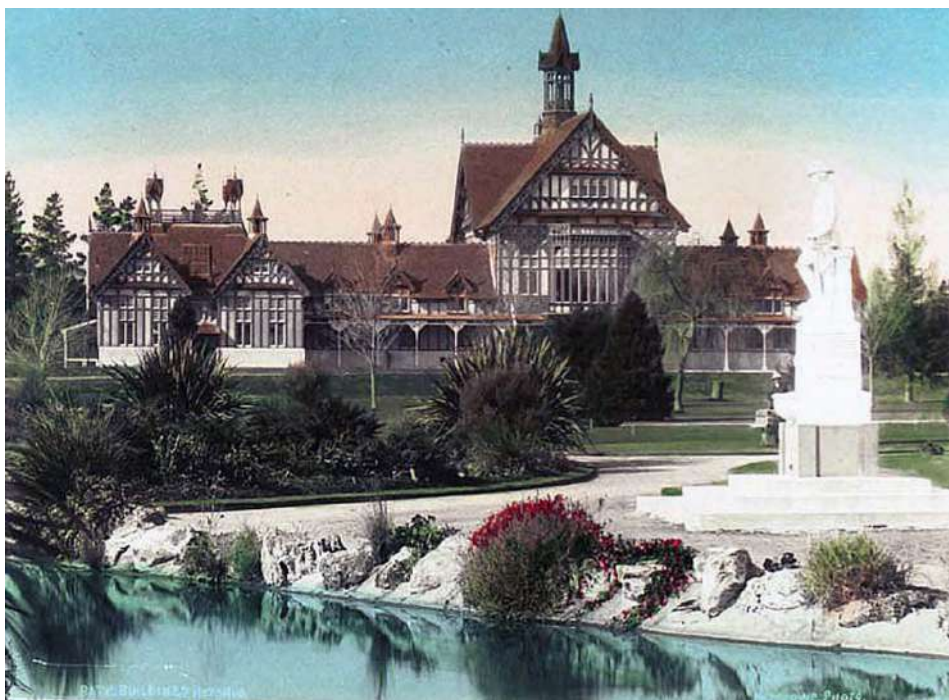




ROTORUA BATH HOUSE (FORMER) CONSERVATION PLAN

April 2019



DPA Architects

Phone: (09) 445 8544
Email: admin@dpaarchitects.co.nz
Level One
83 Victoria Road
PO Box 32 318
Devonport
Auckland

Principal Contact

Dave Pearson
Principal
Mobile: 027 4972205
Email: dave@dpaarchitects.co.nz



CONTENTS

1.0 INFORMATION	5
2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
3.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE	10
3.1 Introduction.....	10
3.2 Historical Background.....	10
Beginnings.....	10
Foundation: Planning the New Establishment.....	13
Building the Bath House: 1908	20
The Equipment.....	26
The Official Opening.....	30
Maintenance Problems.....	32
Naming the Building.....	37
4.0 CHANGING PHILOSOPHIES AND FUNCTIONS.....	40
4.1 The Chronology of the Bath House	40
Chronology of Events	50
5.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE	51
5.1 Location and Setting	51
5.2 Evidence of Previous Human Activity	53
Introduction	53
Archaeology.....	53
5.3 Description of the Building	54
Initial Construction.....	55
Early Alterations	58
Adding a Restaurant.....	59
Forming a Museum.....	61
Rotorua Art Gallery North Wing Alterations	63
Mud Bath Exhibition	65
1983 South Wing Addition	65
2008 North Wing Extension.....	66
2011 South Wing Extension	67
5.4 Architectural Description	69
Architectural Influences	69
Architectural Concept	70
5.5 Construction and Key Physical Changes.....	72
Construction and Materials.....	72
6.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	84
6.1 Approach.....	84
Levels of Significance	84
Criteria for Assessment of Significance - Heritage Values.....	84
Physical Values	85
Historic Values.....	85
Cultural Values	86
6.2 Values Assessment	87
Physical Values	87
Historic Values.....	93
Cultural Values	95
6.3 Statement of Significance	101
National Significance	101

Local Significance	101
Summary of Cultural Significance.....	99
6.4 Heritage Inventory	103
Site and Setting	104
1908 Section	105
1911 Addition	124
1983 Addition	125
2008 Addition	126
2011 Addition	127
Supplementary Photographs	129
7.0 DEVELOPMENT OF CONSERVATION POLICY	143
7.1 The Requirements of the Owner and Occupier.....	143
7.2 Heritage Protection.....	143
Heritage New Zealand Trust Pouhere Taonga	143
Rotorua Lakes District Plan	144
ICOMOS New Zealand	144
7.3 Legislation.....	144
Resource Management Act	144
Building Act 2004.....	144
Earthquake Prone Buildings	144
Access and Provisions for Persons with Disabilities.....	145
Safety from Fire	145
7.4 Conservation of Standards	146
7.5 Current Condition of the Building.....	146
7.6 Risks	148
8.0 CONSERVATION POLICY.....	150
8.1 Policy Principles	151
8.2 Statutory Approvals.....	151
8.3 Alignment with Current Heritage Guidance	152
8.4 Engaging with Community and Stakeholders.....	152
Sustaining Significant Associations	152
Engagement and Communication When Change is Proposed.....	153
8.5 Setting	154
8.6 Caring for the Building Fabric.....	154
8.7 Building Policies	155
1908 Section	155
1911 Section	156
1983, 2008 and 2011 Section.....	157
8.9 Operation of the Building	159
8.10 Future Development	159
8.11 Universal Access Policy.....	161
9.0 ADOPTION, USE AND REVIEW OF CONSERVATION PLAN	162
10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY	163
Appendix A - Other Key Relevant Drawings	165

1.0 INFORMATION

Subject and Purpose of Report

The subject of this conservation plan is the former Bath House, Rotorua. The building has served as the museum for Rotorua since 1969, although it is currently closed due to concerns about its structural integrity, following the 7.8 magnitude Kaikoura earthquake Of 14 November 2016. The earliest part of the building dates from 1908 with subsequent additions constructed in 1911, 1983, 2008 and 2011. A significant seismic upgrade and general remedial works are currently planned.

Positioned overlooking Government Gardens on Hinemaru Street, the Rotorua Bath House occupies a prominent location within the city. In conjunction with other buildings in the vicinity, it makes a significant contribution to the larger heritage precinct.

The Rotorua Bath House Conservation Plan is intended to provide guidance for the general management of the building as well as enabling future planning and redevelopment work. Pressure is mounting for additional, well designed, storage and exhibition spaces as well as the need to improve the confusing and complex circulation routes within the building. In addition, structural strengthening and remedial work is required to the building following an assessment of the building which deemed it earthquake prone. It is intended that this Plan be a user-friendly, workable document that provides the required information in a succinct manner.

Heritage Protection

The Rotorua Bath House was listed as a Category 1 Historic Place by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga in April 1985 under the list number 141. The early 20th century building and its setting are also listed in the Rotorua Lakes District Plan. The site may be considered to be an archaeological site as it appears it was a place of human activity prior to the year 1900. It may therefore be afforded protection as such under the *Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014* which defines an archaeological site as: “A place associated with pre-1900 human activity, where there may be evidence relating to the history of New Zealand”.

The Rotorua Government Gardens in which the Bath House is located are listed by HNZPT as a Historic Area. Also located within the Historic Area are the Blue Baths, Rotunda, Gardener’s Cottage, Prince’s Arch and the Tea Pavilion.

Commission and Authorship

The Rotorua Lakes Council commissioned DPA Architects to produce this Conservation Plan in February 2019.

Information Sources

In the preparation of this Conservation Plan reference has been made to an earlier Conservation Plan written in 1993 by Dave Pearson, at that time employed by Works Consultancy Services Ltd. The historic account in that document was based in research undertaken by Mr Philip Andrews. All other sources of information, including historic photographs, are referenced throughout the document. Contemporary colour photos were taken by DPA Architects.

Archives have been referred to throughout the document in abbreviated form as follows: Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (**AJHR**), National Archives Auckland (**ANA**), Rotorua Lakes Council Archives (**RLC**), Rotorua Museum Records (**RM**), National Archives Wellington (**WNA**).

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rotorua Bath House is considered an iconic building in Rotorua and a landmark within the immediate area. It is also notable for the fact that it remained in continuous use as a bath house for over fifty years. The Rotorua Bath House has been a vital part of the cultural heritage of the city and the region as the city's museum since 1969 and it should continue to fulfil this role.

The museum today comprises the entire Bath House building, with some twenty-first century additions. The earliest part of the building dates from 1908 and was designed by Government Balneologist, Dr Arthur Stanley Wohlmann in collaboration with Tourist Department architect, Benjamin Stott Corlett, although the overall design of the building must be credited to Wohlmann. Wohlmann provided the initial drawings, played a guiding role throughout the planning and kept a critical eye on the construction. The original build cost over £25,000, a substantial amount for the time and more than £8,000 more than predicted in 1903. Although the original conception did not to come to full fruition in 1908, it was eventually realised by 2011 by which time north and south wings had been completed, essentially to the design of the original drawings.

In terms of architecture styles, the Elizabethan Revival style building emulated those found in the original Elizabethan movement in England. The Rotorua Bath House followed the common internal planning of government sanatoriums at the time including extensive corridors with private and public rooms accessed off them.

The Rotorua Bath House closely followed the latest developments in Victorian and Edwardian bath houses and sanatoriums. It demonstrates how particular architectural styles, in this case Elizabethan as well as Edwardian, Jacobean and Tudor styles, were adapted for a local situation and made distinctive through the use of locally available materials such as kauri timber and the incorporation of verandahs. In England, an Elizabeth building would have never had verandahs. The building also demonstrates a number of technological advancements using a half-timbered method of construction that is of interest in a country where 100 x 50 studs sheathed with weatherboards are standard. The half-timbered technique was adapted to New Zealand conditions and incorporated precast concrete infill panels. Although the use of precast panels became common later, particularly in the 1960s, this is the first recorded use of such a technique.

The Bath House building has contextual value, conceived in part as a social centre for the Edwardian township of Rotorua, as well as for the visitors it was hoped to attract from overseas. Circumstances soon destroyed that role as new sources of entertainment were developed. When spa facilities ceased at the Bath House, the Rotorua Borough Council and later the Rotorua City Council, in part promoted strongly by residents, picked up Wohlmann's initial concept and proposed new community roles for the building, developing museum and art gallery facilities. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the Bath House has served as a venue for a wide variety of community activities. Among the many community uses of the Bath House, whether in the north wing gallery or the foyer or the first floor area, have been book launches, poetry readings, dance and musical performances, lectures, film screenings and antique and collectors' fairs.

In 2016, a full seismic assessment of the Bath House building showed that the majority of the building is rated at less than 15% of the New Building Standard (NBS). This result meant that the building had to be closed indefinitely for seismic strengthening.

In 2018, DPA Architects, heritage and conservation architects of Auckland were commissioned as project architects for the seismic strengthening and redevelopment of the building in conjunction with Carling Architects of Rotorua.

The proposed work to the Rotorua Bath House has been designed to ensure that it recognises, protects and conserves key elements of building fabric that contribute to its heritage values. Wherever a museum is housed in a heritage building such as the Bath House building, there can sometimes be a delicate balancing act between the differing and sometimes conflicting requirements arising from the conservation of built heritage fabric and the conservation and display of important collections.

PART ONE:

UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE

3.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

3.1 Introduction

The Rotorua Bath House remains an iconic building in Rotorua. Comprising a substantial Elizabethan Revival building with Edwardian, Jacobean and Tudor influences, as well as more modern additions, the Bath House is set in the Government Gardens and was purpose-built as one of New Zealand's earliest bath houses. New Zealand, as a British colony, designed its government sanatoriums based on English models and the Elizabethan Revival style was chosen by balneologist Dr Arthur Wohlmann who created this most remarkable building in Rotorua. A combination of English styles was widely regarded as an appropriate choice for the sanatorium and was intended to reflect the 'homely' style of buildings in England.

Ceasing use as a bath house in 1966, ownership of the building was transferred to the Rotorua District Council in 1969. Changes to museum requirements over the following years required different responses to the management of collections and displays and this was essentially achieved through expansion. Substantial additions to the building in 1911, 1983, 2008 and 2011 were intended to fulfil these requirements as well as realisation of the original design concept that was not completed in 1908 due to budget constraints.

Today, the Bath House building is integral to the cultural heritage of Rotorua and the preservation of its heritage values needs to be carefully managed.

3.2 Historical Background

Beginnings

"The Governor also may ...erect pump rooms, baths, bath-rooms and other buildings for the convenient use of the baths, springs and lakes."

- The Thermal-Springs Districts Act 1881.¹

In 1906 B. S. Corlett, Engineer in Charge of the Bath House project, wrote to his superior officer in the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts: "It appears that the history and tradition of the spots even within the Gardens and of the bath springs is very interesting. I am getting a number of the details from the leading Maori, Erueti [Rotorua?]." ² However, the whereabouts and details of these notes are unknown.

The Bath House is sited within the Government Gardens, originally known as the Sanatorium Reserve, the largest of a number of reserves set aside by Ngati Whakaue by the 'Agreement for a Township...' negotiated by F. D. Fenton, Chief Judge of the Maori Land Court, signed 25 November 1880.

Its site designation, within Block 1 Tarawera Survey District of the South Auckland Land District, is Lot 2, Section 2 in Block 1, covering 1 acre 0 roods 30 perches.

The Agreement contained the provision that all the medicinal waters within the claim should be Public Reserves. The main area of mineral springs was contained in the Sanatorium Reserve within the Pukeroa-Oruawhata Block. The Sanatorium Ground was a barren,

¹ 'The Thermal-Springs Districts Act 1881', Stafford: 1967.

² ANA A259/19b. Engineering Charge to Superintendent, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 10 October 1906.

thermally active area extending from Hinemaru Street north and east to the shore of Rotorua Lake and bounded to the south by the lake end of Eruera Street, as represented in the survey plan of A. B. Morrow, May 1891.



Figure 1 – An 1891 map of Rotorua produced shortly after the formation of the Sanatorium Ground that would later become the site of the Rotorua Bath House.

Source: British Library

The Thermal Springs Districts Act 1881 was intended to legalise the Fenton Agreement of 1880. While Ngati Whakaue later expressed dissatisfaction over Government management of both fees and township leases and over the amount of the initial payment, the validity of the setting aside of reserves was sanctioned by the Thermal Springs Districts Act 1881 which specified that “The Governor also may, with the consent of the Native proprietors, ... (7) Manage and control the use of all mineral springs, hot springs, ngawha, Waiariki, lakes, rivers and waters and fix and authorise the collection of fees for the use thereof...”³

The annual report for 1885 of the Crown Lands Department states “The more celebrated hot springs of Rotorua, although on native lands, are, so far as the erection of baths and other arrangements are concerned, entirely under the control of the Government.”⁴

The purchase by the Crown in 1889 of the Pukeroa-Orouawhata Block and subsequent conveyances, according to the 1973 Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Rotorua

³ 'The Thermal-Springs Districts Act 1881', Stafford: 1967.

⁴ Crown Lands Department Annual Report for 1885. RLC file copy.

Township Reserves, “included all the reserve areas so that the Crown’s title to them is from a legal point of view quite clear and unassailable.”⁵



Figure 2 – The timber arch at the entrance to the Government Grounds in the early 1900s. Constructed in 1901 for the Royal Visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, it is in the shape of a crown. The Bath House was yet to be built when this photograph was taken.

Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images Online

By Section 6 of the Thermal Springs Districts Act 1910 the reserves were declared validly made and were vested in the Crown subject to the provisions of the Public Reserves and Domains Act 1908.

The 1948 Royal Commission found that the Sanatorium Ground was among reserves gifted by Ngati Whakaue 'hei oranga mo nga iwi katoa o te Ao' ('for the benefit of the people of the world')⁶ prior to the 1889 purchase.

By the Reserves and Domains Act 1953, in the event of any revocation of reserve land, such land would become Crown land available for disposal under the Land Act 1948. Ngati Whakaue therefore legally would have no reversionary interest. However, the Crown agreed in the 1960s that formal advice of any change of purpose or revocation of reservation would be made to Ngati Whakaue, an arrangement Rotorua City Council agreed to when the reserves were vested in the Council. The Rotorua District Council is bound by the same understanding.

The original reserves (including the Sanatorium Reserve) provided in the Fenton Agreement are now subject to the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977.

In 1981 the Director of the Rotorua Museum and Art Gallery was advised by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust that the Bath House had been given a provisional B classification, as one

⁵ Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Rotorua Township Reserves 1973. RLC file copy

⁶ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

of “Those buildings of such historical significance or architectural quality that their preservation is strongly recommended.”⁷

This listing was confirmed on 2 April 1985 when, under section 35(1)(b) of the Historic Places Act 1980, the Bath House was registered as a Category B historic place, meaning it “merits permanent preservation because of its very great historical significance and architectural quality.”⁸ Under the revised classification system of the Historic Places Act 1993 the Bath House is now listed as Category I.

Within the current Rotorua District Plan the Bath House is also classified as a category one building.

Foundation: Planning the New Establishment

“The new bath building, while not completing the original scheme, should yet be one which for architectural beauty and for completeness of internal fittings would do credit to the most famous spas of Europe, while for excellence and variety of mineral waters supplied, it need fear no comparison with any bathing establishment in the world.”

