

# Auckland Council District Plan (North Shore Section)

## Proposed Plan Change 38

### Proposed New Item

#### Appendix 11A: Schedule of Buildings, Objects and Places of Heritage Significance



**Name:** Former Devonport Police Station

**Address:** 7 Rattray Street Devonport

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ID: 568	Category: A	Use: Residential	DP Map:32A
Material 1:	Condition:	Cultural Heritage:	
Material 2:	Integrity:	Streetscape:	
Construction Dates 1923/24 & 1955/56			
From:	To:	Alteration Dates:	
Legal Description: Lots 1 & 2 DP 404401		Zoning: Residential 3A	

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#### **Architect/Designer/Contractor:**

Government Architect of the day, contractor Mr Charles Downie, Epsom.  
Original plans for watch house or office, water closet & lumber shed and lock up found, plans for sergeants house not found.

Government Architects, John Thomas Mair 1876-1959, Robert Adams Patterson 1892-1971

**Architectural Style:**

Bungalow style, typical for the period, fair faced brick and rough cast plaster walls, gabled and hipped Marseille tile roofs (house roof appears to have been replaced), timber joinery

**Reference Source:**

Martin, Lewis E, Built for Us *The Work of Government and Colonial Architects 1860s to 1960s*, 2004

Salmond, Jeremy, *Old New Zealand Houses 1800-1940*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1978

Property Records Auckland Council

Archives New Zealand plans for Water Closet and Lumber Shed 1924

and additional information for; Water closet and lumber shed

Additional window in north west wall of watch house 1954

Additional garage lean-to to boundary side of Water Closet and Lumber Shed

Proposed Motor Garage 1954, timber, to south eastern corner of section (boundary with 11 Rattray Street)

**NZHPT Listing:**

Not registered by NZHPT.

**Significant Elements:**

The former Police Station comprises 4 buildings, the house or Sergeants Residence (Lot 1 DP 404401) 7 Rattray Street and the watch house or office, water closet and lumber shed, and 2 cell lock up at 9 Rattray Street (Lot 2 DP 404401) (recorded on GIS also as 7 Rattray Street). Site subdivided into 2 lots in 2008 and appears now to be in separate ownership.

**Extent of Listing:**

Former Devonport Police Station includes:

- Former Sergeants residence
- Former watch house/office
- Former water closet and lumber shed
- Former 2 cell lock up

**History:**

By the time the Rattray Street buildings were constructed, in 1923-24, Devonport already had a long history of Police presence. The first record of a policeman in the area was of a Mr. George Banks appointed by the Flagstaff Highway Board in March 1869. In 1873, a 'special' constable was put in charge of the area taking on such responsibilities as administration of the Weeds and Watercourses Act and Dog Nuisances Act while attempting to keep rabbits under control on Mt. Victoria. The first specially trained policeman, Constable Dews of the New Zealand Armed Constabulary, took up his posting in June 1877 policing the area from Devonport to the Wade River

and Lucas Creek to the west. In 1886, the Police Force Act established the first unarmed civilian Police organization thereby enabling the force to concentrate on the job of policing.<sup>1</sup>

Devonport's first Police premises are thought to have been in Victoria Street in a "gable end house close to the present Devonport Post Office"<sup>2</sup> but later moved to Clarence Street where an office and residence were established. These premises were leased until Rattray Steet was built.<sup>3</sup>

The first street directory listing for numbers 7-9 Rattray St appear in 1925 with Sergeant Alf Rowell as the sergeant in charge of the new Police Station.<sup>4</sup> Previously, both Allotments (11 and 12) were transferred from the ownership of a blacksmith by the name of John Cogan, to His Majesty the King, in September 1916.<sup>5</sup> It is not known if other buildings were on the site at that time.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the staff consisted of "...one sergeant and four constables with a coverage on foot and bicycle for 22 hours out of 24 each day, seven days a week".<sup>6</sup> Two constables would cover the Sunday morning to Monday morning shift while the other two had their fortnightly day off. A regular evening beat included the two hotels, the Masonic and the Esplanade where, during the Depression, the constable would turn a blind eye to a bit of late drinking, having officially seen the men out at 6pm. It appears that, despite riots and looting across the harbour, Devonport Police maintained friendly relations with the public.<sup>7</sup>

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, many smaller Police Stations were closed in an effort to improve efficiency.<sup>8</sup> Although Divisional Headquarters for Auckland's Northern Division were relocated to Takapuna, during this period, Rattray Street continued to operate as a Police Patrol Base<sup>9</sup> until March 1990 when Constable Norwood moved to his new office in the North Shore City Council's Devonport Service Centre. The house, however, was still used as rental accommodation for police on transfer<sup>10</sup> until mid 1991 when the titles to both Allotments were passed into private ownership.<sup>11</sup>

## Statement of Significance

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<sup>1</sup> 'Takapuna H.Q. Northern Police Division: Souvenir Programme of 62<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Station Opening, 29 May 1912', Vertical File, Police, Takapuna Library, pp. 10-12.

<sup>2</sup> *North Shore Times Advertiser*, 28/1/1975:17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Cleaves Auckland Provincial Directory* 1925.

<sup>5</sup> LINZ, Deeds Book, R266-158 (Lot 11); Land on Line, CT NA 50/291 (Lot 12).

<sup>6</sup> 'Takapuna H.Q. Northern Police Division: Souvenir Programme of 62<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Station Opening, 29 May 1912', Vertical File, Police, Takapuna Library, p.15.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Mace, Tania, 2010. North Shore Thematic History, Section 5.2.2. – Justice.

<sup>9</sup> 'Takapuna H.Q. Northern Police Division: Souvenir Programme of 62<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Station Opening, 29 May 1912', Vertical File, Police, Takapuna Library, p.13.

<sup>10</sup> *North Shore Times Advertiser*, 15/3/1990:16.

<sup>11</sup> Land on Line, CT NA 50/291(Lot 12); CT NA 87A/80.

The former Police Station is important in the local Devonport context and it is a rare example of its kind.

*Architecture:*

The police station buildings are constructed in the bungalow style which was typical of the post and interwar period and Rattray Street contains a number of bungalows and villas. The buildings associated with the station operations (watch house, water closet and lumber shed and cells) are of domestic scale and detailing and fit easily into the residential nature of Rattray Street

*History:*

The complex of buildings which comprise the station are significant for their close and enduring association with the police, these buildings were purpose designed in 1923-24 and continued in use in various capacities for 66 years. They reflect policing at a community level, of policemen 'on the beat' which gave them a high public profile in an area with two hotels and a strong Navy presence. Provision of all the necessary facilities included the watch house or office, water closet and lumber shed, a 2 cell lock up and the provision of a house for the constable, who virtually 'lived on the job'

The buildings are on their original site and appear in virtually original condition and have had little exterior alteration and they are now a rare example of their kind with few other remaining examples known on the North Shore. Birkenhead has a former police station [1905-6] behind the Category B District Plan scheduled Highbury Community House at 110 Hinemoa Street and one at 11 Clarence Street in Northcote [1915] was also constructed, but is no longer used for its original purpose.

The buildings are important in representing historic themes in the development of Devonport identified through the North Shore thematic review, including The People of the North Shore and Justice.

*Context:*

The station is located in close proximity to the shopping area, surrounded by houses, and contributes to a varied but coherent townscape. Its setting and curtilage compliments the buildings.