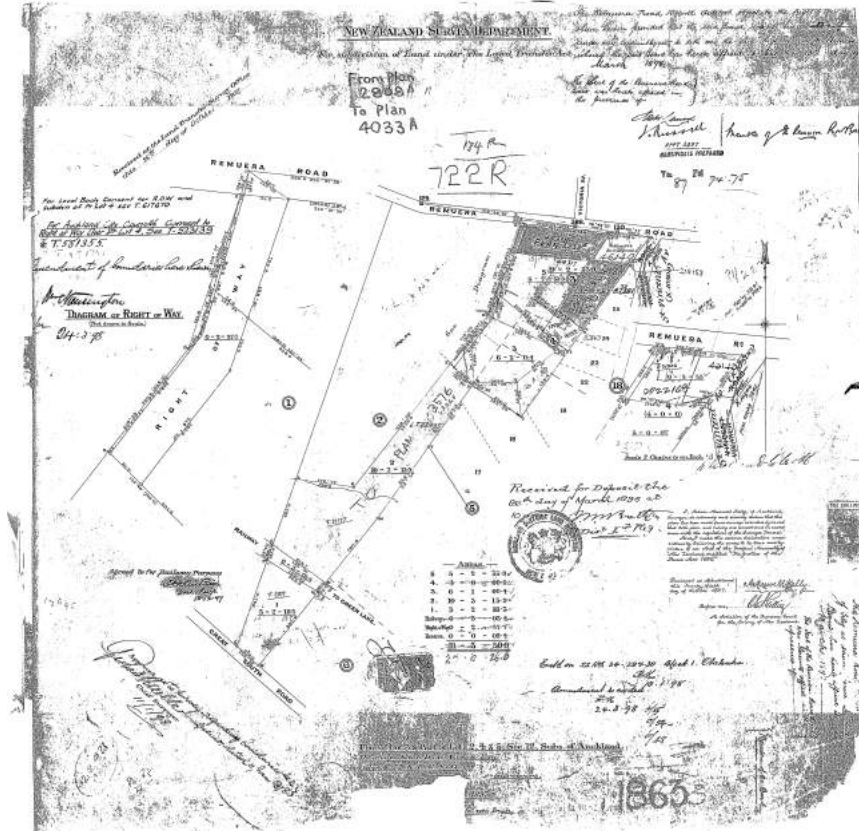
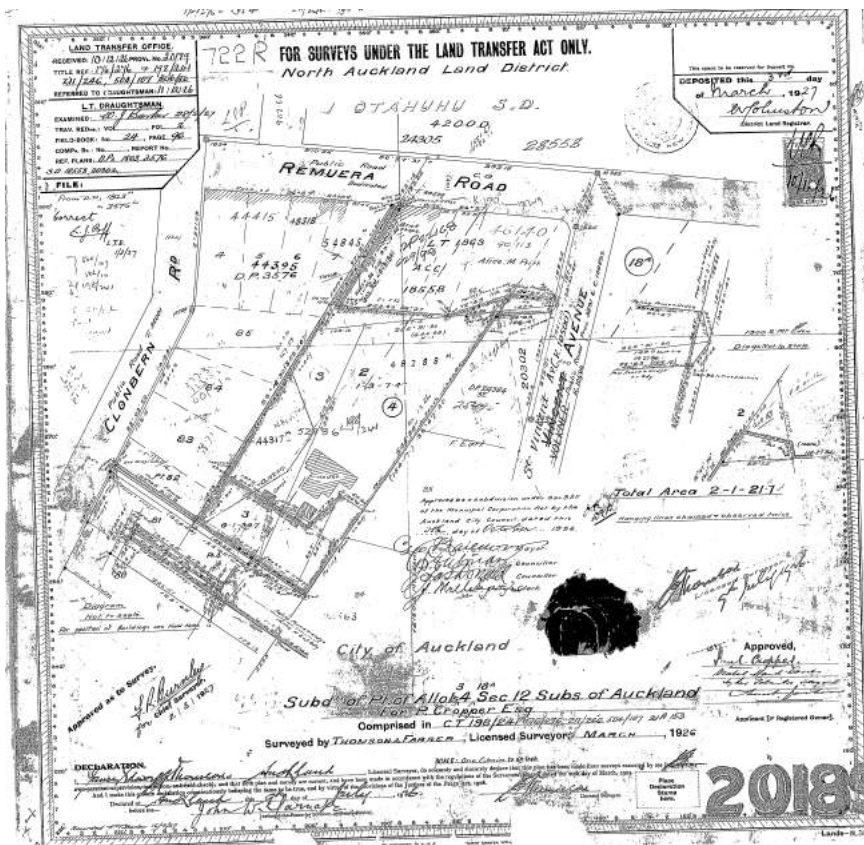


Figure 2: A plan showing Lot 3 and Part of Lots 2, 4 and 5, Section 12 Suburbs of Auckland, surveyed for D. W. Clerk, 1897 (Cadastral index, DP 1863).