- A. S. Wohlmann⁹

In August 1902 T. E. Donne, Superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, informed his Minister that the new Government Balneologist, Dr A. S. Wohlmann, was “very anxious to at once proceed with the inauguration of a new era of things at Rotorua and proposes that immediate steps be taken to construct a new bath house.”¹⁰

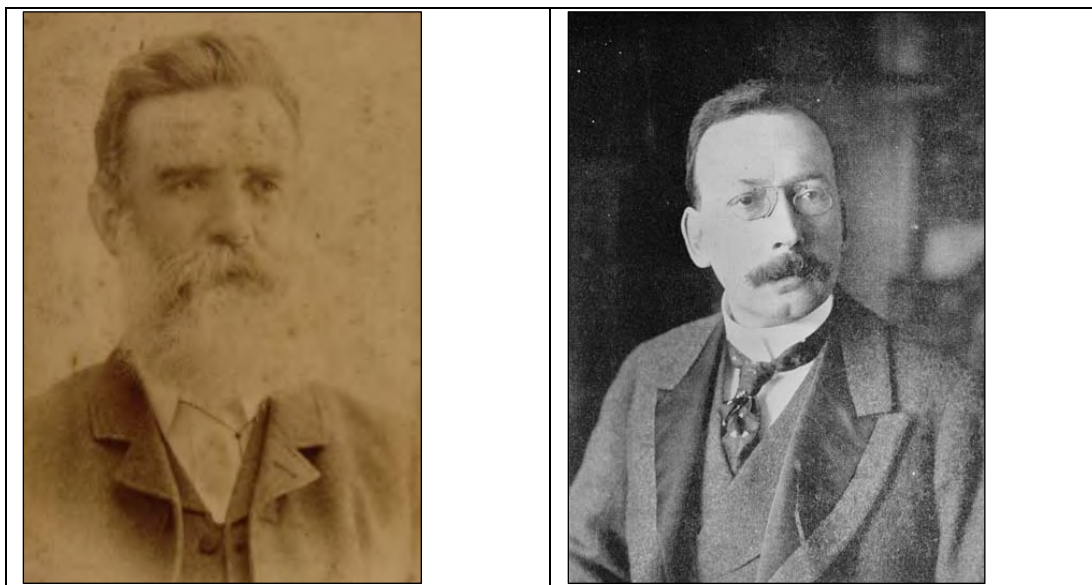


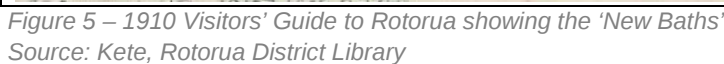
Figure 3 (left) - Arthur Stanley Wohlmann (Source: Te Ara NZ Govt), and Figure 4(right) - Benjamin Stott Corlett (Source: Rotorua Museum)

⁷ RLC 026-1185 Tudor Towers

⁸ RLC 026-1185 Tudor Towers

⁹ AJHR 1907 vol iv H-2, Balneologist's Report in Annual Report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, p15

¹⁰ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10a.



Wohlmann favoured a style reminiscent of the “homely timbered buildings of Nauheim” rather than “the cold glory of marble palaces”,¹¹ based on the experience of his inspection of European spas on behalf of the New Zealand Government prior to his coming to New Zealand.

¹¹ *AJHR 1902. H-2. Government Balneologist's Report*



Figure 6 – Bath House original concept by Wohlmann, described as a “homely timbered building.”
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 6 - Woodhall Spa, England
Source: Booking.com

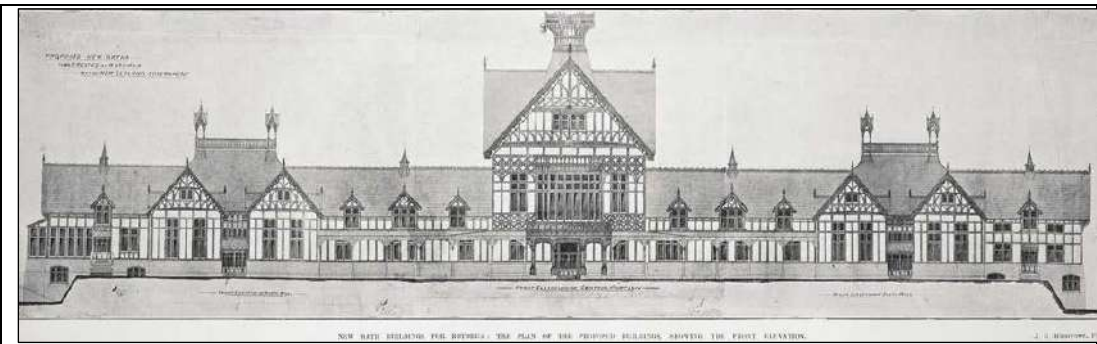


Figure 7 - Original drawing for the front elevation of the Bath House
Source: Auckland City Libraries Heritage Images

The overall design of the Bath House must be credited to Arthur Wohlmann. Wohlmann provided initial drawings, played a guiding role throughout the planning and kept a critical eye on the construction.



Figure 8 - Leamington Spa, England
Source: Google Street View

Corlett prepared the plans and compiled the more than fifty pages of specifications, possibly with the help of the Tourist Department's W.J. Trigg, who also did much of the draughting. Wohlmann described Trigg as "an exceptionally able man" who had "brought about several notable improvements", none specified.¹² The plaque prepared for the official opening describes Corlett and Trigg as the joint architects.

Local architect J. W. Wrigley was called in to help complete the plans, though his role seems limited to about six weeks' work.

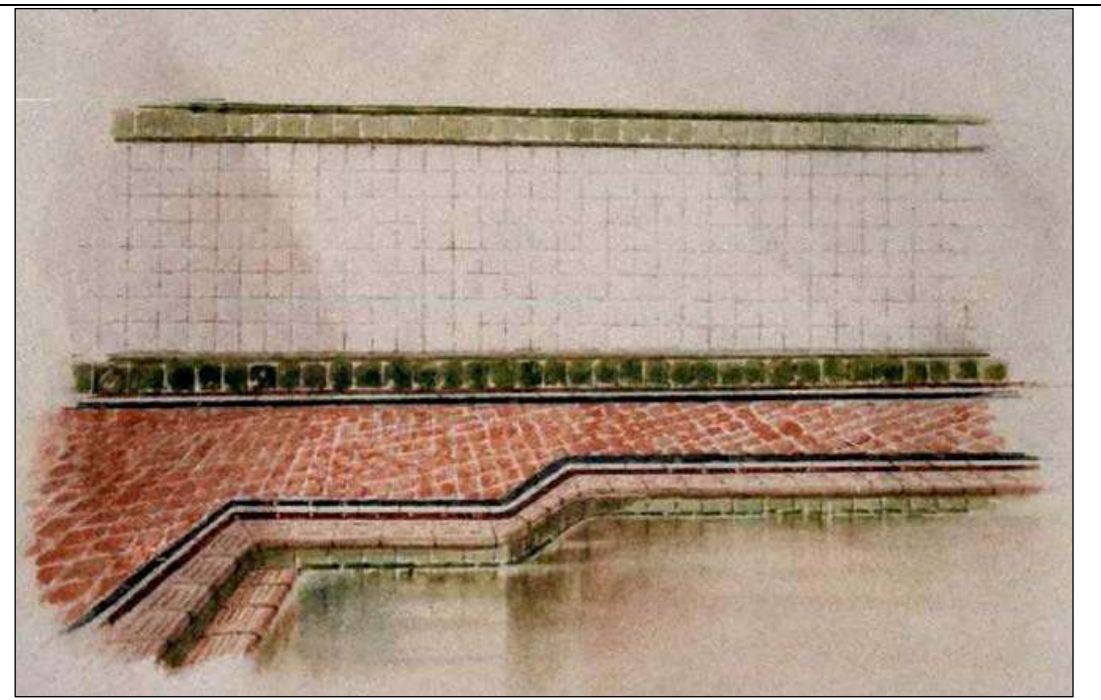


Figure 9 – An original concept drawing prepared by Wohlmann depicting a bath and proposed tiling design. Source: Rotorua Museum

Corlett prepared a geometrical elevation plan on a scale of 1/8" to 1 foot. This was photographed then sent to Wellington to be drawn in perspective. "I should have preferred the elevation shaded in sepia instead of bright colours," wrote Corlett, "but it pleases the Dr, so it is all right."¹³

¹² WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 9 March 1903. John Campbell, the Government Architect, referred to Trigg as "the Architect who has designed and drawn out the plans from instructions given by the Doctor" [Wohlmann], clearly exaggerating Trigg's role at the expense of Corlett's.

¹³ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. B. S. Corlett to T.E. Donne, 10 February 1903

The plans and specifications were inspected and revised by the Government Architect. The Public Works Department then arranged the printing and colouring of plan copies to be mounted on cloth by the Government printer.

The specifications¹⁴ provided for the outside wall timbers above the concrete walls to be of heart Totara, as well as the verandah posts, rails, balusters, gables, dormers, finials, bargeboards, sills and transoms. The timber for roofs, turrets, tower joists and studs were also to be of defect-free heart Totara.

All keys, wedges and pins would be of split dry Puriri, with rimu for the main hall beams, sarking, joists and newels (though Puriri was an alternative wood for newels).

Ridges, rafters, battens, braces, verandah bearers and rafters, gutter-boards, hips and valleys were all to be of kauri. Matai would be used for risers and treads, outside door sills, floors and steps.

A lift for patients was planned for the ticket-office, the cage and apparatus to be capable of lifting 250 lbs seventeen feet, that is, from ground floor to first floor.

Oxide of zinc paints were specified, since lead paints would turn black in Rotorua's sulphurous air.

The plan called for pumice concrete, though the Government Architect advised a change to the much lighter fireproof hollow plaster block walls. Tenders were called for both methods, but it seems pumice concrete slabs were finally used.

The dressed Totara framing exposed through a facing of light pumice concrete was designed to "make the building as light as possible on account of the uncertainty of the nature of the ground underlying the foundations" according to one newspaper report.¹⁵

For roofing, Corlett thought the Bridgewater tile preferable to the Marseille tile, believing it to be more easily fastened, more in harmony with the style of the building, cheap and light in the quantity required and "homemade" – "home" being England.

As the estimated cost rose, Wohlmann reluctantly indicated economies could be affected by omitting the towers and verandahs, substituting iron roofing for tiles and using wood instead of concrete for the superstructure, despite the fire risk.¹⁶

Such drastic changes were avoided, but there were changes. Wohlmann, who had introduced a tower for "purely ornamental reasons" claimed the architects' enthusiasm had doubled its height, weight and cost. He considered the tower would be too heavy and should be replaced by a light turret or flagstaff, "just to bring the building to a focus."¹⁷

In fact, it was reduced in weight, though more on aesthetic grounds, apparently by Public Works in agreement with Corlett. Donne regretted the reduction: "It is, I think, generally admitted that it was a mistake to reduce the size of the turret, as the one originally designed was much more imposing and in keeping with the character of the building."¹⁸

¹⁴ All specification details are listed in the 52 pages of specifications. WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b Bath Buildings

¹⁵ *New Zealand Times* 29 July 1905.

¹⁶ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 24 October 1903

¹⁷ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b 25 March 1906

¹⁸ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/9 T.E. Donne to B. S. Corlett 20 October 1908



Figure 10 – The Rotorua Bath House as originally completed
Source: Palmerston North Museum

The one-storey building (apart from the central gallery), with a frontage variously estimated between 315 and 330 feet long and floor area of 24 000 square feet, was to overlook the main space of the Sanatorium Ground, facing west to catch the maximum amount of sunlight. Floor to ceiling height would be 20 feet, the whole building elevated on concrete foundations rising to six feet six inches above the ground surface, to allow ample basement room for piping, drying and storage rooms, water storage cylinders, compressed air machinery for pumping and workman access from staircases at the north and south ends of the building.¹⁹ The high foundation was intended also to do away with “any squat appearance and affording a fine view over the lake from the verandahs.”²⁰

These 12 feet wide verandahs Wohlmann regarded as a special feature, providing summer shade and winter shelter. Corlett opposed the verandahs, believing them out of keeping with what he called an ‘Old English Style’ timber frame building, claiming “the boldness, proportions and details of style would be partially lost by having verandahs – in particular to the Main front.”²¹ Wohlmann was willing to omit that part of the verandah where exposure to sun was poor.

Wohlmann visualised the interior thus: “One enters a large and airy hall affording a vista right through past a fountain to a stained glass recess ... This hall would be used by the people drinking the mineral waters – of which I would have a variety on tap – and would also serve as a waiting room, with comfortable lounges against ferns and growing flowers.”²² The type of fountain proposed (perhaps seen by Donne while overseas) was an illuminated coloured one, similar to that at the St Louis Exposition and the Sans Souci at Chicago.²³

The floors of the main hall, corridors and bathrooms were to be laid with Minton glazed tiles, which would also be used to wainscot the bathrooms. Wohlmann himself prepared a water-

¹⁹ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne: ‘New Bath Buildings Rotorua’

²⁰ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10a A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne 26 September 1902. ‘Ground Plan of Proposed New Baths at Rotorua’

²¹ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne 18 September 1903

²² WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10a A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne 26 September 1902. ‘Ground Plan of Proposed New Baths at Rotorua’

²³ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/17 16 December 1908

colour sketch of the baths tile colour scheme. He considered tile baths preferable to porcelain, being cheaper, more durable and more attractive.

Within, immediately to the left of the entrance, were to be the ticket office and mineral-water bar and to the right the waiting-room and Balneologist's (a physician specialising in the therapeutic treatment of affected persons with the use of thermal baths and natural mineral waters) consulting room.

Leading off from either side of the proposed central fountain there were to be two broad corridors leading to the 'male and female sides of the establishment'. Broad corridors and wide doorways would allow ready bath-chair access to bath-rooms and dressing-rooms. Wohlmann proposed 10' partitions to form cubicles 7' broad, thus creating ventilation below the 20' high ceilings.

Initially the Balneologist considered that the ground floor of the north and south wings would be devoted exclusively to mud-baths. Later he proposed temporary mud baths in the basement (until they could be placed permanently in the south wing, whenever that should be constructed). He proposed and sketched an idea for four mud baths and adjacent dressing-rooms, with access by tramway lines and turn-tables, but a revised sketch plan shows six mud baths, without the tramway. The building was to be approached by a semi-circular drive across a built-up terrace 27' wide, level with the ground floor entrance, thus avoiding steps, for the convenience of invalids. The main doors were planned to allow easy bath-chair access, with a porch which Wohlmann thought would break the monotony of the long verandah. The porch Corlett described as being "enclosed with a framed dado, with sashes above glazed with coloured glass."²⁴

MAIN BATH BUILDING.	
PRIVATE BATH (private)...	1 0
DEEP BATH (private, Private or Shared) including Tack	0 9
DEEP BATH (private) Private or Shared, or just outside the garden of	2 6
from two to six, each person...	1 5
SHALLOW BATH (private, Private or Shared)	1 0
DOUCHE, Undercurrent, extra	0 6
PACK, extra	0 6
LIVER PACK and DOUCHE	1 5
ROTORUA DOUCHE MASSAGE, including Nozzle, Horizontal and City	2 5
connected with Public	3 6
ROTORUA DOUCHE MASSAGE, including the above with Resident Room	2 9
ROTORUA DOUCHE MASSAGE, Resident Room and Private	2 0
PLUNGE HOT AIR OR VAPOUR BATH, including Private, Shower	1 9
and Pack	2 0
DOUCHE AND SHOWER	1 5
MUD BATH, Complete	2 5
MUD BATH, Local or partial	2 5
ELECTRIC BATH (AS4 or AS5) with Nozzle, including Private, each	2 5
ELECTRIC MULTIPOLAR BATH (10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100)	7 6
MASSAGE with or without Electricity, one hour	2 0
MASSAGE with or without Electricity, half hour	2 5
THURSTON MASSAGE	1 5
HIGH FREQUENCY ELECTRIC TREATMENT, each person	10 4
LOW FREQUENCY ELECTRIC TREATMENT, each person	3 0
2-BAY TREATMENT	2 0
ELECTROLYTIC BATH, Local or partial	2 0
ELECTROLYTIC BATH, Local or partial	1 6
ROTORUA SHAMPOO	4 0
Computation Tickets. (No Tonnage Fee.)	
PRIVATE BATH (including Nozzle) each	24 0
DEEP BATH (including Nozzle) each	3 0
SHALLOW BATH (including Nozzle) each	3 0
For Bath-house see next page.	

Figure 11 – List of treatments available.

Source: DPA Architects

²⁴ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne: 'New Bath Buildings Rotorua'

Eight deep baths, 12 mud baths and 42 shallow baths were initially planned, with large massage and Turkish baths, two electrical bathrooms and four vapour and hot air rooms.²⁵

With his usual scrupulous care, Wohlmann gained approval to construct in an annexe of the Aix massage baths an experimental bath which he and others tested for design suitability in order to give “the greatest comfort to the average sized bather.”²⁶

Flanking the bay-window corridor were staircases leading to the upper rooms intended possibly for waiting or reading rooms and perhaps eventually a Zinder Institute.

Building the Bath House: 1908

“The best materials obtainable must be used, as we are building not only for the present generation, but for [the] future.”

- B. S. Corlett²⁷

Although the Bath House (begun late in 1905) was being built for the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts, in May 1906 the Government decided the Public Works Department (which had let the tenders and revised the plans and specifications) should have full control.

Already there had been disagreements over design between Wohlmann and Corlett. Now there were further complications. Corlett referred to himself as “father of the plans”²⁸ and, as the Architect and Engineer appointed in charge of the project, considered Public Works’ interference “a gross insult to me” as well as to the Tourist Department.²⁹

In addition, Corlett resented being subordinate to Government Architect Campbell, however diplomatic Campbell might be – and was. Officially informed that he was to work under Campbell’s supervision, Corlett coldly replied “I shall be pleased to consult with Mr Campbell ...”³⁰

When Public Works took full control Corlett was replaced by that Department’s District Engineer, Vickerman and Trigg was transferred to Public Works.

Wohlmann, in his watchdog role, found much to criticise in the construction. The Public Works Department, while expecting the Tourist Department to effect compliance with contract conditions, passed what Wohlmann considered faulty work, prompting him to comment to Donne: *“being accustomed to buildings intended to last for hundreds of years, I view things from a different standpoint and look for much great[er] stability and durability than is generally accepted here.”*³¹

As early as December 1902 Wohlmann was seeking permission to start preparing foundations. The ground had been selected and cleared, with levels and parallels taken. Donne reported Government approval to proceed with foundations but pointed out that the building could not be started because specifications had not even been submitted. It was two years before foundation work began.

²⁵ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 General Description of Proposed Bath Buildings, to be Erected at Rotorua. B. S. Corlett. 23 October 1903

²⁶ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 3 May 1904

²⁷ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b

²⁸ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne, 17 November 1905

²⁹ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne.

³⁰ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10 B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne.

³¹ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/1 A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 13 September 1908

The successful building tenderer was W. Hutchison of Auckland with a bid of £25,720, some £8,000 more than Corlett's 1903 estimate.



Figure 12 – The Bath House under construction (front elevation).
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 13 – The Bath House under construction (front elevation) showing roof sarking.
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 14 – The Bath House under construction (rear elevation).
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 15 – The Bath House nearing completion
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 16 – The Bath House under construction (rear elevation).

