



TSB Bank, 87-89 Devon Street West

1929

**Themes in development:** transport and trade, civic.

**Cultural heritage values:** historic, architectural, technical, townscape and group values.

**Registered:** Category II under the Historic Places Act, 1993.  
Category II on the New Plymouth District Planning Scheme.

**Owner**

TSB Bank Ltd  
PO Box 240  
New Plymouth

**Title**

All DP 4377, Lot 2 DP 8487 -  
TSB Building  
ID: 015149

**Use**

Banking

### **Description**

The Taranaki Savings Bank is a two storey reinforced concrete building founded on 7 metre deep concrete piers. It is sheathed in glazed terracotta, the only building remaining in the city with this cladding. Unusual in material, it is also unusual in form: pilasters on either side and a cornice and parapet above frame a deeply recessed ground and first floor. Four polished granite columns on the ground floor support an open balustrade at first floor level. Although the original and beautifully detailed fabric is still intact, it is rendered less visible than it was by a high glazed canopy, built as part of a refurbishment of the building in 1983 by Boon Goldsmith and Co, architects. Other minor work was carried out in 1958, 1987 and 1989.

### **History**

The New Plymouth Savings Bank was founded in 1850, the first deposit being by "a Maori" of Mokau for the sum of £34. For the first ten years of its operation the bank lost money but deposits grew during the period of the land war. It became the Taranaki Savings Bank in 1964 and finally the TSB Bank in 1989. The bank had many premises around the city until the present building was constructed in 1930. The site was part of the old bed of the Mangaotuku Stream, necessitating the deep foundations. The builders were Jones and Sandford and the opening ceremony was performed by the Governor General Lord Bledisloe in June 1930.

### **Architects**

The architects were Messenger Griffiths and Taylor, and the drawings are dated April 1929; copies are held by the District Council.

### **Statement of Significance**

The TSB Bank is important historically for New Plymouth having been an integral part of its banking history since 1850. The building is perhaps the most distinguished piece of architecture left of the work of the important local firm of architects Messenger Griffiths and Taylor; it is inventive in its form and use of materials, and is technically extremely proficient. It has high townscape value as part of a group of buildings of consistent scale and quality along Devon Street West, and in addition forms an end to the view looking south along the axis of Egmont Street.

### **Sources**

NZHPT Record Form no 913.

New Plymouth District Council building file 152/87.

Taranaki Museum, heritage trail file C7020048.