**Figure 3:** Plan of Clonbern, being portions of Lots 2, 3, 4 and 5, Section 12. To the south of Remuera Road shows the area of land then in the ownership/ occupation of Bamford, 1897 (Cadastral index, DP 3576).



**Figure 4:** Plan showing the subdivision of part Allots 3, 4 and 18A, Section 12, 1926. At this time, the property in question (highlighted) was in the ownership of Auckland City Council (Cadastral index, DP 20189).

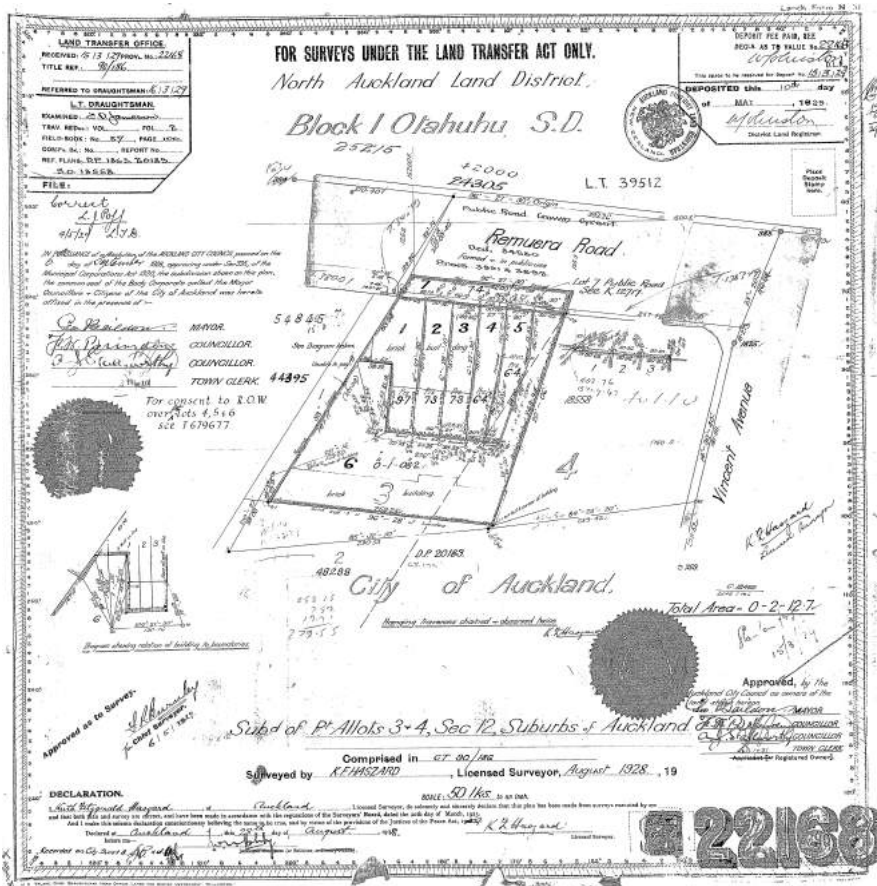


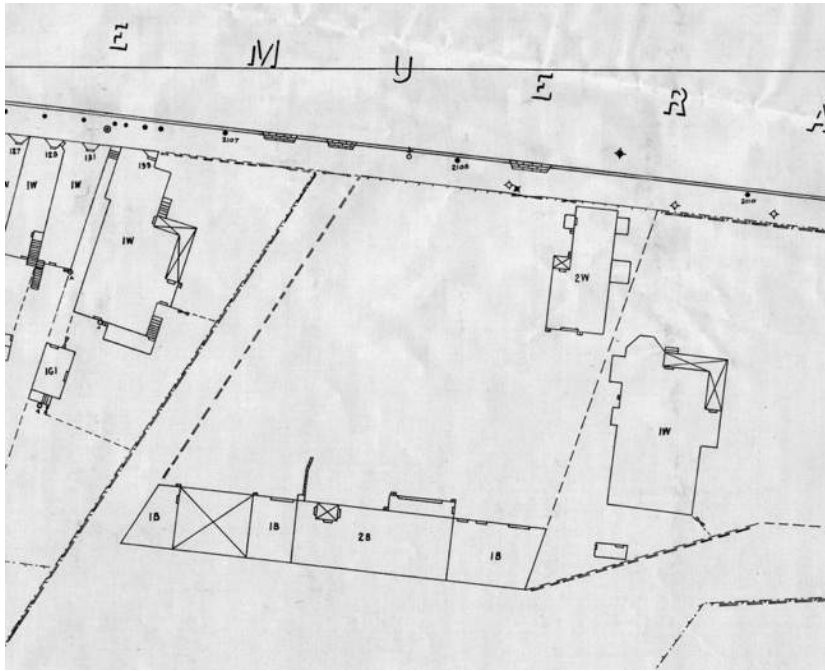
Figure 5: Plan showing a close-up of the property in question and its subdivision into seven lots, 1928. The former stables are visible (identified as 'brick building' in lot 6 (highlighted)) (Cadastral index, DP 22168).