Source: Rotorua Museum

The foundations were 4' x 3' ferro-concrete 'beams' on the surface of the site. The contractor suggested old 25 feet long railway lines be used for foundation reinforcing but the Government Architect, believing the rails would cause settling, recommended 1" iron rods. Whether the rails were used before Campbell's opposition was voiced is unclear, though Corlett wrote of the walls being reinforced above the footings. Bedded in the walls and foundation floor was 12-gauge two-strand barbed wire.³²

A terrace to accommodate a sweeping drive required an estimated 2000 cubic yards of filling and 1200 cubic yards of pumice. The roadway was built up to avoid invalids having to negotiate steps at the entrance. A retaining wall was required at the eastern approach, designed to form part of the foundation for the stage two southern wing.³³

Unaware of the specifications (for instance, that the interior walls were to be of solid concrete, not timber) local sawmillers protested the use of kauri, preferring rimu which provided their livelihood. They lobbied H.W. Herries, district Member of the House of Representatives and sent this telegram to the Prime Minister, Sir Joseph Ward: *"Mamaku sawmillers would again respectfully urge that under present depressed condition they are allowed a chance supplying rimu for such interior work as studs, upper joists, roofing timber, etc. Position very keenly felt here."*³⁴

The Government Architect was consulted; he said it was impossible to use rimu where totara was specified, but rimu could replace kauri in some roof timbers if properly seasoned and large enough. He credited Corlett's judgement on local conditions. Corlett pointed out that heart rimu "requires to be bored almost for every nail driver and then often splits."³⁵

Hutchison erected his own joinery plant near the building, while a small on-site office on skids was provided for the Engineer, Corlett, though in fact it was the draughtsman who was stationed there. At one stage Donne wired Corlett: "In view of necessity of constant supervision of new baths do not leave Rotorua for any purpose without special authority from me."³⁶

³² WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b

³³ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/17 L. Birks to T. E. Donne. 4 June 1907

³⁴ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b Telegram from Mamaku P.O., 8 September 1905

³⁵ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b Corlett's view prevailed

³⁶ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10b T. E. Donne to B. S. Corlett, 5 April 1906

Hutchison had difficulty attracting tile-layers and plasterers to Rotorua, though he managed to employ mostly Aucklanders, for six months at fourteen shillings a day. Carpenters, glaziers, plasterers, painters, plumbers and electricians went about their business.

The electric wiring – done by the firm of Steuart and Fenn – was enclosed in iron piping. A furnace and boilers for hot air and vapour rooms were installed in the basement where a network of pipes carried water from the town system, acid water from the Priest Spring and alkaline Rachel water. Pivoted sashes were fitted in the basement walls and 400 balusters (at one shilling each) round the back verandah.

As the building neared completion, the local newspaper praised its porcelain baths with nickel-plated steel handrails to assist bathers in and out; the plush upholstered couch and chair in each private room; the statuary being placed in the main hall and gallery.

Dominating the foyer was Eve, on a heavy panelled pedestal, one of twelve marble statues by sculptor Charles Summers. These, together with a figure of Pauline (Napoleon's sister) by C. Fossi (after Canova), had been purchased from the Commissioners of the 1906-7 New Zealand International Exhibition held in Christchurch.

Wohlmann had requested a lift for crippled patients needing massage or electrical treatment, both given upstairs. The Public Works Department designed a hydraulic lift capable of lifting one patient and stretcher at a time. A space was left for a lift well 7'5" x 4' but since this would leave an internal width of just over 2'10" there would be no room for attendants managing a stretcher patient. Wohlmann considered 3'6" the minimum internal width needed in lift to make it serviceable. To the balneologist's consternation the width was increased to 3'5" by cutting into the main wall and chasing the 6" x 2" guide planks into it. Any further widening would have entailed completely reconstructing the lift-well.³⁷

Since Wohlmann expected 99 out of a hundred patients would be mobile and able to stand or sit, he recommended a space-saving folding seat. Donne, however, ruled that chairs should replace seats.

The lift at ground floor level was cased in and upstairs the lift was screened from the gallery.

On 31 May 1908 the building contract was completed, and a mandatory period of maintenance began. The whole of the concrete slab work walls was carried on a timber framework, on which therefore its stability depended.³⁸

The Tourist Department wanted a formal handing over of the Bath House, but the Public Works Department saw no need for ceremony and the new bath building and all its incipient problems, without ceremony became solely the responsibility of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts.

³⁷ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/2

³⁸ ANA. A259/46a. *Engineer in charge to the Director of the Tourist Department, 2 February 1911*



Figure 17 - The central hall nearing completion in 1908. Note the cornice between the roof trusses and the upper staircase which were removed during the 1960s.

Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 18 - The central hall after completion in 1908 after the installation of the sculptures.

Source: Rotorua Museum

The Equipment

"I trust that we shall be able to offer to the invalid all the modern appliances that he can obtain at the best Spas of Europe ..."

- A. S. Wohlmann³⁹

As Government Balneologist, Arthur Wohlmann had a free hand in the selection of baths, equipment and furnishings.

He experimented with bath design, chose tile types and colours, kept up to date with overseas hydrotherapy products, even to the extent of changing orders as new equipment came to his notice. The equipment he purchased was varied and modern.

It included devices providing both Galvanic and Faradic treatments. Galvanic treatments, as in the electric Priest baths, involved patient stimulation by direct electrical current. Faradic treatment, using alternating current, was believed to regenerate nerves, soothe neuralgic pain, stimulate muscles and even reduce acne.

In Schnee's multipolar bath a current was supposed to stimulate the whole of the immersed part of the body, but since in fact most of the current affected just the skin touching the surface of the water, treatment with large currents could be painful.

High frequency treatment required an oscillating electrical current; Wohlmann wrote *"From its somewhat theatrical effects ...[it] is especially useful in neurotic cases and may be looked upon as an excellent form of suggestion."*⁴⁰

Light bath treatments used either arc-lights or incandescent lights to improve metabolism, while 'blue light' (which excluded ultra-violet and part of the visible long-wave spectrum) was used for its apparently sedative and anaesthetic effect.

A box heated by red-hot electric wires in its metallic walls and referred to as a hot air bath, was used to relieve joint stiffness.

X-rays were used mainly for diagnosis, but by 1914 Wohlmann considered the Bath House apparatus 'somewhat antiquated'.⁴¹

By the early 1940s over 25,000 massage and physiotherapy special treatments were given annually. Ultra-short-wave diatherm equipment had been installed in the departments of the Chief Masseur and Chief Masseuse,⁴² and new galvanic and faradic units purchased.⁴³

In 1911 an aerated water machine was installed under the back verandah, next to the plumber's workshop, to bottle Te Aroha mineral water.

The mineral bathing waters supplied to the Bath House were either acidic (the 'Priest' waters, named after the 'Priest' spring) or alkaline (sometimes called Rachel water, after the Rachel spring).

³⁹ RM. Unsourced, incomplete and undated photo-copy of letter by A. S. Wohlmann, probably from WNA.TO-1

⁴⁰ Wohlmann 1914:36

⁴¹ Wohlmann 1914:36

⁴² AJHR 1941

⁴³ AJHR 1942

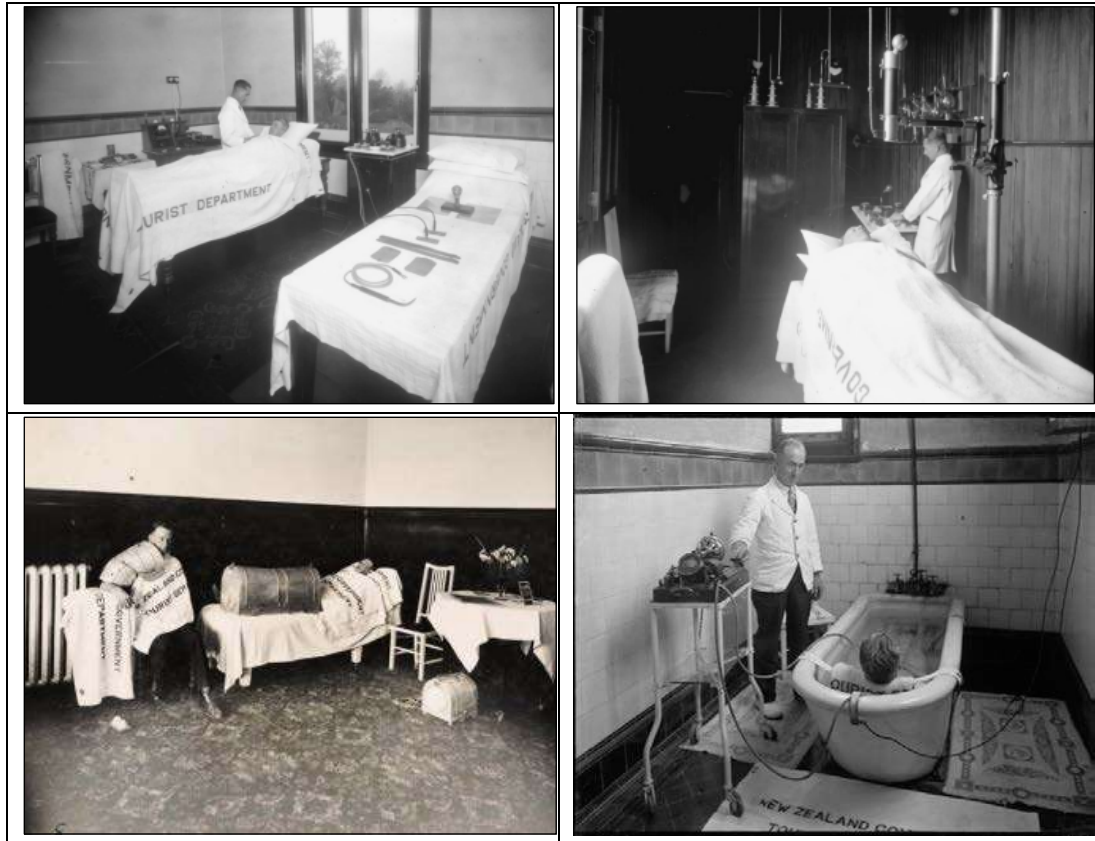


Figure 19 – Various treatments as the Rotorua Bath House in the 1920s.

Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

The men's and women's public Priest baths contained water at a temperature of 104F. Pyretic baths, in which the patient's body temperature was raised presumably to increase the body metabolism rate, were still in use throughout the 1940s and 1950s, two new pyretic baths being installed in 1945 for treatment of servicemen.⁴⁴

Two porcelain Sitz baths were imported, with polished teak seats and with hot and cold fittings for a bottom spray and douche. Each accommodated a sitting patient.

The weak radio-active waters, with 'emanations' derived from the disintegration of radium salts, were believed to assist gout and diabetes, assist excretion, soothe nerves, lower blood pressure and increase sexual activity. Claiming "*the public are mad on radium*"⁴⁵ Wohlmann purchased a Radium Emanation Apparatus for the impregnation of drinking water with 'radium emanation', possibly the first of its kind in Australasia.⁴⁶

The 'Rotorua Times' said the apparatus looked like an ordinary filter. "*The emanations ... are useful as a nerve soother and they also have the singular property of tightening loose teeth.*"⁴⁷ Yet by 1922, Dr Duncan reported, the 'emanations' were hardly asked for and seldom prescribed. Supplementary to the mineral waters themselves were douche showers and under-water douches, involving a high-pressure flow of water.

⁴⁴ AJHR 1945

⁴⁵ RM. Unsourced letter, A. S. Wohlmann (now A. S. Herbert) to General Manager Department of Tourist & Health Resorts 25 May 1914. Probably from WNA. TO-1

⁴⁶ AJHR 1915, H-2, p.3

⁴⁷ 'Rotorua Times' 20 October 1914

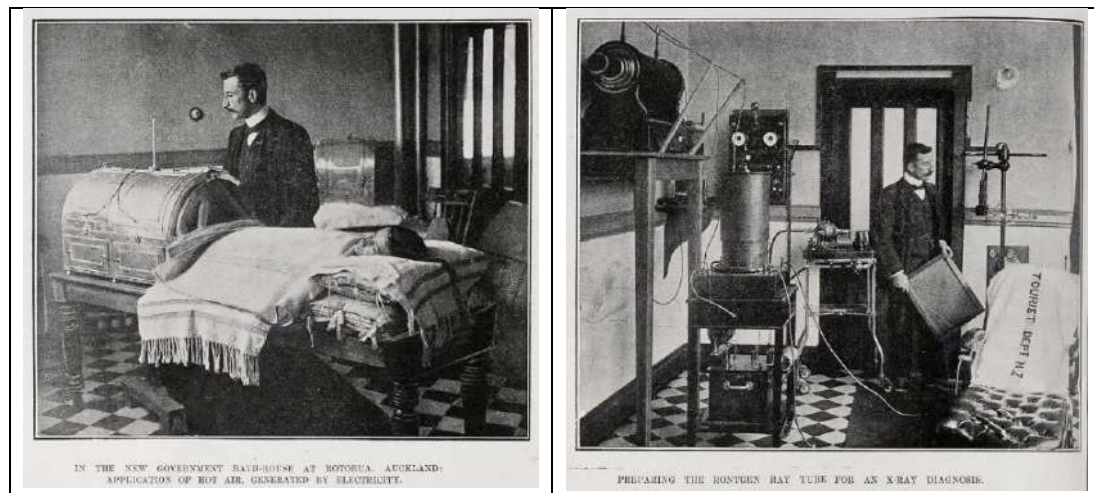


Figure 20 – Various treatments at the Rotorua Bath House in 1909.

Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images

Two other treatments went under the names of Turkish Baths and Russian Baths; the first a steam bath followed by shower and massage, the second a hot air bath. Both were supplied from a 50hp boiler which also heated the building. The inhalation baths were supplied with steam from one of the cones of the artificial Malfroy Geyser.

In conjunction with these treatments, 'medical gymnastics' (akin to physiotherapy?) enabled the stimulation and strengthening of muscles to assist in, for instance, the correction of spinal curvature or of constipation.

It would appear that cutaneous warming and stimulation, whether by electrical current or by mineral water, gave a feeling of well-being that some may have interpreted as curative. In the case of joint problems relief was certainly obtained.

The Rachel Bath was the most substantial bath in the Rotorua Bath House and was named after the notorious Madame Rachel, a Victorian London-based con artist and beautician. Operating a prominent beauty salon from which she sold fabulous preparations, such as her magnetic rock water dew from the Sahara Desert, she personally guaranteed her clientele everlasting youth as a result of the use of these products, which would later be revealed as consisting of water and bran. Using her salon as a front, she was able to blackmail many of her wealthy and prominent members of London's social elite during the 1860s. Imprisoned for fraud twice, and eventually dying in 1880, Madame Rachel left a lasting impression on the beautician industry in Britain. This legacy continued some 50 years later when in 1908, the Rachel Bath was named after her.

The Rachel Bath was promoted for its ability to increase circulation and flexibility, reduce aches and pains, promote stress reduction and relaxation. Following the closure of the Bath House in the 1960s, the Rachel Bath and adjoining private baths were reconfigured to form a cafe and the original baths covered over.

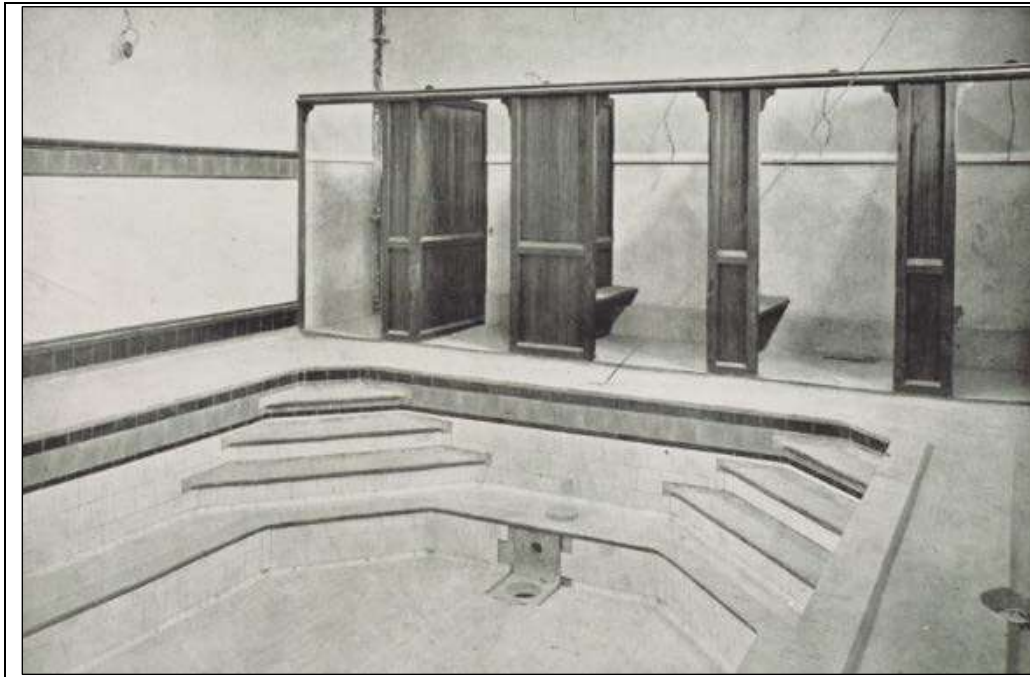


Figure 21 – The Rachel Bath prior to the opening of the building in 1908.
Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images



Figure 22 – A newspaper depicting Madame Rachel during the time of her court appearances.
Source: Helen Rappaport



Figure 23 – The Rachel Bath area was in a dilapidated state by 1960.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

The Official Opening



Figure 24 (left) - The opening of the Rotorua Bath House in 1908 (Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images), and Figure 25 (right) – Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward (Source: Wikipedia)

"I hope this bright day will be a happy augury. I now declare this building open."

- Sir Joseph Ward, Prime Minister ⁴⁸

The Government Balneologist may have regretted suggesting that the opening of the Bath House coincide with the visit to Rotorua of Rear-Admiral Sperry and 200 of his officers.

After the rousing and colourful Arawa welcome in the Sanatorium Reserve, with poi dances, haka and speeches in Maori (interpreted by Dr Peter Buck), the opening ceremony which followed may have been anti-climactic.



