



Public Trust Building, 29 Queen Street  
(King St cnr)

1920

**Themes in development:** cultural and social.

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

**Not registered.**

**Owner**  
Public Trust  
PO Box 648  
New Plymouth

**Title**  
Lot 1 DP 3831  
ID: 015094

**Use**  
Offices

### **Description**

The Public Trust Office is a compact and solid single storey building on the corner of King Street and Queen Street. The main entrance on King Street has a curved canopy over it and is flanked on either side by large round-headed windows with elongated keystones reaching up to a prominent cornice. A pattern of round and square-headed windows stretches along the Queen Street facade. The parapet has abstracted stepped motifs at each corner and in the middle of the Queen Street facade - these are devices of unusual design, akin to others found on buildings designed by T H Bates. The building is reinforced concrete, plastered, with timber joinery.

### **History**

New Zealand's Public Trust Act of 1872 established a state-backed trust to administer public and private estates, the first of its kind in the world. Until the 1920s, the Trust's New Plymouth agents operated from offices in the now demolished Government Buildings on the corner of Robe and Devon Street West. During the 1920s the Public Trust built a number of their own buildings around New Zealand, the New Plymouth office being built in two stages, the first in 1920-21, with additions along the Queen Street boundary in 1925.

### **Architect**

The architect for both parts of the building was T H Bates.

### **Statement of Significance**

The Public Trust has historic significance as the permanent office in New Plymouth of a socially important institution. The building has a suitably dependable quality about it, well ordered and detailed, the work of a locally important architect. It has townscape quality, being seen on a corner site in close proximity to important heritage buildings such as the White Hart Hotel, Govett-Brewster Gallery and the Clock Tower.

### **Sources**

New Plymouth District Council building file 294/...

Taranaki Museum, heritage trail file C7020048.

*Buildings of New Zealanders*, Michael Fowler, Lansdowne Press, 1984.