## Map (traced 1923)



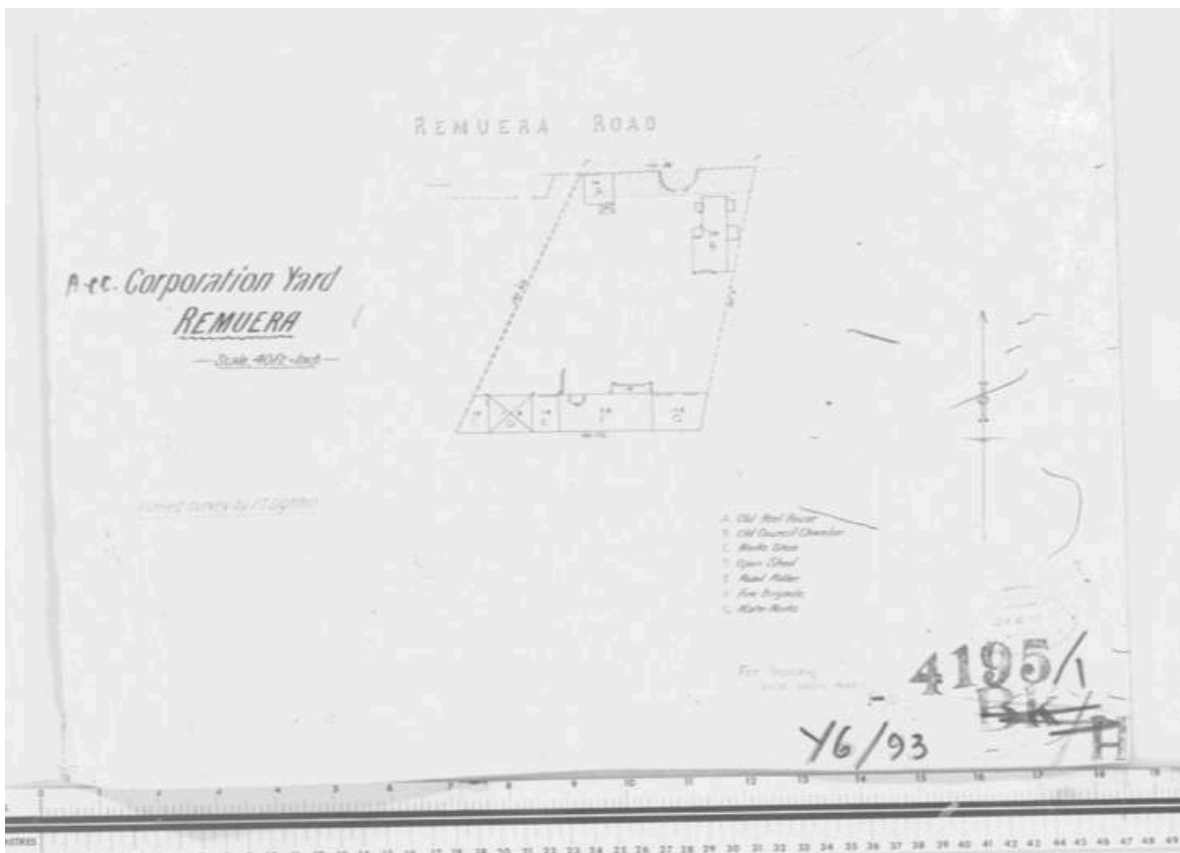
**Figure 6:** (Above) Section of the Auckland City planning map, showing a southern portion of Remuera Road and the land that formed part of original Allotments 3 and 4, Section 12, Suburbs of Auckland (highlighted) (ACC 001-326 Q19, Auckland Council Archives).

**Figure 7:** (Left) Close-up of above image showing the 'Araroa' homestead (circled), built by Frank Buckland. Note the outbuildings to the south of the homestead. The northern portion of land (highlighted) was the site purchased by the Remuera Road Board in 1902, and later owned by Auckland City Council and utilised as its works depot.