Figure 26 - The opening of the Rotorua Bath House in 1908.
Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images

Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward, with a key handed to him by the Balneologist's daughter, officially opened the main doors. Then, from the first floor balcony, he addressed the gathering, stressing the recent rapid changes in Rotorua and the modernity of the facilities of the new building.

Sir Joseph formally declared the Bath House open and the crowd cheered. Following tributes by the Prime Minister to Arthur Wohlmann, T. E. Donne, the architects Corlett and Trigg,

⁴⁸ 'Daily Post' 13 August 1908, quoting from the special edition of the 'Hot Lakes Chronicle' issued August 1908 after the official opening

resident engineer Lawrence Birks and the builder Hutchison, Rear Admiral Sperry was asked to say a few words and said that *“as for the building, he would like to take it away with him.”*⁴⁹ The ceremony over, the public were admitted, a string orchestra providing music. Meanwhile the Tourist Department provided the personnel of the fleet with printed material and photographs of the new spa building to ensure some publicity in the United States.

Three hundred members of the public attended the evening concert in the Pump Room, at three-pence a ticket. Soon after it was realised that the Pump Room needed licensing as an Assembly Hall under local By-Law 87, since concerts were to become a feature.⁵⁰

Soon Wohlmann was urgently requesting the purchase of numerous light cane chairs for the Pump Room turned concert hall, *“as hundreds of people are now finding their way to the baths, especially at night and either take Te Aroha water or a Pump Room ticket.”*⁵¹

Up to 150 thermo-plastic wooden seats appear to have been ordered, with the Department's name stencilled on each.

But within a day or two of the official opening, the baths were temporarily closed, partly to enable the completion of the douche apparatus and partly to have the white furniture removed, stripped and repainted, for the lead in the paint had blackened it. The never-ending nightmare of maintenance had begun.



Figure 27 – The rear of the Bath House building circa 1908. Note open area below the verandah. Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images

⁴⁹ 'Evening Post' 14 August 1908

⁵⁰ ANA. A259/46a, 6 January 1909

⁵¹ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/10



Figure 28 The front of the Bath House building in 1909 showing the incomplete south wing (right).
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

Maintenance Problems

"... there will be a real economy in maintenance."

- A. S. Wohlmann⁵²

"There are of course special difficulties caused by the peculiar nature of the mineral water..."

- A. S. Wohlmann⁵³

Just over one year after the official opening of the Bath House, the Director of the Tourist Department wrote optimistically to the engineer-in-charge: *"As the building is now in complete working order, practically, it seems to me that it should be possible to greatly reduce the cost of maintenance."*⁵⁴

It was a vain hope. Although the building had withstood the shock of some fifty more than usually severe earthquakes a month after the official opening,⁵⁵ a more insidious force was constantly at work: corrosion from the acidic water and from hydrogen sulphide gas.

High ceilings and inadequate ventilation caused the water vapour and steam from the mineral baths to condense on the walls before reaching the outside air. Steam from the vapour baths condensed heavily in the main ventilators and roof and being strongly acidic rapidly corroded the ventilation system. Although the small turrets contained ventilation vents, separate wall-vents from each vapour-room were proposed. In 1928 the large central ventilator was renewed.

Lacking adequate ventilation, steam caused the ceiling wood-pulp plaster to swell. Cracks appeared, then pieces of plaster periodically fell from the walls and ceilings of the massage and vapour rooms. The Department feared being sued. In the Russian Bath Room (13'11" x 12'2" x 13' high) a galvanised sheet steel replacement ceiling was installed. Within months this began to discolour. Other ceilings were re-done with metal laths and plaster. At some

⁵² AJHR. 1905, H-2, p.16., *Balneologist's Report*

⁵³ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/11. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 24 December 1908

⁵⁴ ANA. A259/46a. Director Robieson to Engineer-in-charge, 22 September 1909

⁵⁵ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/8. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 9 September 1908

stage the Russian and/or Turkish Rooms may have been fitted with tongue-and-groove replacement ceilings.

Attendants in the Aix massage baths found the steam and gas irritating to their eyes, so radiators were installed to evaporate the steam.

Wire netting was fitted beneath the skylights, to prevent the danger of falling glass. Sheet-iron trays were sought to place under the fern-plant pots in the Pump Room, to avoid a mess each time the ferns were watered.

Brass and nickel fittings required protective aluminium paint. Ironwork soon began to corrode. Corsite was ordered to try as an anti-corrosive coating. As with most of the equipment and materials, it had to be ordered through the New Zealand High Commissioner in England, who then sought tenders for supply.

The standing wastes were found to have been poorly fitted and the brass too weak, allowing water escape and valve failure. Separate valves for each bath then had to be fitted, to eliminate shutting down a whole wing though only one bath might be faulty.

Wohlmann had been unhappy that the Public Works engineer had passed as suitable the bath fittings and the earthenware pipes within the building; the pips leaked badly in the basement, *"to such an extent that it was almost impossible to give a constant delivery of water in the baths."*⁵⁶ They had to be hurriedly replaced by temporary galvanised iron pipes.

A brass shaft at the acid water pump developed rapid wear. Special tools had to be requisitioned for pipe-fitting. Pipes had to be lagged to prevent heat-loss.

Condensation affected electrical equipment, which too often needed an electrician's services, while the pumps required oiling and supervision.

Cracks in the massage room walls needed plastering and plumbing repairs were necessary to baths, wastes and supply valves. Then there were repairs to woodwork, doors, windows, including repair of a wind-broken large sash pane in the main bay window.

Carpet pieces were required to prevent water from the bath-rooms running into the dressing-rooms. The large swing doors kept blowing open in the wind; Wohlmann had leather straps fitted to the doors but the leather kept breaking. Finally, pneumatic stops were added.

All these problems occurred within two years of opening, some within days. Within three months two and a half foolscap pages had been recorded of defects in pipes, valves, shafts and other fittings.

By 1914 the canvas fire hose had perished, but a use was found for the discarded hose: watering the lawns, since the leaks *"will be no detriment."*⁵⁷ A year later it was reported that the wooden gratings round the public Priest baths were falling apart.

By October 1916 Rotorua's Resident Engineer observed that *"nearly all the fittings originally installed in the main building are showing signs of deterioration."*⁵⁸

⁵⁶ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/11, 21 January 1909

⁵⁷ ANA. A259/46a. Resident Engineer Hill to Tourist Department, 24 November 1914

⁵⁸ ANA. A259/46a. Tourist Agent to the General Manager, Tourist Department, 11 October 1916

Wohlmann had expected the 'special difficulties' associated with the acidic water but believed working experience would solve them, though he admitted *"it will be long before we get over them all."* Five weeks after the opening, disgusted with the passing by Public Works of what he saw as faults in construction, he wrote: *"being accustomed to buildings intended to last for hundreds of years, I view things from a different standpoint and look for much great[er] stability and durability than is generally accepted here."*⁵⁹

There were difficulties in pumping and conducting the acid mineral water, overcome by the use of rubber hose and lead-lined iron pipes.⁶⁰

Though Wohlmann had for years experimented with pipes, cements and other materials, his experience was ignored during the laying down of the pipes. As a result, he complained, *"there is not one single line of piping that has been put down between the various pumps and the baths that has not proved useless when tried and had to be replaced at great expense and after annoying delay."*⁶¹

When one of the douche showers developed a blockage, investigation revealed in one pipe the presence of a trout, presumably having entered the system as a fry and since grown to troublesome size.⁶²

In later years alkaline water was piped from Roto-a-Tamaheke at Whakarewarewa, the wooden pipes being replaced by cast-iron pipes in 1925. When the supply level became inadequate for the Bath House Aix douches and other treatments, in 1944-5, experimental steam bores were sunk in the Government Gardens. A 75, 000 gallon hot water reservoir was constructed to hold the bore water.

The balneologist's report in 1958 noted that *"owing to the complete deterioration of the pipe line from the Priest Spring, Priest [acidic] water has not been available at the Bath House for some months."*⁶³

There were power supply problems too. Electrical power supply from the Okere Falls station proved inadequate for the first few years, so that to light the building the Tourist Department had to run a small plant, powered by a kerosene-driven 27 horse power *Tangye* motor.

When the electric light baths [with arc and incandescent lamps] were in use together with more than one Greville apparatus [hot air treatment device] the charging capacity of the transformer was insufficient.

Although possibly illuminated well enough in daytime by the upper bay window, the great foyer was poorly lit at night. The addition of a central hanging lamp in May 1910, complete with silk shade, improved the lighting there.

By June 1918 most of the north wing had been re-wired for a revised lighting scheme. Screw-type bulbs and holders replaced the former bayonet-type ones which gave continual trouble. The Tourist Agent commented *"the use of a different type of fitting in these buildings to that in general use in Town, will minimise the loss of lamps ... appropriated to private use."*⁶⁴

⁵⁹ WNA. 1908/135/1. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 13 September 1908

⁶⁰ AJHR. 1909 vol iv, p.16. Report of Government Balneologist

⁶¹ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/9. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 22 August 1908

⁶² 'Bay of Plenty Times,' August 1908

⁶³ AJHR. 1958

⁶⁴ ANA. A259/46a. Tourist Agent to General Manager, Tourist Department, 15 June 1918

In the same year the steel-metalled verandah roofing was so perforated as to be beyond repair and was replaced by galvanized iron, underlain by rubberoid.⁶⁵

Intended to be a temporary provision, the building's supplementary power plant (presumably the original one) was still in action in 1920 when there were complaints that the high-frequency and x-ray equipment could be used only after 3p.m. because of restricted power.⁶⁶

The interior and exterior were re-painted in 1920, the totara given special priming because of its oil exudation. The cement panels and base at the front of the building and at both end gables, were coated with 'Stone-tex'. It appears that small red and black tiles that remain on the upper floor today were laid in the foyer about this time.⁶⁷

The following year a new tank for the storage of hot mineral water replaced the corroded and leaking tank in the highest point of the under-roofing.

By 1923 the whole of the main ventilation shaft and branch vents over the women's Aix and Russian rooms had corroded away, allowing vapour discharge into the roof where ceiling and roof timbers were subject to rotting.

In 1935 it was reported that the steep lead flashings and iron work *"have been eaten away by the strong acid fumes and steam from the baths and the present condition is a menace to the public."*⁶⁸

Member of Parliament G.F. Sim was reported as saying in 1948: *"The Main Bath House – it's leaking, it's out-of-date, it's shocking."*⁶⁹ The following year access to the roof was closed to the public as a safety measure.

In 1952 new tiles were added⁷⁰ but no attempt seems to have been made to connect the new roofing with the guttering, so that stormwater cascaded down the sides of the building. In addition, rubble from re-tiling was left on the verandah roof.⁷¹

On an inspection of the building in June 1955, the Minister of Health said, *"show me the worst."* He was accordingly shown corroding nails, springing window-frames in mud-bath rooms, flaking plaster, stained baths and corroded water-pipes and concrete beams.⁷²

The need for constant maintenance and repair never diminished. In 1955 the Balneologist's report commended *"the building will never be free from trouble as long as it is subjected to the corrosive fumes of the mineral waters."* His report pointed out, however, *"the building is structurally sound externally, if the fumes of the mineral waters could be removed it would continue to give good service in some other capacity."*⁷³

The Health Department's report for 1959 pointed out that an estimated 50% of the wall and ceiling linings need re-lining, the roof tiles needed galvanized wire ties, all the interior

⁶⁵ ANA. A259/46a. Tourist Agent to General Manager, Tourist Department, 26 June 1918

⁶⁶ ANA. A259/46A. Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to Tourist Agent, Rotorua, 26 October 1920

⁶⁷ ANA. A259/46A. Tourist Agent to Tourist Department, 19 October 1920

⁶⁸ WNA. TO-1 1908/135. Tourist & Publicity Section General Manager K. J. Schmitt to the Minister in charge of the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts & Publicity, 11 December 1935

⁶⁹ 'Morning Post' 8 October 1948. The tower closure was reported in the 'New Zealand Herald' 10 January 1949

⁷⁰ AJHR. 1952, H-31, p.60

⁷¹ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Bath House Negotiations

⁷² 'Rotorua Post,' 30 June 1955

⁷³ AJHR. 1955

downpipes needed replacing by ones of greater capacity, some exterior downpipes were missing, incomplete or blocked and the lesser stairs needed repair or even replacement.⁷⁴

The flat malthoid roof over the tower on the men's block was one of the main causes of leaks and water damage to the north wing, while the unsheathed portion of the spire or main tower also allowed leaking.



Figure 29 – Series of photographs showing the extent of deterioration in the building by 1960.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

Renovations under Rotorua City Council in 1964 included the replacement of broken tiles and the fixing of loose ones; the renewal of lead roofing on the main tower, bay windows and front balcony; re-roofing of the front and rear verandahs; and roof repairs above the men's and women's wing and at each end of the north wing. The previously brown exterior paint (done perhaps in 1952 and before that in 1941)⁷⁵ was succeeded by four coats of Indian red paint. With the introduction of a first-floor restaurant interior maintenance, repair and alterations included painting, plastering, partitioning and plumbing. More than 2500 window panes

⁷⁴ AJHR. 1959

⁷⁵ AJHR. 1952, H-31, p.60

ranging in size from 5" x 5" to 10' x 2' were re-glazed or replaced.⁷⁶ The corroded ventilation towers (pinnacles) were replaced.

The restaurant equipment brought new problems. There was sulphur damage to the kitchen refrigerator and later to the bottle cabinet condensers. The refrigeration engineer reported that *"Repairs of this nature are not uncommon in the Rotorua area, but in your case the degree of sulphur corrosion has, in our opinion, been greater than in any other previous instance that we know of."*⁷⁷

In addition, upstairs ventilation was needed, the goods lift was out of action an estimated 60% of the time and steam from the dishwasher and the Bain Marie was damaging the paintwork and fluorescent light fittings.

Particularly common and sometimes destructive, was flooding from the first floor. Between 1981-1983 there were eight overflows, five of them restaurant mishaps. The Museum Curator's office below the kitchen was damaged (the ceiling is discoloured still), books were damaged and in one case museum exhibits affected.

Causes of flooding included cistern overflow in the upstairs women's toilet; a blocked outlet; a faulty glass washer; a burst wine cask line; and a roof leak over the dance floor.

With the exclusion of thermal waters and their associated gases, the building's main enemy now is the weather. There are occasional roof leaks and displaced tiles. Exterior paintwork is subject to Rotorua's peculiar atmosphere as well as the weather. One problem not encountered in Edwardian times is the reaction of treated timbers with hydrogen sulphide, causing timber discoloration as evident in the far gable of the south wing.

Naming the Building

"It is I think advisable to have a pleasant sounding Maori name for the New Bath buildings, one that embraces a meaning pertinent to our curative work."

- T. E. Donne⁷⁸

In 1908 the Sydney 'Sunday Times' reported that some New Zealand opposition candidates had made capital out of the erection of the "bath palace" at Rotorua at a cost of £30,000.⁷⁹

The derogatory term was one of the first unofficial names generated by the Bath House; the variety of names for it eventually led to public and official confusion.

While the new spa building was in construction, Tourist and Health Resorts general manager T.E. Donne told Government Balneologist Arthur Wohlmann: *"It is I think advisable to have a pleasant sounding Maori name for the New Bath buildings, one that embraces a meaning pertinent to our curative work."*⁸⁰

The possible names he had gathered were (with his translations): Rongoa Katoa (Cure All), Hanga Ora (Make Well), Mari[e] Ano (It Is Good), Pai Ora (Good Health), Hou Ora (New Life) and Nga Wai-o-Ora (Waters of Life).

⁷⁶ 'Daily Post,' 6 March 1964

⁷⁷ RLC. RCI 002-0686. G. B. Teat, *Refrigeration Engineers*, 7 December 1966

⁷⁸ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. T. E. Donne to A. S. Wohlmann, 5 August 1907

⁷⁹ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/1. Sydney 'Sunday Times,' 22 November 1908

⁸⁰ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. T. E. Donne to A. S. Wohlmann, 5 August 1907

Wohlmann was unable to find a Maori name *“which will have at the same time an appropriate meaning to those who understand Maori and a sufficiently pronounceable and euphonious title for those who do not.”*⁸¹ Anyway, the Balneologist wanted a name that would stress the fact that the baths were built for ‘all New Zealand’ and suggested The New Zealand National Baths or The Dominion Baths.

In the end none of these was used and the public for years, even when the newness was long gone, familiarly spoke of the New Baths, though Donne was critical of this common usage, initially preferring The Rotorua Baths and later (1913) suggesting it be called the main Bath, to distinguish it from the other bath buildings in the Sanatorium Reserve.

A photograph caption in ‘The Canterbury Times’ of 18 March 1908 refers to it as the new Bath Pavilion, while building plans of the time refer to either the New Baths or the Rotorua New Bath Buildings. Newspapers and official correspondence generally referred to the New Bath Buildings.

Over the years photograph and post-card captions used various names for the impressive edifice, including the Bath House, Bath Buildings and New Bath Building.

In December 1964 the ‘Daily Post’ reported that the Finance Committee of the Rotorua City Council, after consultation with the architects and the restaurant lessee, felt reference to the building as the Main Bath House or the Old Bath Building was not in keeping with its ultimate renovation and conversion.⁸²

They introduced the name Tudor Towers which they felt an appropriate description of the architecture and style of the building. The new official name accorded handily with the name of the company leasing the upstairs restaurant, Tudor Towers Restaurant Ltd.

A ‘Daily Post’ editorial pointed out that *“the name misses the goal of the original thought.”* The editor also expressed the view that *“it does seem a pity the voice of the citizenry was not sought.”* Unfortunately, he went on to miss the goal of the original thought by suggesting that *“Perhaps the Manors or Manor Place would have fitted.”*⁸³

Soon after Councillor Enid Tapsell gave notice of a motion urging *“That the name ‘Tudor Towers’ be not adopted as the name for the old Bath-house and that the public be asked to send in any name which is considered suitable for the building.”* However, *“upon more mature consideration”* she withdrew her notice of motion and the name Tudor Towers remained official.⁸⁴

Yet the revised lease in 1973 refers to *“The Restaurant portion of the Main Baths Building known as Tudor Towers ...”* Even officialdom was uncertain of the building’s name.⁸⁵

‘Asma’, an anonymous writer to the Daily Post in late 1982, suggested Tudor Towers be called Rotorua’s Early Bath House,⁸⁶ while the following year the Rotorua & District Historical Society recommended re-naming it the Rotorua Bath House.