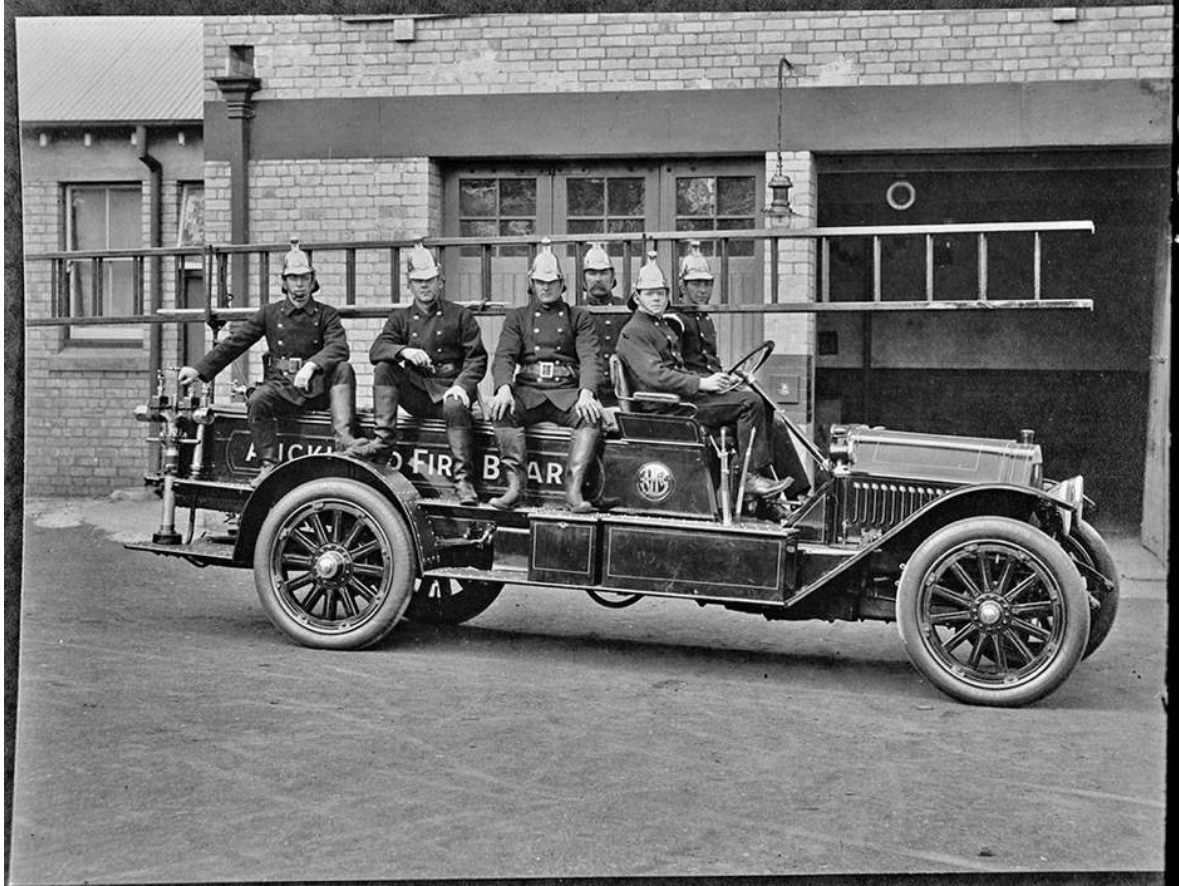
**Figure 8:** A further close-up showing the Auckland City Council site fronting Remuera Road. At this time, the Library building (former Remuera Road Board offices) were located at the front of the site and the single and two-storey brick subject building - known as the Stables/Village Green – was located along the southern boundary (highlighted).

### Referenced map (1915)



**Figure 9:** A map showing the broader Auckland City Council Corporation Yard/Works Depot, which references the uses of the buildings on the site, including the subject site, which housed the 'Works Store', 'Open Shed', 'Road Roller', 'Fire Brigade' and 'Water Works' (AKC 033 City Engineers Works Plans Aperture Cards 1872-1993, Plans 7100-8999, Auckland Council Archives).

### Photograph: Remuera Fire Brigade



**Figure 10:** Showing firemen on a Kissell fire engine outside the Remuera Fire Station, c.1915. This is the earliest known photograph that shows parts of the subject building, being the principal two-storey portion (former fire station) and one of the single-storey structures (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 7-105/11)

## Oblique aerial photographs (1954, 1989)



**Figure 11:**  
Showing Remuera  
Road and  
shopping area,  
looking east  
(Whites Aviation  
Collection,  
Alexander Turnbull  
Library, PA-  
Group-00080:  
Whites Aviation  
Ltd: Photographs,  
Reference:  
WA-34996-F, 18  
Feb 1954).



**Figure 12:** Close-up of above image, showing the location of the Auckland City Council Works Depot. The former 'Stables' are visible to the rear of the site (circled).



**Figure 13:** Looking north along Victoria Avenue towards Remuera Road and shopping centre (Whites Aviation Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, PA-Group-00080: Whites Aviation Ltd: Photographs, Reference: WA-80540-F, 28 Feb 1989).



**Figure 14:** Close-up of above image, showing the location of the former Auckland City Council Works Depot. The single and two-storey former 'Stables' are visible to the rear of the site (circled).

**Series of aerial images (1940, 1959 and 2017)**







Figure 15: Series of aerial images showing present-day 415 Remuera Road (indicative outline) (Auckland Council Geomaps).