⁸¹ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne, 30 September 1907

⁸² ‘Daily Post,’ 16 December 1964

⁸³ ‘Daily Post,’ 17 December 1964

⁸⁴ RLC. RCI 002-0682 Main Bath Building – Negotiations etc December 1964-September 1976, 21 January 1965 and 15 February 1965

⁸⁵ RLC. BC 002-0688

⁸⁶ ‘Daily Post,’ 10 June 1982

The name confusion was compounded by the changing names allotted to the facilities within the building. For instance, a Council brochure of about 1970 refers to the City of Rotorua Museum and Arts Centre. In May 1979 Council's Community Affairs Committee recommended the facilities be called The Rotorua Museum & Art Gallery. Then a new name was introduced, The Bath-House Rotorua's Art & History Museum.

Even among those who knew that the name was The Bath House there was uncertainty whether to write Bath House, Bath-House, Bath-house or Bathhouse.

Following an objection by members of the Te Arawa committee advising the Rotorua District Council that the connotation of washing (and hence uncleanness) was inappropriate for a place in which Te Arawa taonga are stored and displayed,⁸⁷ Council in mid-1994 adopted the recommendation of its Community, Parks and Recreation Committee that the name of the institution based within the Bath House be The Rotorua Art and History Museum, Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa. The building itself is still called the Bath House, often spelled Bath-House.



Figure 30 – ANZAC Parade showing the Rotorua Bath House in the background
Source: Rotorua Museum

⁸⁷ 'Daily Post,' 12 February 1994. 'Bath-House Name Honours its History'

4.0 CHANGING PHILOSOPHIES AND FUNCTIONS

4.1 The Chronology of the Bath House

The place “... merits permanent preservation because of its very great historical significance and architectural quality.” - New Zealand Historic Places Trust (now Heritage New Zealand)⁸⁸

In 1892 Camille Malfroy, then Overseer of Works in Rotorua, expressed in his Annual Report the desire for a *“therapeutic thermal establishment, furnished with all modern appliances, which should be a credit to and the pride of the colony and form one of its greatest attractions and a source of direct and indirect revenue.”*⁸⁹

That the Government would utilise the geothermal waters of the district was made evident from the beginning, for the Thermal Springs Districts Act 1881 stated an intention to *“Manage and control the use of all mineral springs, ngawha, Waiariki...”*⁹⁰ and to *“Erect pump-rooms, baths, bath-rooms and other buildings for the convenient use of the baths, springs and lakes.”*⁹¹

When Arthur Wohlmann was appointed Government Balneologist to the Colony, those bath buildings that had been built in the Sanatorium Ground were in a condition of deterioration. Wohlmann, in less than a year after his arrival, was already outlining plans for an impressive new establishment and was urging, through his superior, T.E. Donne, the construction of a new building on a more ambitious scale. Both men, as Donne wrote to the Minister in charge of the Tourist & Health Resorts Department, believed that the existing bath buildings were *“in a very bad condition.”*⁹²

Tourist Department Acting-General Manager Robieson pointed out to his Minister *“that it is necessary to go on at once with the work of providing bath accommodation at Rotorua. I am just in receipt of word from Dr Wohlmann that portion of the roof of the Pavilion Bath Building recently fell in ...”*⁹³

Wohlmann visualised a twofold purpose: a facility providing the best in mineral bath and physical treatments, together with an equivalent of a British ‘Pump-room’ or a continental ‘Kursaal’, a building *“which practically answers the purpose of a club for all visitors – where there are shelter in bad weather, light music and a bright cheerful rendezvous in the evening.”*⁹⁴

Yet by 1913 the popularity of picture theatres and other entertainments in Rotorua was badly affecting attendance at the Bath House orchestral evenings.

Already there was talk of spring facilities being developed in Australia and though the number and variety of springs at Rotorua had no equal, Wohlmann was convinced that *“In view of the strenuous competition of the increasingly numerous spas of other countries, a complexity and*

⁸⁸ RLC. 026-1185. New Zealand Historic Places Trust to Director of Rotorua Museum and Art Gallery 9 April 1981

⁸⁹ AJHR. 1892. NZ Lands & Survey Annual Report 1892, Appendix 6, Rotorua Sanatorium, Report of the Overseer of Works

⁹⁰ Thermal Springs Districts Act 1881, clause 6 (7)

⁹¹ Thermal Springs Districts Act 1881, clause 6 (8)

⁹² WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10a. T. E. Donne to Minister in charge of Tourist Department, 23 August 1902

⁹³ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. C. R. Robieson to Minister in charge of Tourist Department, 1 October 1904

⁹⁴ AJHR. 1907 vol iv, H-2, .15

finish of equipment which a few years ago would have been deemed unnecessarily luxurious, are essential if the springs in New Zealand are to maintain and increase their reputation."⁹⁵

Donne supported Wohlmann's enthusiasm: *"I am very sanguine as to the future development of Rotorua and any money spent in the improvement of the baths there will, in my opinion, prove an undoubtedly valuable asset to the colony."*⁹⁶

The Government evidently agreed. Sir Joseph Ward in particular saw an opportunity to create a southern hemisphere spa centre which would attract hale and invalid visitors from Europe, the United States and Australia. A vote of £5,000 was approved by Government in 1902 towards the projected new building.

The hopes of Government were probably well expressed by Donne's belief that: *"The stream of travellers has certainly set towards New Zealand and the establishment of up-to-date Government baths will no doubt make Rotorua world-famous and be the means of attracting many thousands more visitors yearly."*⁹⁷

Although the expected European and American influx did not eventuate, Australians and New Zealanders patronised what was termed in 1916 *"the leading health and pleasure resort of New Zealand."*⁹⁸

The appointment of a successor to Wohlmann saw no diminution in enthusiastic claims for the establishment. Dr J.D.C. Duncan wrote that *"hydrotherapy has become an exact science capable of effecting cures that were previously considered impossible... I would urge that the work of our spas is as valuable as that of any branch of medical science."* He viewed spa work in New Zealand as a *"national necessity"*⁹⁹ and wrote of the Rotorua Spa as *"one of the most valued possessions in this richly-endowed Dominion's assets."*¹⁰⁰

World War One brought wounded soldiers for special treatment and free ordinary mineral baths. *"The work that has been done for wounded soldiers has been of incalculable benefit to the men themselves and deserving of grateful recognition by the country"* wrote Dr Duncan.¹⁰¹

The Second World War again brought injured and convalescent servicemen for treatment.

The building was utilised for a civic reception for Sir Charles Kingsford Smith on 20 September 1928, an indication that its role as a social centre had not then ended.¹⁰²

But while Arthur Wohlmann had envisaged a social as well as therapeutic role for the New Bath building, Dr Duncan's emphasis was distinctly medical. Government seems to have taken the same attitude, since in 1947 control of the Bath House was transferred from the Tourist Department to the Health Department.

The changeover involved verifying existing contracts; arranging which staff and which property should be transferred; deciding a system for drawing supplies from Tourist Department stores; and providing artisan staff for plant maintenance.

⁹⁵ AJHR. 1907 vol iv, H-2, pp.15-16. *Balneologist's Report*

⁹⁶ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. T. E. Donne to Minister in charge of Tourist Department, 13 February 1903

⁹⁷ WNA. TO-1 1901/5/10. T. E. Donne to Minister in charge of Tourist Department, 13 February 1903

⁹⁸ AJHR. 1916, H-2, p.9. Dr Robert McNab, Minister of Tourist & Health Resorts

⁹⁹ AJHR. 1921-1922. *Balneologist's Report*

¹⁰⁰ AJHR. 1936. *Balneologist's Report*

¹⁰¹ AJHR. 1917, H-2

¹⁰² Stafford 1988:153

The Main Bath (as it was called), with its furnishings and fittings, was to be transferred at book value; the natural springs would remain under the control of the Tourist Department, with free use to the Health Department. The thermal bore adjacent to the old boiler house used mainly for central heating and for heating thermal mud was to go to the Health Department.

The Health Department would be responsible for the maintenance of the building, the Priest Spring pumphouse and immediate vicinity and the pipeline 6' each side from the pumphouse to the Bath House.

The facilities of the Main Treatment bath were to be available for use, *"irrespective of whether the treatment is prescribed by the balneologist or not."*¹⁰³

Dr Duncan's successor, Dr A.J.M. Blair (as Ian Rockel states), *"saw spa treatment as being complementary to clinical work done in hospitals."*¹⁰⁴

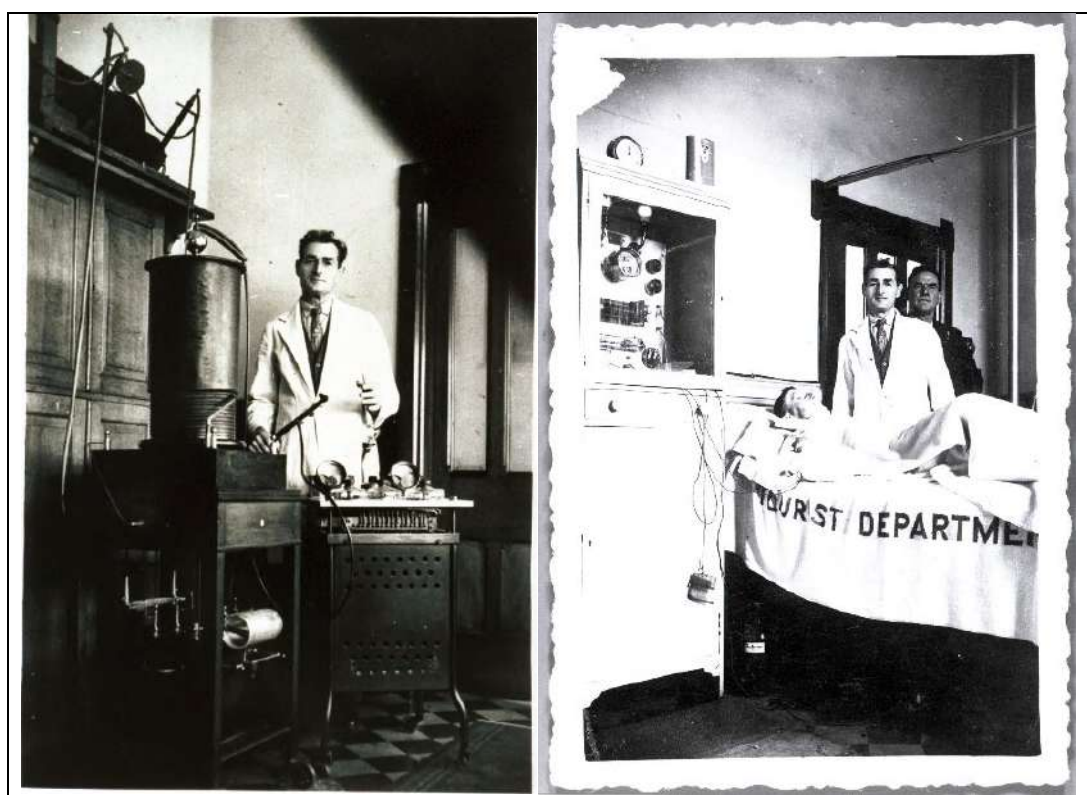


Figure 31 – Various treatments underway in the Rotorua Bath House prior to the 1920s
Source: Rotorua Museum

The swing against the old forms of spa treatment was forcefully expressed in 1949 by the new Director of Physical Medicine, G.A.Q. Lennane: *"The old-fashioned spa conception – a conception of treatment which has been responsible for the delayed knowledge of the treatment and causes of rheumatic diseases – had to be abandoned and the further exploitation of the mineral waters of Rotorua as miraculous cure-alls could not be condoned by the Health Department."*¹⁰⁵ It was his belief that a more rational and scientific outlook was needed.

¹⁰³ A259/5c. Department of Tourist & Health Resorts to Health Department 16 April 1947.

¹⁰⁴ Rockel 1986:44

¹⁰⁵ AJHR. 1949, H-31, p.66

To this end Lennane urged the provision of a new hydrotherapy building of modern design which would be more economical to operate. Already in 1948 suggestions were being mooted for the building once the Health Department vacated it: an Arawa museum, a Maori library, a community centre, *“or some other utilitarian communal purpose.”*¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile the Bath House had been playing a new social role. With the introduction of Social Security, prescription patients could receive free physiotherapy and other treatments, as well as x-rays.

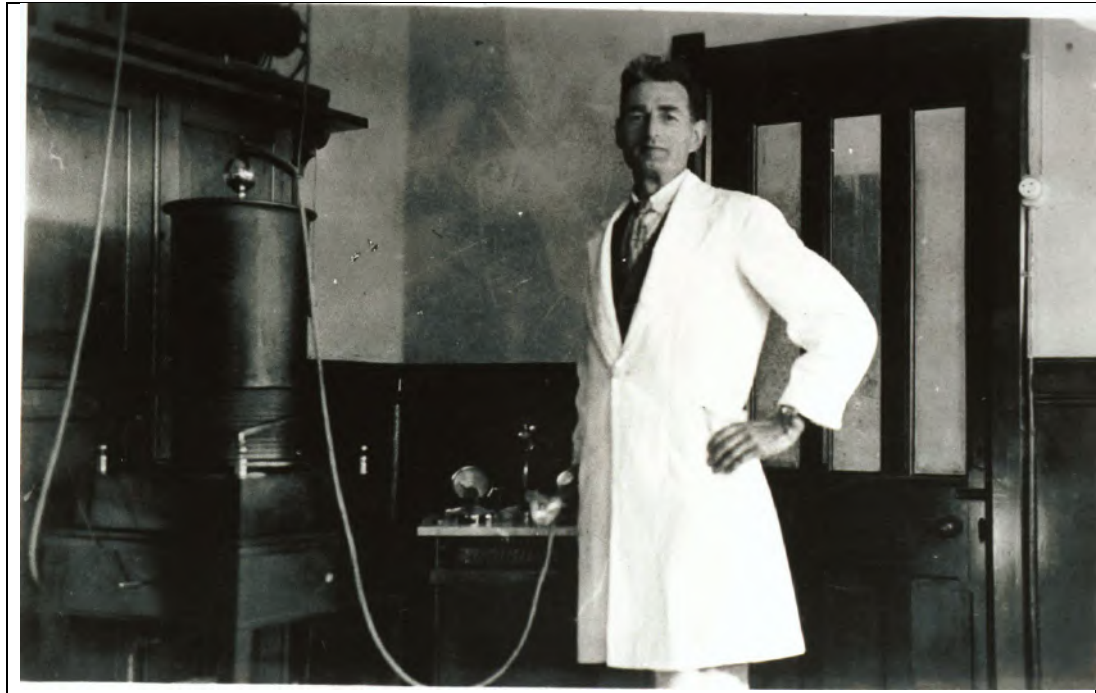


Figure 32 – Staff member and various equipment in the Rotorua Bath House
Source: Rotorua Museum

Outpatients from the developing Queen Elizabeth Hospital used the waters of the Bath House, as did paying patients. But the electrical and mud bath treatments of the early decades of the century were outmoded. Massage metamorphosed into physiotherapy. Treatment of rheumatoid arthritis was now mainly at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, though osteo-arthritis and fibrositis were still treated at the Bath House.

The Health Department's changed attitude towards the efficacy of mineral bath treatment and its apparent corresponding lack of concern for the Bath House, in the eyes of many threatened the very existence of the building. There were rumours that departmental officers were considering its demolition.

In 1952 the Commissioner of Crown Lands suggested that, once the new hydrotherapy unit was built, the Borough Council could take a 21 year lease of the Bath House with a right of renewal, at a peppercorn rental, as long as Council maintained the building and did not *“effect any structural alterations to the exterior of the building without the consent of the Crown.”*¹⁰⁷ The deal was contingent upon Council extending the lease of the site of Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

¹⁰⁶ 'New Zealand Herald', 1948

¹⁰⁷ RM. Commissioner of Crown Lands to Rotorua Borough Council Town Clerk, 14 August 1952

The Health Department's Report for 1952 claimed Council had expressed a desire to take over the building for use as a community centre in consideration of a fifteen year's extension of the lease of the land on which the Queen Elizabeth Hospital stood.¹⁰⁸

When, upon the retirement in 1957 of the Bath House balneologist Dr Blair, no resident medical officer replacement was appointed and a press report prematurely mentioned the proposed cessation of medical services, there was swift reaction from Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce and other local organisations and individuals.

Following a well-attended public meeting, the Rotorua Ratepayers' & Residents' Association in a telegram to Prime Minister S.G. Holland requested that *"in view of overall national importance of Government Bath House as part of Spa in Rotorua urgent and definite measures be implemented immediately to re-introduce former service which must include service of fulltime Balneologist and availability of Priest water, either in existing building or alternative premises to be suitable to requirements of medical profession."*¹⁰⁹

The Rotorua Chamber of Commerce sent a telegram to the Minister of Health: *"Our Executive surprised to read press report of proposed cessation of the internationally famous Rotorua Bath House medical service stop we cannot conceive that after over fifty years of service this step will be taken without reference to the feelings of the people of Rotorua. G. Gilltrap, President."*¹¹⁰

In reply to a letter of support which said *"Rotorua would not be Rotorua without it"* [the Bath House], the Rotorua Town Clerk wrote *"You may be assured that everything which the Council can do to obviate such a step [closure] being decided upon will be done as the Council feels that the building is a national landmark and must be preserved at all costs."*¹¹¹

On the other hand, one borough councillor proposed that Council advocate to Government *"the demolition of the edifice known locally as the 'Government Bath Building' ... [and] erect behind its site a 'truly modern spa'."*¹¹²

However, much of the concern was not so much that the building might be demolished but that curative treatments at the Bath House might come to an end. Certainly that was behind the Rotorua Borough Council's reiteration of its opposition to closure of the Bath House.

Local agitation prompted Minister of Health Ralph Hanan to set up an Inter-departmental Committee headed by Dr Turbott to investigate the future of the Bath House, although he had already (in May that year) recommended to Cabinet its closure once a new hydrotherapy block had been built.¹¹³

Since Government's brief to the Committee had directed it to consider the future of the Bath House, following its closure for bath purposes on economic grounds, all but one submission at the Committee's hearing in Rotorua in November 1957 missed the point by urging the value and retention of balneological treatments.

In December 1957 the Town Clerk informed the Committee that Council thought the building would make an ideal community centre and it recommended that *"the building be used as a*

¹⁰⁸ AJHR. 1952, H-31, p.60

¹⁰⁹ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Bath House negotiations, 16 May 1957

¹¹⁰ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Bath House negotiations. Chamber of Commerce letter to Rotorua Town Clerk, 9 April 1957

¹¹¹ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Bath House negotiations. Rotorua Town Clerk to Mrs Heather Pinfold, 23 May 1957

¹¹² RLC. RCI 002-1886. Main Bath-House Takeover by Council 1957-1966. Councillor J. A. B. Hellaby

¹¹³ RM. Cabinet Paper CP(57) 387, 3 June 1957

Youth Welfare Centre, a YMCA and a centre of cultural and physical welfare in its widest sense."¹¹⁴

There was even Cabinet talk of demolition, but the cost was too high.¹¹⁵ As an alternative the Rotorua Borough Council offered to preserve the building if it was handed over with a Government grant equal to the (unspecified) cost of demolition. This was eight years after the Health Department had first tentatively suggested that the Rotorua Borough Council might like to assume control of the building.²⁹

The new Minister of Health told Rotorua's Mayor Murray Linton in 1961 that Government had no intention of demolishing the building but rather had plans for its renovation and conversion to a community centre under the Rotorua Borough Council. Because of excessive cost Government dropped the previous Cabinet's proposal to renovate and convert the north wing to a modern hydrothermal unit.

In 1957 Mayor Linton was reported as claiming that four or five years previously the then Minister of Health had offered the Bath House to the Rotorua Borough Council. On enquiring as to why the Minister should want to do that, Linton was allegedly told the building was "*positively dangerous*."¹¹⁶

There had long been vague notions within Council of converting the building into a community centre. With the ever-imminent, but long-delayed, withdrawal of the Health Department from the Bath House and Government approval in principle for the Council's eventual takeover of the building, the Council could now make more substantial plans.

Among the suggestions for the development of the Bath House as a recreation centre were facilities for boxing, wrestling, weightlifting, table-tennis, squash, bridge, chess, with a bowling alley in the north wing where a basketball court was rejected because of lack of spectator space. Lockers, showers and committee rooms were also projected.

Then a new concept was introduced: the development of a sports and recreation centre to be added to the Bath House, originally planned to dovetail into its eastern side. Eventually a Sportsdrome was planned, to be connected to the Bath House by an elevated walkway.

Provision of a Sportsdrome left the Bath House open to new possibilities. Council's Legal and Property Committee had ideas of a north wing theatrette, a Maori Arts and Crafts Centre between the north wing and the foyer and a massage and baths complex in the south wing, together with an Old Folks Service Centre lounge and a committee room available to clubs.

In the midst of all these ideas the building was still in use by the Health Department, with the current Minister of Health reported as saying he would like to see the Bath House kept as a spa.¹¹⁷

In his report for 1932-3, at a time of national economic depression, the Government Balneologist could report that "*The Main Bath House, despite its manifest defects, has been maintained to a high degree of efficiency*."¹¹⁸ This does not seem to be a claim the Health

¹¹⁴ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Bath House negotiations. L. J. Wright, Rotorua Town Clerk, to Inter-departmental Committee, 19 December 1957

¹¹⁵ 'New Zealand Herald,' 18 December 1959

¹¹⁶ 'Rotorua Post,' 16 May 1957

¹¹⁷ 'Daily Post,' 22 February 1962

¹¹⁸ AJHR. 1932-3. Balneologist's Report

Department could make between 1953 and 1969. There was little point in expenditure on a building it intended to vacate, however long the delay.

Meanwhile there were concerns among the descendants of the donors of the reserve land. At a meeting in 1961 of Ngati Whakaue at Tamatekapua, Te Papa-i-ouru Marae, Ohinemutu, among the submissions prepared for the Minister of Maori Affairs was an objection to any transfer of the Sanatorium Reserve and bath buildings to Rotorua Borough Council and *“to any use these grounds and buildings may be put to that are not in keeping with the spirit and letter of the original Trust, failing which we are ready to take the land back.”*¹¹⁹

Nonetheless two months later Minister of Health N.L. Shelton told the Rotorua Borough Council that Government had approved in principle the transfer of the Main Bath House, saying: *“The bathhouse has outlived and is now unsuitable for its original purpose, but its mana will remain.”*¹²⁰

The Rotorua City Council in September 1962 advised the Director-General of Health that it was *“not prepared to take over the Main Bath Building in Rotorua unless the estimated cost of £96,175 for renovating the building and carrying out alterations and additions ... is made available.”*¹²¹

A Government Committee comprising representatives from the Department of Health and Treasury, together with the Deputy Government Architect, recommended Government pay no more than £55, 000, but Rotorua City Council insisted on a minimum of £96,000.

The current Minister of Health, McKay, considered Council's demands completely unacceptable, referring to the Bath House – once considered a national asset – as *“a local amenity.”*¹²² Council reduced its demand to £75,000 in January 1963, then the following month advised that it would accept £60,000.

The transfer to Council of the Bath House and 2.5 acres needed for the Sportsdrome, with £60,000 spread over three years in even payments, was approved by Government and accepted by Council in May 1963. The date of actual takeover was dependent on complete evacuation of the Bath House by the Health Department, a shift in itself dependent on the completion of the new hydrotherapy unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Meanwhile Council's architect had been instructed to carry out as much maintenance as possible without disturbing the activities of the Health Department, Council's immediate concern being to *“make the building completely weatherproof.”*¹²³

The Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Bill 1963 decreed that Rotorua City Council *“acting in its capacity as the Rotorua Domain Board ... will take over the control of that building and convert it for use as a community centre ...”*¹²⁴

However, Council's immediate plans were not exactly community-centred. Local M.P. Harry Lapwood had stated in 1962 that the Bath House had become a liability on the State because

¹¹⁹ RLC. RCI 002-1886. Main Bath-House Takeover by Council, 1957-1966

¹²⁰ 'Rotorua Post,' 20 August 1961

¹²¹ RLC. RCI 002-0680. Rotorua Town Clerk to Director-General of Health, 11 September 1962

¹²² Minister of Health McKay to Rotorua Town Clerk, 26 September 1962

¹²³ RLC. RCI 002-0681. Rotorua Town Clerk to the Director-General of Health, 15 August 1963

¹²⁴ RLC. RCI 002-0681. Main Bath Building – Negotiations

it had not been maintained to the necessary standard and had urged that private enterprise be given a chance to develop the spa which he believed was insufficiently exploited.¹²⁵

Possibly influenced by this line of thought, Council developed plans for an upstairs restaurant facility, together with a downstairs coffee lounge; the concept of a community centre in the Bath House, if not lost, was meanwhile postponed, with the development of the Sportsdrome. Tudor Towers Restaurant Limited took up the first lease early in 1965, initially on the understanding that catering for conferences and municipal functions would take precedence over private functions.

In fact, the first catered function took place before the leasing negotiations were completed, when the first floor of the Bath House was the venue for a banquet for the International Federation of Agricultural Producers on 28 November 1964.

Meanwhile some councillors were keener to develop the Sportsdrome than to preserve the Bath House, Councillor Urquhart for instance warning that it would become a white elephant.¹²⁶ Her words unconsciously echoed the words of a resident in 1909 who wrote *"When a Rajah of India wishes to do anyone a serious injury, he presents them with a white elephant, knowing thus will very soon ruin them and it is the general opinion in Rotorua that the new Bath Building is something akin to the rajah's present."*¹²⁷

Finance committee chairman Mathias said Council had no intention of putting a museum and art gallery in the Bath House¹²⁸ though two months later Mayor Linton said the Bath House would, on completion of renovations, make a suitable art gallery site.¹²⁹

The opening of the new Hydrotherapy Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in 1967 did away, as the Health Department's Annual Report put it, with *"the need to subject the more feeble patients to the discomforts and rigours of treatment at the old Bath House."*¹³⁰

In April 1967 Council approved a plan to convert the south wing to a museum and clubroom (which became a room for the Rotorua Society of Arts), as well as an upstairs lounge bar with toilets and emergency stairs in accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Commission,¹³¹ and the following year a mezzanine gallery of 700 square feet was completed in the south wing, incorporating a row of colonial cottage display rooms, with windows, doors, weatherboarding from Crowther House demolition work.¹³²

Mostyn Thompson was invited in July to be the museum's establishing curator/ preparatory, with D.M. Stafford appointed permanently to that position in September 1968, though not starting officially until November. The Museum was officially opened on 1 November 1969.

Meanwhile rooms in the north wing, recently vacated by the Health Department, were being used for storage, essentially by Council for bulky items, mainly election booths, collapsible dais, meeting house bargeboards and windows and doors from the Public Relations Office renovations, but also by the Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society and the Rotorua City Combined Clothing & Furniture Bank.

¹²⁵ 'Daily Post,' 15 June 1962

¹²⁶ 'Daily Post,' 24 May 1963

¹²⁷ ANA. A259/17a. S. J. Dannefaerd to T. E. Donne, General Manager, Tourist & Health Resorts, 16 January 1909

¹²⁸ 'Daily Post,' 11 September 1964

¹²⁹ RLC. RCI 002-1902 Treasure House & Museum September 1964-April 1968, 26 November 1964

¹³⁰ AJHR 1967

¹³¹ RLC. RCI 002-1902. Treasury House and Museum September 1964-April 1968, 4 April 1968

¹³² 'Daily Post,' 15 May 1985

In 1974 Council received a proposal from theatre director J.R. Johnstone to establish a professional theatre company at the end of the north wing but nothing came of it.

By 1975 an art gallery had been planned for the north block. For the Golden Jubilee of Rotary in Rotorua the three local Rotary Clubs proposed to raise funds for the new art gallery which was officially opened in October 1977.

An application by Council in 1979 to the New Zealand Lottery Board claimed: *"The Tudor Towers building forms part of a total community centre complex, comprising the Rotorua Museum ..., the Rotorua Art Gallery, the Sports Centre, Conference Centre, Youth and Cultural Centre and Restaurant."*¹³³

The extension of the south wing, long-awaited but still not fully matching the north wing, was completed in 1983 when the Centennial Wing was officially opened on 23 May, not by a 1980s equivalent of Sir Joseph Ward but by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Local Government, G.W.F. Thompson.

Hocking and Verrall & Associates presented a preliminary report in February 1984 proposing a two-stage development and recommending an automatic air-conditioning system. The report stated: *"Our investigation has also reinforced the desirability of preserving the Building in the original concept"*,¹³⁴ referring presumably to its architectural rather than to its functional concept.

Stage one introduced a reception counter to the foyer, upgraded the downstairs toilet facilities, and converted the north wing downstairs restaurant to an additional art exhibition area, adding a mezzanine gallery above this space.

The plans for the north wing alterations were approved by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, which stated in a letter to Council *"We will view alterations sympathetically providing they are in keeping with the style of the building ..."*¹³⁵

The art gallery extension was officially opened on 11 October 1986. Prior to this a study on hydrogen sulphide problems had been commissioned. Noting that a number of pigments reacted unfavourably with hydrogen sulphide, Regional Conservator Sarah Hillary recommended the installation of an air-conditioning system in stages, starting with the storage area.¹³⁶

An earlier NZDSIR report on the effect of hydrogen sulphide on paintings in Rotorua, following experiments with pigments, determined that short-term exposure for a month or so was 'reasonably safe'.¹³⁷

Meanwhile, freelance designer Cary Couchman was invited to redesign the Centennial wing for a proposed Arawa Hall. The completed Te Arawa Gallery was opened on 29 May 1987.

In 1992 the Arawa display was freshly presented as "The Legacy of Houmaitawhiti".

¹³³ RLC. 026-1185 Tudor Towers, November 1979

¹³⁴ RLC. 026-0073 Art Gallery General 5.1.1982-30.4.1984

¹³⁵ 'Daily Post,' 15 May 1985

¹³⁶ RLC. 026-0074 Art Gallery: General 1.5.84-15.1.86. "The Problems of Hydrogen Sulphide at the Rotorua Art Gallery: Discussion and Recommendations" by Sarah L. Hillary, Regional Conservator. 1985. Letter & report 14 March 1985

¹³⁷ RLC. RCI 002-1908. Art Gallery September 1976-26 March 1979. "Pigments and Pollution: a DSIR report on the effect of hydrogen sulphide on paintings in Rotorua 1973", by J. R. Sewell, Chemistry Division, DSIR

The pending expiry (on 2 September 1990) of the Tudor Towers lease presented an opportunity for further redevelopment of the Bath House.

Back in 1978 Council had adopted a new policy for ultimate use of the building once the lease expired: *"it be ultimately and totally developed for community purposes as an historical and cultural centre."*¹³⁸ But legal advice at the time was that Council was committed to a new lease.

Council in 1989 commissioned Dr Rodney Wilson to prepare proposals for the *"redevelopment of the entire Bath House building as an integrated art and history museum"*, following expiry of the restaurant lease.¹³⁹

Commenting that the Bath House *"serves as the city's signature throughout New Zealand,"* Wilson recommended that *"The Government Gardens and, in particular, the Bath House must be central to the further development of Rotorua's tourism zone. They must also be central to the city's cultural planning as they form a focus and historical heart to the community."*¹⁴⁰

The report incorporated specific business opportunities recommended by McDowell Keightley Real Estate. One was that, should Council decide to provide elsewhere a purpose-built museum and art gallery, the Bath House be converted to a casino. The concept of a casino had been first conceived by Wohlmann and lightly suggested again in 1935 by the Tourist Department's General Manager.¹⁴¹ Both had in mind the broad sense of the word, 'a place of entertainment' in which gambling – contrary to the latest proposal – was but one element.

Other possibilities suggested included a shop on a licence basis; a restaurant at the sunny north-east corner, incorporating the verandah; an air-filtering system; removal of the dance floor and restoration of the foyer to Edwardian elegance; and the building of a fountain within the foyer.

The appointment was recommended of a Project manager to advise Council on the selection of architects and consultants.

In 1991 R. Hughes of Octa Associates was invited to submit a programme for the Project Management of the Bath House restoration project. His report spoke of *"enhancing its commercial viability to generate the necessary funding required to service a significant loan ...to develop the Bath-House and surrounding area to create the commercial environment within which the funding will be generated."*¹⁴²

The first stage would be the development of a Business Plan or Project Mission Statement to *"... identify the market opportunities to create an entertainment centre capable of generating funding sufficient to pay for the capital works."*

Council recommended that Octa Associates be appointed to carry out Stage I of the project management of the Bath House restoration but later in 1991 proposed that an architect be appointed to produce designs for assessment by both Council and NZHPT. In March 1992 Council advertised for a consultant for the development of a business plan for the restoration of The Bath-House – Rotorua's Art & History Museum.

¹³⁸ RLC. BC 002-0689. Main Bath Building Restaurant Tenancy, 17 July 1978

¹³⁹ RLC. Minutes vol.86, 20/2/90

¹⁴⁰ Dr T. L. R. Wilson. "The Bath-House – Rotorua's Art & History Museum", 1990, part 2.4

¹⁴¹ RM. Tourist & Publicity Section General Manager K. J. Schmitt to the Minister in charge of the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts & Publicity 11 December 1935. Probably from WNA. TO-1

¹⁴² RLC. Minutes vol.95, 26/3/91

At that stage, the Regional Officer for the New Zealand Historic Places Trust indicated that before further alteration or restoration went ahead, a conservation plan should be prepared. As a result, the 1993-1994 Rotorua District Council Management Plan called for a conservation plan.

Consequently, Works Consultancy Services Limited was appointed in December 1993 to prepare a conservation plan for the Bath House. Local historian Philip Andrews was commissioned to compile the history of the Bath House and its significance.

In 2018, DPA Architects were appointed to prepare an updated conservation plan for the Bath House.

Chronology of Events

Date	Event
26.09.1902	Wohlmann submits initial plans
18.10.1905	Hutchison's tender is accepted
31.05.1908	The building contract is completed
13.08.1908	The Bath House is officially opened
1911	The south wing addition is completed
20.09.1928	A reception is held for Kingsford Smith
01.07.1947	The Bath House is transferred to the Health Department
01.05.1963	The transfer of the building to the Rotorua City Council is approved
01.12.1964	The restaurant tender is accepted in principle
22.08.1966	The Health Department fully vacates Bath House
01.11.1969	The Rotorua Museum is officially opened
12.10.1977	Rotorua City Art Gallery is officially opened
23.05.1983	The Centennial Wing is officially opened (second south wing gable)
02.04.1985	The NZ Historic Places Trust (now Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga) registers the building as a Category I Historic Place
11.08.1986	The north wing art gallery extension is officially opened
29.05.1987	The Arawa Hall opens at Museum
02.09.1990	The restaurant lease ends
15.12.1993	The first Conservation plan is commissioned
04.07.2008	The north wing addition is completed
09.2011	The south wing addition is completed
11.2016	The Rotorua Museum vacates the building to enable it to be seismic strengthened
09.2018	DPA Architects is commissioned as project architects for the seismic upgrade and redevelopment of the building in conjunction with Carling Architects of Rotorua and GDC Engineers

5.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Location and Setting

Sited at the edge of the Government Gardens towards Lake Rotorua and across from the Blue Baths, the Rotorua Bath House has retained a prominent position within the cityscape of Rotorua since its inception. The Rotorua Government Gardens in which the Bath House is located are listed by Heritage New Zealand as a Historic Area. Also located within the Historic Area are the Blue Baths, Rotunda, Gardener's Cottage, Prince's Arch and the Tea Pavilion, along with buried archaeological deposits, historic plantings and geothermal features.¹⁴³ Other listed buildings in the vicinity include the Civic Theatre, the former Post Office and the Prince's Gate Hotel.



Figure 33 - The Rotorua Bath House sitting prominently in the Government Gardens, pre-1930.
Source: DPA Architects



Figure 34 - The entrance to the Sanatorium Grounds in 1908 with the Rotorua Bath House in the background.

Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

The Bath House sits within what is essentially a rectangular park, with its principal facade being visible across the park and from Hinemaru Street. The entrance to the Bath House building is via a porch from Oruawhata Drive. The three less prominent side and rear façades face the adjoining gymnasium located behind the Bath House building. Further afield, the precinct extends to include the Princes Gate Hotel and Rotorua Tourist Bureau buildings.

¹⁴³ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

Figure 36 – The Rotorua Bath House situated within the Government Gardens showing surrounding listed heritage buildings (blue) and unlisted buildings (red) in 2018.
Source: DPA Architects adapted from Google Earth

5.2 Evidence of Previous Human Activity

Introduction

For the purposes of this conservation plan, archaeological evidence is considered as being any below-ground material relating to the former occupation of the site prior to the erection of the Rotorua Bath House and any below-ground material associated with the historic use and construction of the buildings and grounds. It is noted that demolition of standing buildings that pre-date 1900 are subject to the archaeological authority requirements of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. Heritage New Zealand also recognises the application of archaeological techniques to standing buildings and structures.

The heritage aspects of the standing buildings and their setting are primarily addressed in other sections of this Plan, although archaeological input has been provided, as required.

The approach used follows international models developed and used in Australia and Great Britain, adapted for the New Zealand heritage environment. Consultation with the client, stakeholders, the community and the planning team informed the process. The method began with the identification of archaeological evidence and an assessment of archaeological and other heritage values, including the review of existing archaeological reports and other relevant literature and the outcomes of consultation.

Archaeology

The site may hold pre-1900 archaeological significance for Ngati Whakaue as it appears it was a place of human activity prior to the acquisition of the land by the Crown in the late 19th century.

The Rotorua Bath House is sited within Government Gardens, originally known as the Sanatorium Reserve, the largest number of reserves set aside by Ngati Whakaue by the 'Agreement for a Township...' negotiated by F. D. Fenton, Chief Judge of the Maori Land Court, signed 25 November 1880. The purchase by the Crown in 1889 of the Pukeroa-Orouahata Block and subsequent conveyances, according to the 1973 Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Rotorua Township Reserves, "included all the reserve areas so that the Crown's title to them is from a legal point of view quite clear and unassailable." The 1948 Royal Commission found that the Sanatorium Ground was among reserves gifted by Ngati Whakaue prior to the 1889 purchase.

5.3 Description of the Building

Planning



Figure 37 – The various stages in the building of the Rotorua Bath House building.

Source: DPA Architects

The Rotorua Bath House was originally planned to be an essentially symmetrical building with a large foyer which was the main entry to the building at its centre. The foyer was planned as a double height space with a central light well in the upper floor to let light flood the lower level. There was to be a fountain installed in the foyer, however, this was never realised. The central section also contained rooms to be occupied by the ticket office and the balneologist's consulting room.

From either side of the main foyer, a single storey wing extends to the north and south. These were to house baths for male and female patrons respectively. Only a small section of the south female wing was initially built. Each wing was divided into a number of small rooms of differing sizes, some of which contained baths, while others served a waiting and cooling rooms.

In 1911, a further section was added to the south wing followed by further additions in 1983 and 2011. In 2008, an addition to the north wing was completed. These additions meant that the main elevation was achieved, in plan at least, and the symmetry that was originally envisaged.

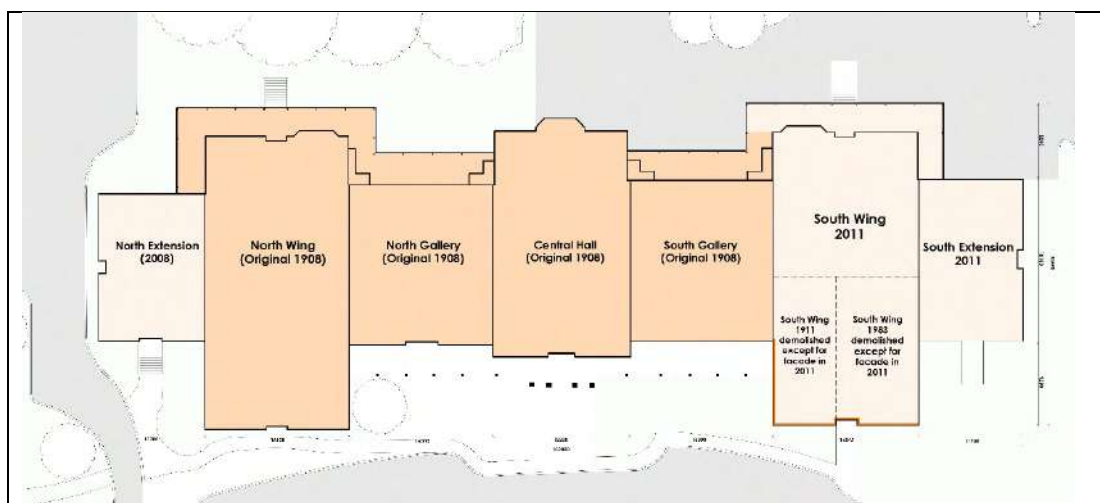


Figure 38 – Stages of buildings that make up the Rotorua Bath House.

Source: DPA Architects

Initial Construction

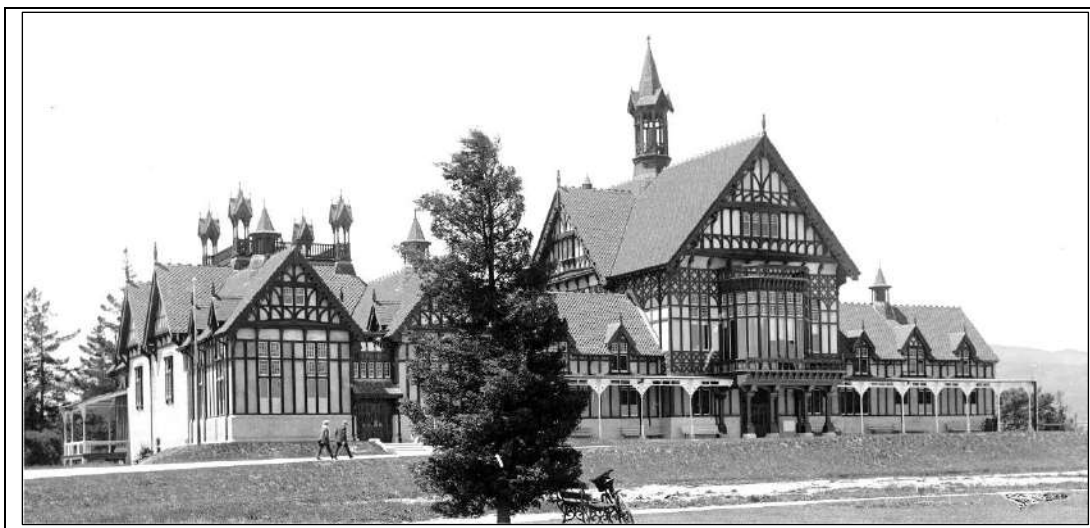


Figure 39 – The 1908 building shortly after opening.

Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

The original conception never came to full fruition until over one hundred years later. Cost cutting compelled the omission of the extreme north and south extensions, as well as the south wing. The south wing was to be added as need arose and no doubt as money became available, though Wohlmann was later to claim that the women's wing was left incomplete "so that fuller experience would show what form of bath was most needed."¹⁴⁴ The final plans showed the main block some ten feet wider than shown in the original drawing, to give added dignity to the building and greater breadth to the main hall.

A requisition of July 1908 successfully sought approval to fit skylights in the front verandah over the consulting room and ticket office windows. A sink was added to the ticket office which was partitioned to provide an office for the Chief Bath Attendant.

Wohlmann decided to sub-divide only one of the vapour bath rooms and to put in two instead of four vapour baths and just one inhalation apparatus for a start, "as it is possible that we may, on the result of experience in working, find it advisable to make some modifications and improvements in the original design."¹⁴⁵

There was an upstairs room set up as a private office for the General Manager, but since he never used it the room was converted to an emergency bedroom for the night nurse.

Pumping apparatus under the main hall did not eventuate (the fountain was not installed and the mineral water pumps were at source), so Wohlmann suggested the space be used for four mud baths, for which he drew a rough plan, suggesting a system of turntables for baths on rails, a scheme Lawrence Birks, the new officer in charge of works in Rotorua, modified to allow room for six mud baths. It was Wohlmann's intention to have only temporary mud baths in the basement, installing permanent mud baths in the south wing, whenever it should be constructed. The basement mud bath area could then, he proposed, be turned into a steam laundry.

¹⁴⁴ ANA. TO-1 8/135/27. A. S. Wohlmann to Director of Tourist & Commerce Division, 7 July 1910

¹⁴⁵ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/15. A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne

Within weeks of the opening Wohlmann was outlining the need for a new boiler, the output from the current small boiler being insufficient to give off an adequate steam jet for mixing and liquefying the solid mud, heating the Turkish Baths and Russian Baths and supplying the inhalation apparatus, let alone servicing any projected laundry-drying scheme and steam radiators.

A second-hand Class L locomotive boiler, with a working pressure of 120 lbs, was bought from Railways in Newmarket, for £65. Because the basement was not large enough it had to be installed outside the southern wall of the building in such a way that any later extension floor could pass right over it, so that the boiler would then be incorporated into the basement.¹⁴⁶

In the latter part of 1909, the old needle baths were moved into the new mud baths and a steam coil installed there for towel heating. A special storage battery and a motor generator were installed in the basement for running electrical medical apparatus.

Almost immediately after the official opening Corlett criticised the cutting of the foyer flank wall, preferring a reduction in size of the lift cage. He was critical too that the cutting of the concrete at the crown of one of the segment window heads had been allowed and that the mineral water pipes had not been laid in the manner he had suggested: *"such work would not then have had to be done twice over."*¹⁴⁷

After a visit to Rotorua, the Secretary to the Agriculture, Commerce and Tourist Department commented to the Director: *"I was impressed by the necessity of a good light for the middle of the ceiling of the pump-room in the Bath House. This requirement is so obvious that I have no doubt you have already noted it for attention when further electric current is available for lighting purposes."*¹⁴⁸

As a stand-by provision should a hot water pump fail, cross-connections were arranged between the pumps controlling hot and cold mineral water.

A platform was built for the Aix tanks and in 1913 a new tank installed to give reliable pressure of alkaline water for the Aix douches.¹⁴⁹ In 1918 the large number of wounded soldiers requiring water treatment necessitated the addition of a 13 000 gallon capacity tank in the top storey, to ensure adequate water pressure.¹⁵⁰

1911 South Wing

In the planning of the building Wohlmann had indicated that the south wing could be postponed if economy demanded restrictions, saying *"This wing is principally for future extensions and for rooms of the caretaker."*¹⁵¹

There was clearly a need for more women's baths and in 1910 approval was given to tender for two 'Priest' public baths with underwater douches.

¹⁴⁶ WNA. TO-1 1908/153/3

¹⁴⁷ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/1. B. S. Corlett to T. E. Donne 16 September 1908

¹⁴⁸ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/25. F. S. Pope, secretary of Department of Agriculture, Commerce, & Tourist, to Director C. R. C. Robieson, 26 January 1910

¹⁴⁹ AJHR. 1913, vol iv, H-2. Acting-Balneologist's Report

¹⁵⁰ AJHR. 1918, H-2, p.3

¹⁵¹ RM. Incompletely sourced letter from A. S. Wohlmann to the Acting Superintendent, Department of Tourist & Health Resorts. Probably from WNA. TO-1 1901/05

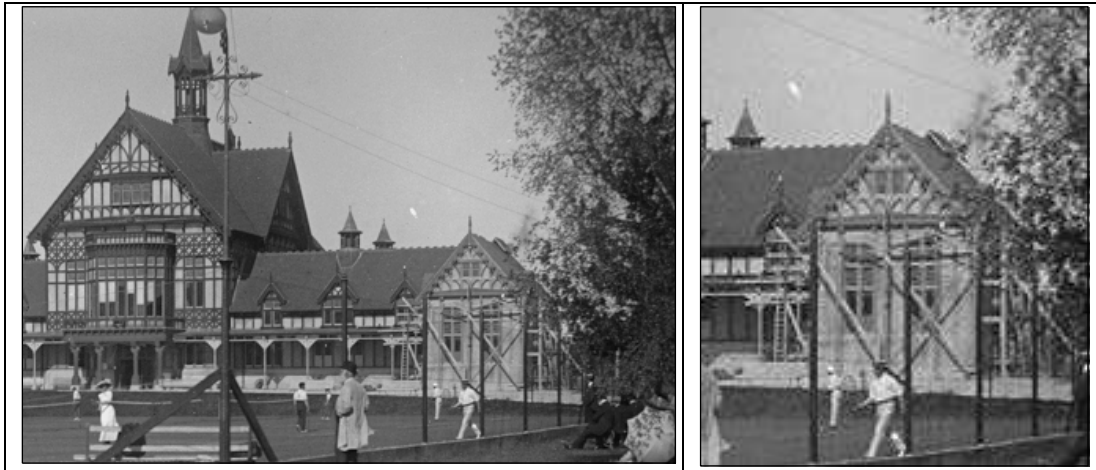


Figure 40 - the 1911 addition under construction.

Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images

The southern extension lay beyond the women's main corridor, with a temporary roof. Initially there was no front (or western) matching gable. The proposed plan for the women's Priest baths specified concrete floor, battened; a louvred roof; tiled baths; concrete walls carried up twelve feet from floor level, with wood; and a ferro-concrete framework resting on a ferro-concrete floating foundation. It is not clear if all these specifications were followed. A 400 gallon capacity acidic water storage tank was built above the overhead douche apartments. With only one water closet in the original women's wing, a second was requisitioned since the first was inaccessible from the Aix bath, forcing women to come into full view of the main hall to reach it.

The Minister of the Tourist Department considered the temporary addition so out of keeping with the rest of the building that he decided a gable should be included to give uniformity with the northern wing (although that had two gables). But a pinnacle with ventilator was eliminated from the planned extension and the large room beneath the gable (intended as a Plombiere douche room) was left unfinished within.¹⁵² Although the extension work was completed by late 1911, under-ordering of tiles had left part of the roof over one of the baths untiled, temporarily requiring iron roofing, so that tiling was not completed till around mid-1912.



Figure 41 – The 1911 gabled addition (right) in 1930.

Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

¹⁵² 'Hot Lakes Chronicle,' 27 April 1911

Early Alterations

Meanwhile because the mechanic found his basement room so dark that he had to work under electric lamps all day, in unpleasant air, an enclosure under the rear verandah was boarded in to provide a new well-lighted and well-ventilated workroom.

By 1920, with the popularity of dry massage, the four small massage rooms (used also for electric treatments) became overcrowded. Dr Duncan was forced to utilise the large upstairs bay window area, though this proved too hot in summer and too cold in winter. He pressed for a separate massage house behind the main building but was eventually given a 25' x 10' massage room for women on the rear verandah.

Part of the rear verandah was also converted to an x-ray annexe, with adjacent dark-room and a storeroom underneath for batteries.¹⁵³

The partition between the waiting room and the Baths Superintendent's office was removed in 1919 to make room for a clerk. A lockable cupboard for ticket stock was added to the ticket office.¹⁵⁴

At some stage provision was made for the drying and distribution of laundry in the south-east corner of the basement, involving concreting of the floor and the introduction of shelving and tables.

For some years Dr Duncan had considered that the women's wing, with only 5 private baths and dressing rooms, possessed *"bathing arrangements absurdly inadequate during the season."*¹⁵⁵

Plans existed in 1920 for the proposed completion of the south wing, at a probable cost of £15,000. But this would provide only six more baths, with no relief of the overcrowding in the treatments area. Consequently, Duncan declared *"I cannot recommend the completion of a foolish piece of architecture for so paltry a purpose."*¹⁵⁶

To the Minister of his Department he wrote: *"With the progress of Hydrological methods and the rapid increase in the number of our treatments, this building is quite inadequate for our needs."*¹⁵⁷

In the 1929-1930 season the south wing Plombiere Douche room, for years an empty shell, was floored, ceiled and lined and apparatus installed, as the dilapidated Duchess and Pavilion Baths were replaced. Around the same time the men's Aix-Vichy massage department was entirely reconstructed and repaired and repair begun on the women's Aix block, though details of the nature of the work are not extant.¹⁵⁸ A new pyretic-treatment room was added, to aid in the cure and alleviation of rheumatism.

¹⁵³ ANA. 259/46a, 4 October 1926, and AJHR 1928

¹⁵⁴ ANA. A259/46a, 31 July 1919

¹⁵⁵ RM. Unsourced letter from Dr Duncan to General Manager of the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts & Publicity, 17 August 1920, probably WNA. TO-1

¹⁵⁶ RM. Unsourced letter from Dr Duncan to General Manager of the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts & Publicity, 17 August 1920, probably WNA. TO-1

¹⁵⁷ RM. Unsourced letter from Dr Duncan to General Manager of the Department of Tourist & Health Resorts & Publicity, 17 August 1920, probably WNA. TO-1

¹⁵⁸ AJHR. 1930

The ornate turrets and railing around the promenade roof may have been removed as a safety measure after the shock of the Napier earthquake, 3 February 1931.

World War Two brought servicemen again to the Bath House, with “*considerable [unspecified] structural alterations*” having been carried out in the main bath building.¹⁵⁹ Five new dressing rooms were added to the women’s Aix and the pyretic departments.

The great increase of work with the introduction of Social Security treatments required the addition of further massage-rooms, but their location is not known.

Up until the 1960s all alterations and additions had been related to the needs of hydrotherapy and allied treatments. New uses for the building brought about further and different changes.

Adding a Restaurant



Figure 42 – The former Rotorua Bath House building during the 1960s.

Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images

Although the 1962 Rigby-Mullan Report stated that “*No major structural repairs seem necessary,*” Council’s decision to create leased restaurant facilities required a variety of alterations and additions.¹⁶⁰

Even while the building was still being used by the Health Department, Council arranged to begin maintenance and alterations. Temporary screens, openings and shelters were set up, including a temporary false front to allow women patients a sheltered walk to treatment in the south wing.