## Appendix 2: Valuation Field Sheets

DESCRIPTION of PROPERTY	Wood Library & Bicks Fire Station. Sheds etc Remuera R <sup>d</sup>		Lot 3 <sup>rd</sup> 3/4 of 12	AREA—			
	Section			6	2.13 <sup>8</sup>		
YEAR	1915-16	1916-17	1917-18	1918-19	1919-20	1920-21	
Valuation No.	1178		13154				
Occupier	Remuera C.C.C.						
Christian Name	R <sup>d</sup> Board						
Occupation							
Owner							
Surname							
Christian Name							
Occupation							
Rent							
Lease							
Ratable Value	£ 260 (Based on 7% of Cap. Val.)	£	£ 270	£	£	£	
Address for Notices							
Capital Value	£ 5200	£	£ 5400	£	£	£	
Value of Land	£ 1200	£	£ 1400	£	£	£	
Value of Building	£ 4000	£	£ 4000	£	£	£	
Conveniences							
Gas & Elec. Light							
Water							
Bath							
Wash Tubs							
No. of Rooms							
Sales	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Valued by							
Date			3.10.16				
Remarks							

**Figure 16:** 1915-1921 Valuation Field Sheet, showing the description of the property as a 'Wood Library and Brick Fire Station, Sheds etc.'. The property was in the ownership of the Remuera Road Board in 1915-16 and later Auckland City Council following amalgamation (ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives).

24/6/15

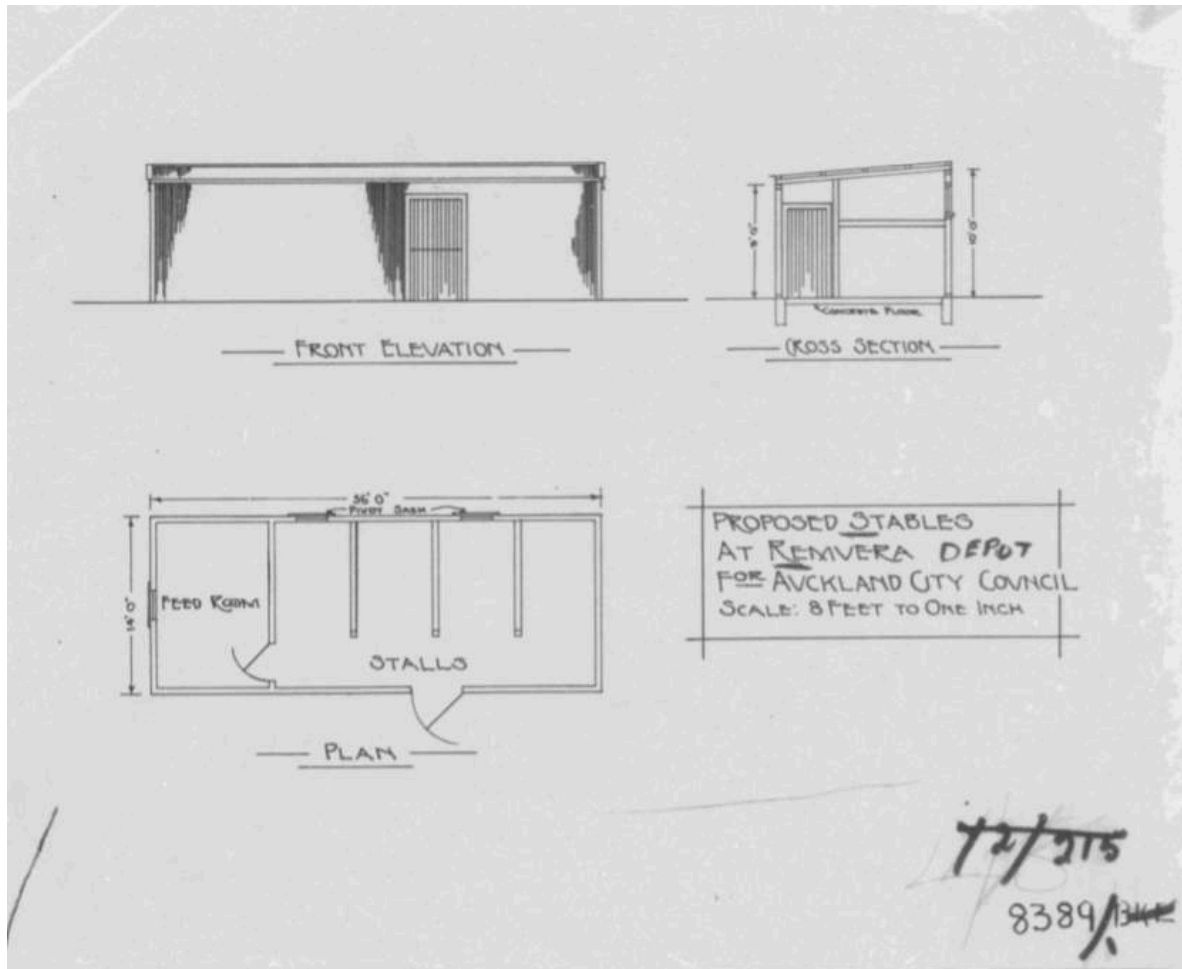
<u>Brick</u>	<u>Office</u>	
800	110	
442.9.3	90	
200	179. 19. 11	
582. 11	<u>379 19. 11</u>	Less sale Temp. Building
<u>2025.0.3</u>		£10
Architect Fees £126		
	merchandise on by F. B.	For Fire B <sup>d</sup> purposes
		20 ft x 150 @ £12 = £240
		Fire Only
		<u>800</u>
		1240

**Figure 17:** Cost calculations for the brick and office buildings (ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives).

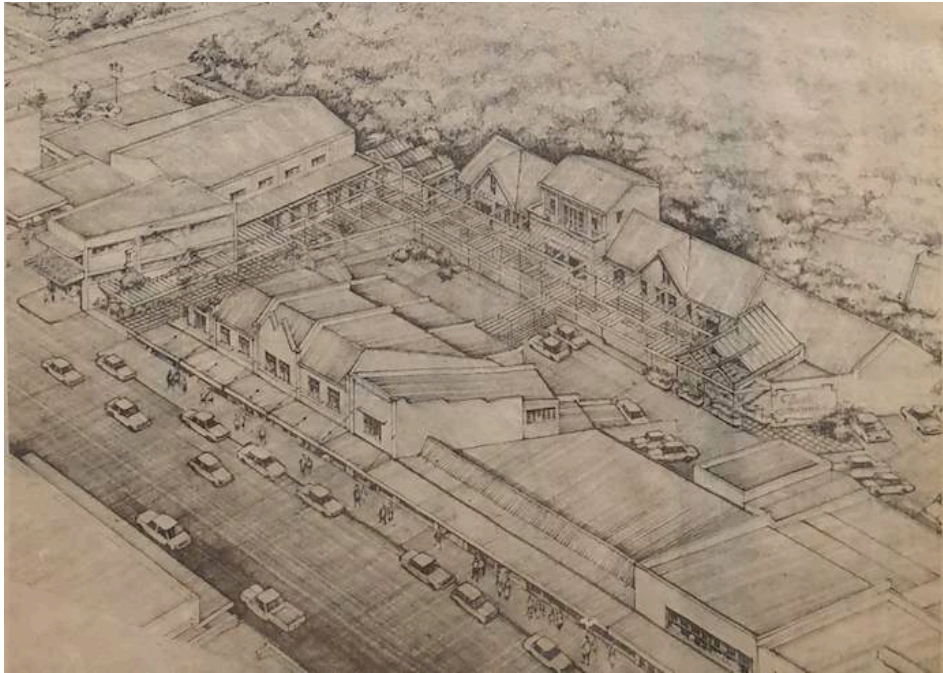
DESCRIPTION of PROPERTY.		Lot	AREA				
Wood Library & Brick Stables, Sheds & Dwelling. Remuera Rd.		123	120				
Section 12, Sub.			2/38				
YEAR	1918-19	1919-20	1920-21	1921-22	1922-23	1923-24	
Valuation No. 13184							
Occupier Surname ...	230						
Occupier Christian Name ...							
Occupier Occupation ...							
Owner Surname ...							
Owner Christian Name ...							
Owner Occupation ...							
Address for Notices							
Rent ...							
Lease ...							
RATABLE VALUE	245	245					
Value of Building	3500	3500					
Value of Land	1400	1400				21600	
No. of Rooms ...							
Conveniences, &c.							
Building Permits							
Sales ...							
Valued by ...	W.H.	W.H.	22 Feb 1920				
Date ...	21.9.17	17.9.18.	28.11.19.				
Remarks ...							

Figure 18: By c.1918-1924, the property was described as 'Wood Library and Brick Stables, Sheds and Dwelling' (ACC 123 Valuation Field Sheets 1912-1997, Remuera Road 329-487, Record ID: 329084, Auckland Council Archives).

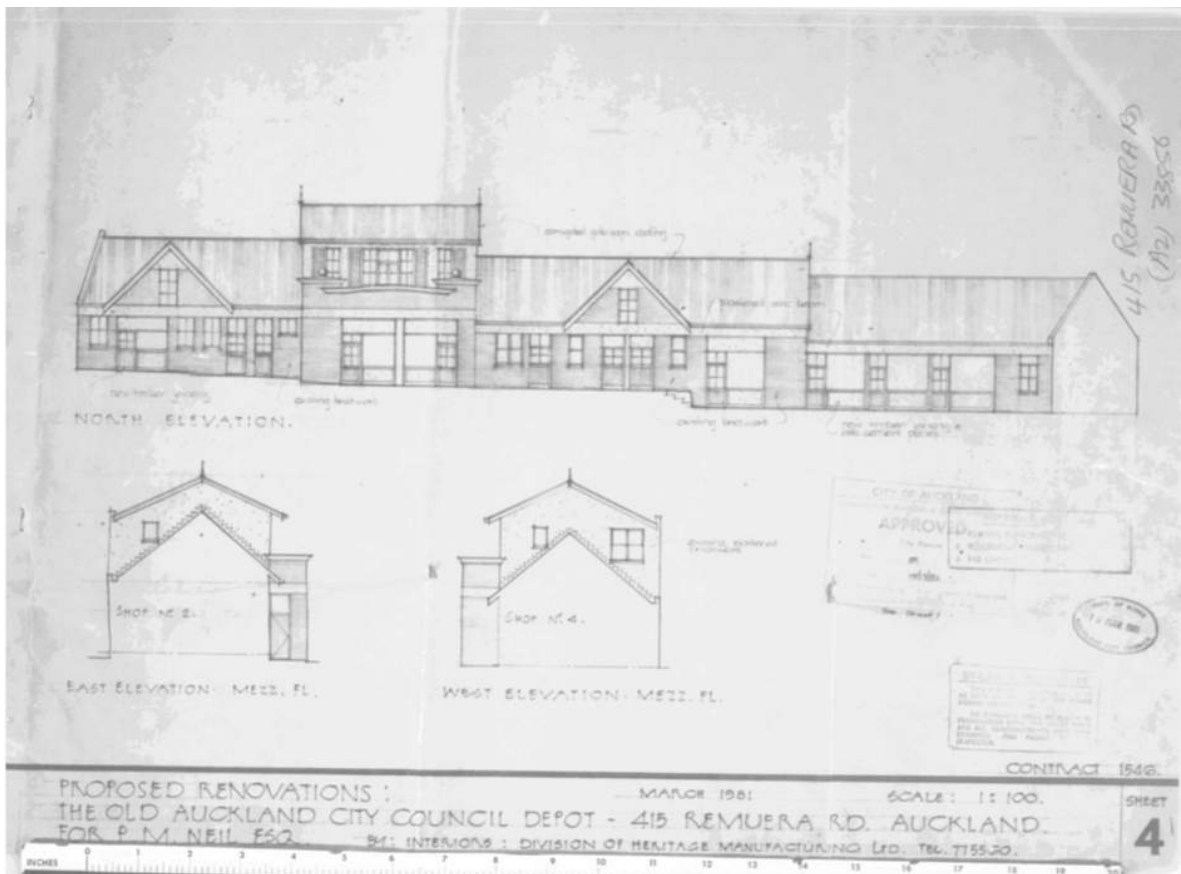
### Appendix 3: Architectural drawings



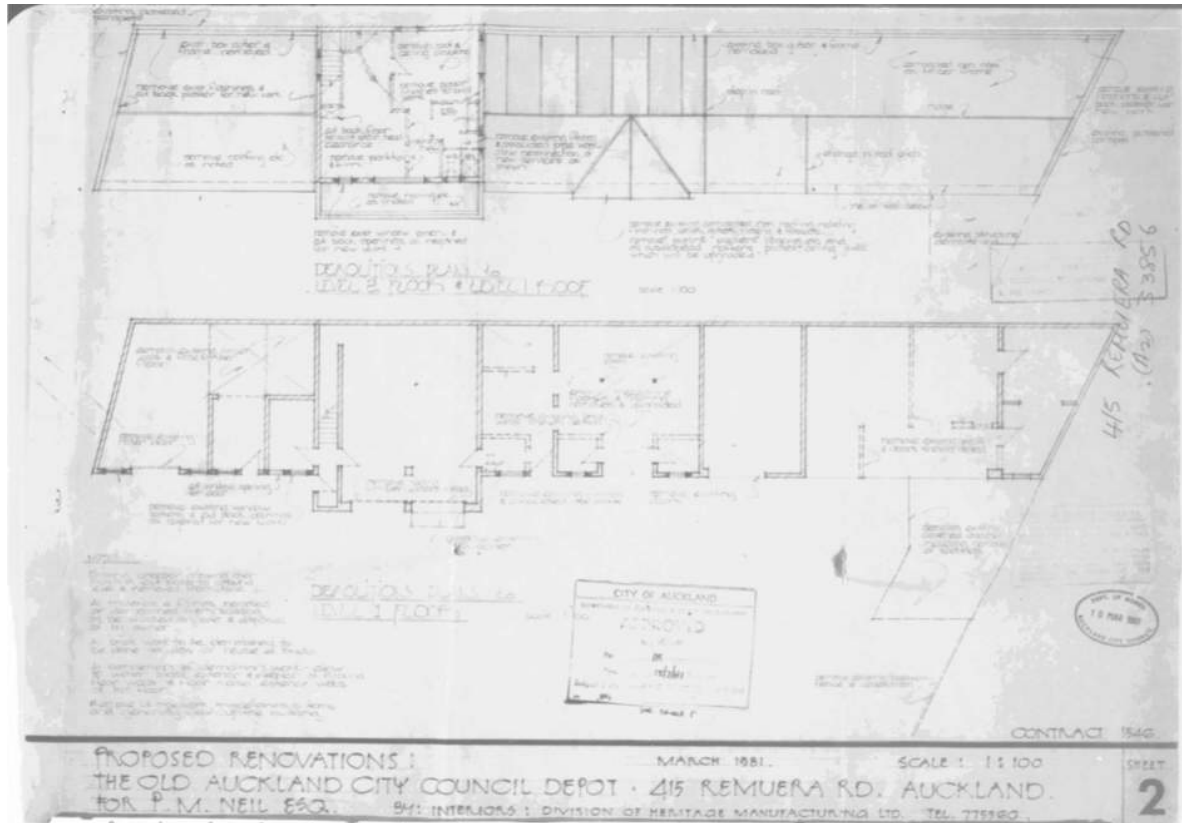
**Figure 16:** Undated drawing showing proposed stables at the Remuera Depot for Auckland City Council. It is unlikely that this stable is one of the existing buildings, but added, possibly temporarily, to accommodate stables (AKC 033 City Engineers Works Plans Aperture Cards 1872-1993, Plans 7100-8999, Auckland Council Archives).



**Figure 17:** Architectural concept drawings showing the proposed 'Victoria Mews' in 1981 (East City News Advertiser, July 1 1981).



**Figure 18:** Architectural drawings showing the proposed changes to the principal elevation of the former stables building, 1981



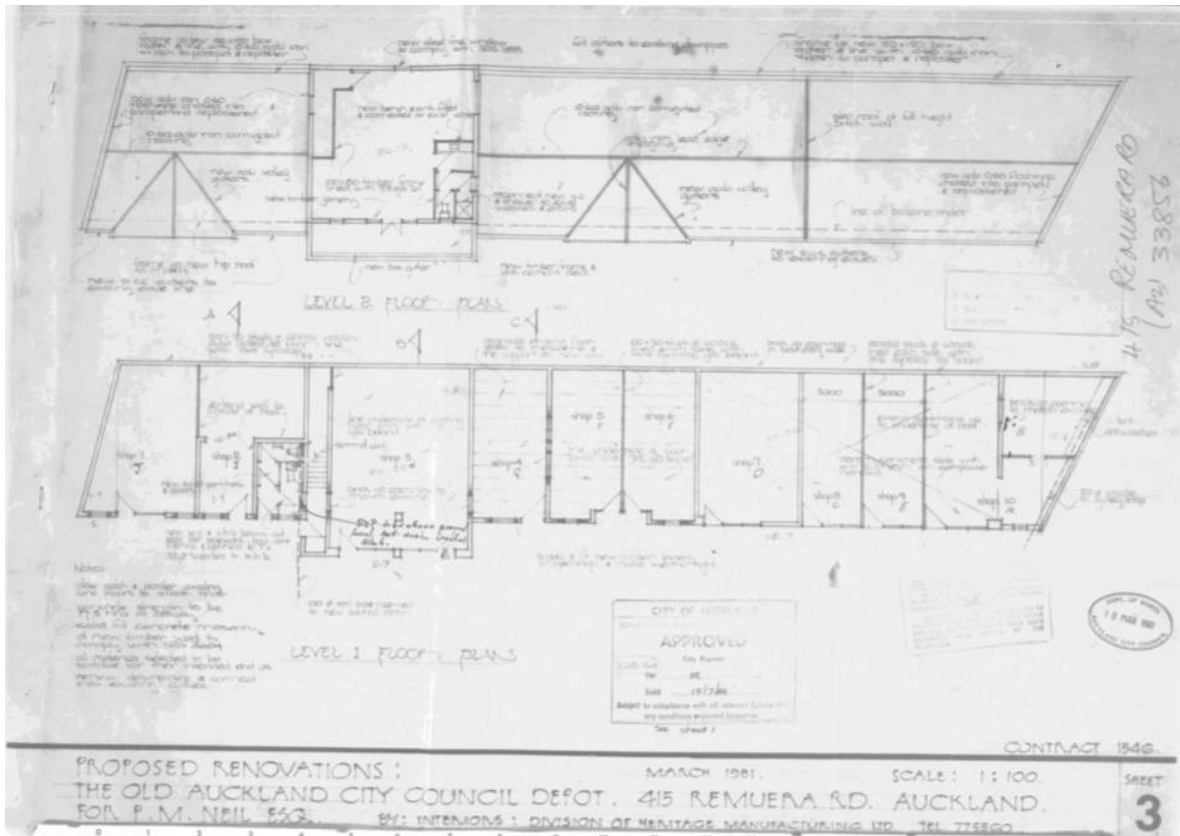


Figure 19: Architectural drawings showing the internal alterations proposed to the former stables buildings, 1981 (AKC 339, Building Permit and Consents Aperture Cards 1908-1997, Auckland Council Archives).

#### Appendix 4: Photographs

The following photographs were taken by the author on 14 May 2019.