A raised, enclosed walkway was built connecting the eastern wall of the foyer to the Sports dome. Consulting engineers North Swarbrick Mills & Westwood (Rotorua) suggested that the walkway connect with the room to the south side of the foyer so that “*the gable windows would be left unobstructed and the tunnel effect of the walk-way would then not be so obvious from*

¹⁵⁹ AJHR. 1939

¹⁶⁰ ‘Report on and cost estimates for (A) maintenance work required (B) alterations and additions required’. Rigby-Mullan Report, 1962

*the foyer...*¹⁶¹ However the architects for the Bath House project, Rigby-Mullan, preferred the walkway to enter on the centre line of the foyer and the feature windows were removed.



Figure 43 – The Tudor Towers Restaurant, showing the infilled void in the floor and clearance of the walls towards the rear of the mezzanine.

Source: Rotorua Museum

The internal walls of the north wing were demolished, and steel columns introduced to support the ceilings. The interior lath and plaster of the external walls was replaced by plaster board. In the north block the sunken public bath was apparently floored over and the private baths removed.

The pyretic shower at the north-east corner was removed to the north block, next to the former public Rachel pool, to allow continued use of the area by the Health Department.

On the first floor lead flooring was removed, partitions taken down from the eastern end, the lift well on the north wall closed in and a kitchen built on the north side adjoining the central block, with walls and ceiling lined with fibrous plaster. A 13'8" canopy was fitted over the cooking area. Wine storage facilities and a freezer room were added. The upstairs toilets (two WCS for women and two for men and urinal stalls) were added a year or more after the restaurant opened, clients having meanwhile to use the downstairs toilets.

A sunken dance floor was added to the mezzanine above the foyer, supported by four timber-encased steel columns which replaced the two kauri columns below the gallery. The erection of the dance floor blocked light from the high gabled windows above.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ RLC. RCI 002-0681, 11 March 1964

¹⁶² 'Daily Post,' 13 May 1964

The service lift well for the first floor kitchen may still be seen at the rear of the present duplicating room, adjoining the main switchboard room adjoining the right-hand set of foyer stairs. A telephone booth seems to have been built into or close to the lift space of the ticket office, with access by a north-facing door.

With a seating capacity for 250 the restaurant proper had 3000sq ft of floor space, of which 900sq ft was dance floor, 14" below main floor level. As well as the south wall bar in the mezzanine area, a performance area was constructed by the eastern wall.

An inspection in December 1964 by Rotorua's Chief Fire Officer found that the fire escape exit ways led through three windows on the top floor and then via small steps onto the main roof, with no indication where to proceed from there.

The Licensing Control Authority later enforced extra egress and in 1968 an escape stairway was installed south of the first floor toilets in the south wing. These first floor additions were above part of the ground floor space of the Museum.

On the ground floor new floor tiles were placed in the vestibule, while toilets, a lounge area, storerooms and bar, as well as a coffee lounge, were built in the space between the foyer and the far north wing.

A variety of work was done on the roof, including complete replacement of the corroded ventilation towers (pinnacles), removal of the glass of the tower lookout and the elevation of the flat roof on the east side of the north block by twelve feet.¹⁶³

A new bore drilled at the south-west corner of the Sportsdrome provided heating and a telephone main cable connection was requested, enabling the installation of a business telephone, as well as a telephone in the foyer.

Fibrolite panels were placed over the basement windows in the south wing.

In 1970 the original waiting-room to the right of the main entrance was leased to Tourist Souvenirs Ltd, with a window let into the room's eastern wall. The shop closed after five years and the original consulting-room became the Museum Curator's office.

Vandalism by some restaurant patrons required the sculpture 'Eve' in the main foyer to be protected by a railing. A dado had to be constructed around the downstairs (north block) lounge to prevent chipping of the plaster.

Security grilles (since removed) were fitted to the foyer stairways, as well as a guide rail (later removed but reinstalled in 1993) around the inner curve of the stairways where the treads were narrowest. Stair-carpet of incongruous design was fitted.

Forming a Museum

Investigation by the City Engineer, prior to the construction of the Museum in the south block, revealed that: *"with a few minor exceptions, the building is as structurally sound as the day it was built."*¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Personal communication from Noel Dittmer, carpenter on the 1964 Bath House alterations.

¹⁶⁴ RLC. RCI 002-0684. Report by City Engineer List, December 1966

The necessary removal of the internal concrete partitions, some up to the roof line, would clearly weaken the two main bearing walls running north-south, so these were removed and replaced with steel columns and bearers as in the coffee lounge in the north block.

A mezzanine floor was introduced, on which was constructed a series of colonial display rooms. A variety of cabinet displays was installed on the ground floor.

The stairway to the 'colonial cottage' mezzanine passed over the site of the demolished consulting room.

Probably early in 1965 two pillar fire hydrants outside the Bath House were changed from standpipes to screw down hydrants.¹⁶⁵

The Museum Curator's report for October 1979 mentions "*The replacement of the top windows above the verandah ... former windows were painted over in various shades of khaki. The replacements are lightly frosted.*"¹⁶⁶ At this time there was a counter (for tickets and sales) to the left of the entrance to the south block.

The east end of the north wing contains workrooms, including a dark-room possibly dating from 1983. Within this room and in the Art Gallery Curator's office (which was apparently the room for the Honeymoon Pool), some of the original tiling is extant and visible.

It appears that some baths may have been removed (though this could probably not have been done without irreparable damage) and the rest either filled in or covered over.

Within the south wing more recent alterations include: the installation of a heating unit against the east wall; the closing in of the egress stairway and enclosure of a room beneath the stairs; the closing-in of the mezzanine staircase; the walling off of the west wall windows. The doorway from the waiting-room to the now-demolished consulting room has been walled off.

In the foyer, the shop window (part of the original waiting-room) has been closed in, and the ticket office east wall windows have been converted to glassed display space. The ticket office incorporates a booth, while a semi-circle of ceiling ornamentation against the north wall of the ticket office suggests earlier emplacement of a wall. A counter has been fitted next to the left-hand set of stairs, in front of the door to the Director's office.

The original lift was against the north wall of the ticket office. A newspaper report in 1977 claimed that the lift had been removed twelve years before (1962?) and that workmen putting in a door had found a small room with a lift pulley. Its location was not specified.¹⁶⁷

Currently (2019) the building is protected by a sprinkler system, security cameras, fire alarms, a security alarm and an air-conditioning system.

A recent proposal was put forward to install a fountain in the foyer, a scheme first proposed by Wohlmann in 1902, and again in 1966, with the suggested enhancement of an associated rock garden.

¹⁶⁵ ANA. A259/19d, 14 December 1964

¹⁶⁶ RLC. 026-0888. Museum Curator Reports

¹⁶⁷ 'Daily Post,' 30 November 1977

Rotorua Art Gallery North Wing Alterations

An art gallery was planned for the north-west part of the north wing in 1977.

Cost meant the development was to proceed in two stages. Stage I comprised the main galleries, workroom and office space. Stage II was to provide further gallery display areas, storage, room and kitchen and toilet facilities (all on the ground floor).

Extra concrete foundations were constructed, with sub-floor under-pinning and bracing. Two massive laminated beams were added to support the roof, the interior concrete walls having been removed.

The plaster walls were stripped and partitions round the tiled baths were demolished¹⁶⁸ although the fate of the eleven private baths in the north wing remains unknown. In response to concerns raised by the Rotorua & District Historical Society the Town Clerk wrote that the baths in the north wing were to be boarded over, not relocated and a decision on their fate deferred till Stage II.¹⁶⁹

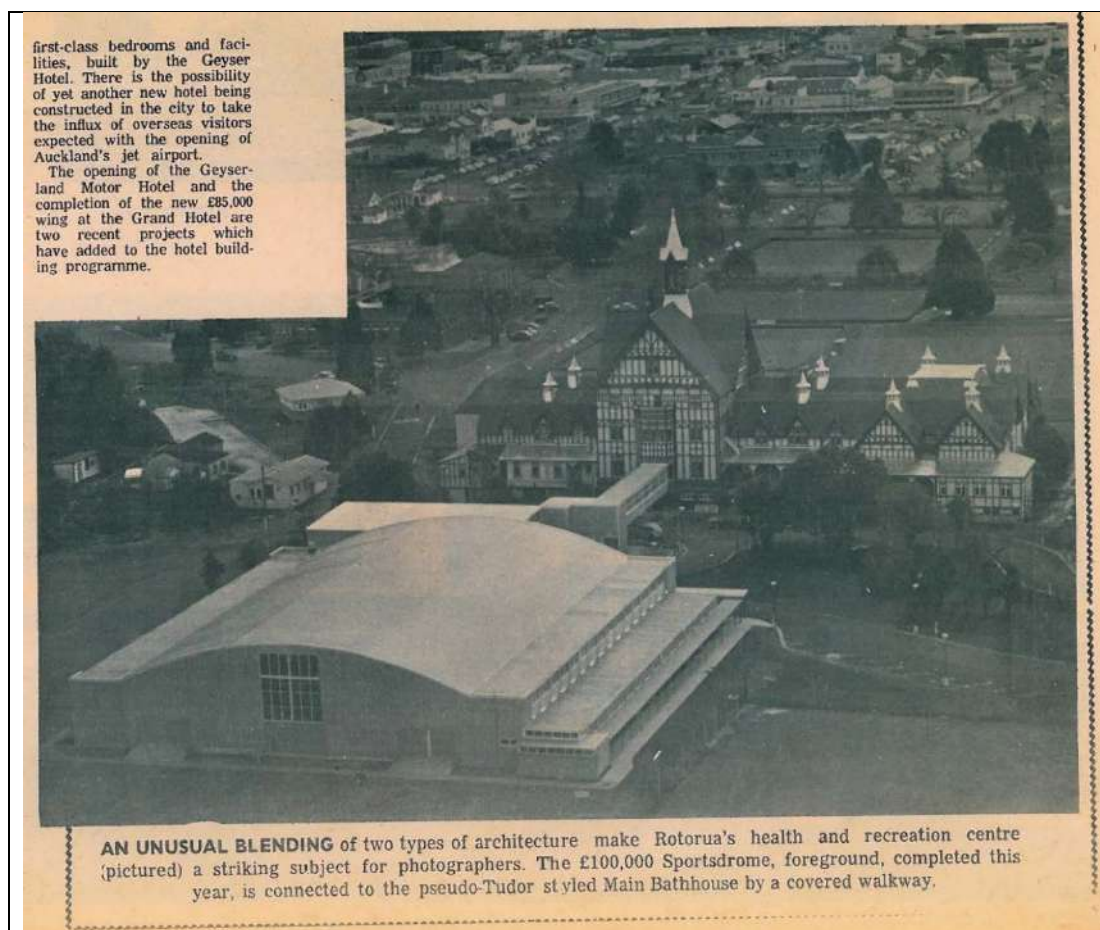


Figure 44 – The £100,000 Sportsdrome building and connection bridge to the Bath House, 1964.

Source: Rotorua Museum

¹⁶⁸ 'Daily Post,' 13 August 1977

¹⁶⁹ RLC. RCI 002-0685. Main Bath Building Sundry Tenancies. Town Clerk to Rotorua & District Historical Society, 1 August 1977

It was observed at the time of alterations that the mainly totara timber framing was in good condition. Also of note were the horizontal truss members joined by steel dowels and wedge-like pins, as well as the tenons and wooden wedges locking the joinery frames.

With access required past the coffee lounge to the north-west wing art gallery (opened 12 October 1977), a bar grille and trellis screens were fitted to secure it and the adjacent souvenir shop. The downstairs toilets were brought up to the standards required by the Disabled Persons Code.

The original kauri columns once in the foyer and reputedly turned in England, were erected at the entrance to the north wing gallery, no longer functional but ornamental. The columns were returned to their original locations during restoration work in the 1990s.



Figure 45 – The building during the 1970s.

Source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Images



Figure 46 – The removal of the built-in verandahs during restoration work in the 1990s.

Source: Rotorua Museum

Mud Bath Exhibition

In 1980 a re-creation of a basement mud bath was completed, with steps from the walkway down to the new display. Vandalism later closed the display for three years with the space eventually being designated to storage. Consideration was then given to restoring and improving the display, with outside visual access only. The mud bath basement was originally accessed via a basement walkway beneath the building. The four baths on view remain largely as they were when the building opened in 1908.

Wohlmann originally imagined a much more expansive mud bath area with twelve mud baths proposed for the south wing, however, the concept was abandoned due to the pressures of an endless list of hydrogen sulphide-inflicted maintenance problems and funding shortfalls.¹⁷⁰

1983 South Wing Addition

In May 1982, the Rotorua Council recommended that extension of the south wing proceed. Murray-North Partners Ltd reported that the existing concrete walls at the west end were defective and would have to be demolished and replaced by basement block walls.¹⁷¹

The proposed extensions required the removal of a retaining wall and a steam valve at the south end and provided 111 square metres of extra display space and the same amount of basement storage.

The completed south wing was designed to match the original north wing but is by no means identical to it [see 2.8.10]. For example, there was no matching promenade roof. The fascia

¹⁷⁰ <http://www.rotoruamuseum.co.nz/visit-us/mud-bath-basement/>

¹⁷¹ RLC. 026-0718. Rotorua Museum: General Rents etc., 29 June 1982 Report by Murray-North Partners Ltd to RLC District Manager

timbers appear to be of treated pine, which accounts for the dark staining developed from chemical reaction.

A notice to tenderers directed that *“the west façade fascias will be machine-pressed or cut out ... Exact replicas are not required.”*¹⁷² There would be no hand-tooled work to match that of the north wing.

The exterior linings comprised fibre cement sheets with wood battens and the interior linings of fibrous plaster. The plinth was plastered blockwork and the tiles concrete.

The south wing second gable was completed in February 1983, with the official opening taking place in May that year.



Figure 47 – The west (front) elevation showing the 1911 gable addition (left) and the 1983 gable addition (right) with the 2011 addition in the background. Note the inaccuracies of the replica detailing on the 1983 façade.

Source: DPA Architects, 2019

2008 North Wing Extension

The north wing addition designed to accommodate the Rotorua Trust Gallery and partially funded by a \$7.5 million grant from Prime Minister Helen Clark opened in November 2008. The addition consisted of 187m² of new exhibition areas. During the construction phase, the existing air conditioning system for the building was modernised. The addition provided much needed additional space for the Museum to develop larger exhibitions including touring exhibitions.

¹⁷² RLC. 026-0718. Rotorua Museum: General Rents etc. Notice to tenderers No.2, 25 March 1982



Figure 48 – The 2008 north wing addition under construction (left) and completed (right).
Source: Rotorua Museum and DPA Architects

2011 South Wing Extension

In May 2009, development began on the final addition to the Bath House building which would see the building completed to a footprint originally envisaged by Dr Wohlmann. The addition was named 'The Stafford Wing', after Rotorua historian Don Stafford who unfortunately passed away in April 2010, not long before the opening of the wing in September 2011. This gallery area was used to exhibit items relating to Te Arawa, the local Maori people.



Figure 49 – The 1911 (left) and 1983 (right) gable additions in 2011 showing the front facades that were preserved and incorporated into the new south wing.
Source: DPA Architects



Figure 50 – The demolition of the 1911 and 1983 additions in 2011 showing the rear of the facades that were preserved and incorporated into the new south wing.
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 51 (left) – The completed south elevation of the 2011 addition. Note the inaccuracies of the detailing and colouring of the stained glass windows compared with the 1908 building, and Figure 52 (right) – The completed east elevation of the 2011 addition showing the loading dock which was not part of the original plans.
Source: DPA Architects

5.4 Architectural Description

Architectural Influences

The exterior form of the building generally follows the plan, again being symmetrical about the massive central section containing the foyer. The central section is capped with an immense tiled roof in the form of a gable running east/west. A smaller gable running north/south intersects the first. At the point where the gables meet, a tower is positioned.



Figure 53 – Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire. A late sixteenth century manor house which is of similar half-timbered construction to the Rotorua Bath House.

Source: Sconzani Blogspot

The tower, in fact, looks somewhat out of proportion. A review of the original drawings shows that the tower was originally to be larger. During the course of construction, a decision, immediately regretted, was made to reduce the size of the tower.

Above the main entrance a balcony is placed on large timber columns. Immediately above this, a massive faceted bay window gives light to the upper level of the foyer. This window is reflected on the east elevation with a smaller window.

To either side of the central element, north and south wings extend out below two smaller gables. To the north, these meet a second pair of gables running at right angles. Where the gables intersect, a promenade deck was originally located, marked by four small towers at the corners and ornate railings. These later features have since been removed.

Although the south wing was extended in plan, the area between the gables was never infilled, reinforcing the feeling that this end was never quite completed.

To complete the west elevation, a verandah runs along the greater part of the façade. Immediately above the verandah, a series of windows located in small gables positioned along the roof planes would have admitted light to the interior.

The east elevation was also originally intended to be symmetrical and similar to the west elevation, the only differences being the smaller central bay window and the omission of the entry doors and balcony above. On this elevation, the verandah was also to extend around

the ends of the side wings. This elevation has been compromised by the infilling of sections of the verandah to provide additional accommodation.

Architectural Concept

The original concept for the Bath House was the brainchild of the Government Balneologist, Dr A. S. Wohlmann. Wohlmann had apparently inspected a number of European spas during a study tour of the continent. He is said to have preferred the “*homely timbered buildings of Nauheim*” rather than “*cold marble palaces*”. In another reference, Wohlmann is said to have described the concept as an “*old English half-timber house*”. He also apparently had a book of “Tudor Models” in his possession.

‘Half timbering’ refers to a structure which features a frame of load bearing timber exposed on the exterior of the building with spaces between the timbers called panels. While the origin of the term “half timbered” is unclear, the technique of an exposed timber frame with infill panels was certainly well developed by the 12th century and flourished through to the 18th century.

The style was refined during the period between 1570 and 1630 and became known as the Elizabethan style after the reigning monarch of the time. It was essentially a homely style, with massing and recession of forms in evidence. It was also highly decorative. In the period, the number of gables grew. If the gable was sufficiently large, a window would be inserted. Houses generally became more symmetrical and looked out upon formal gardens with fountains and yew trees. Inside, a grand wide staircase, would often be built around an open well in the Great Hall. The Elizabethan Style had a resurgence in popularity in the early 1900’s, including when the Bath House was built, where it became known as the Elizabethan Revival style – based on the same principles as the original style but with minor alterations depending on local factors and influences.

There are also influences from the Tudor (1485 – 1558), Jacobean (1603 – 1620), and Edwardian (1901 – 1910) periods of English architecture. In a Tudor manor house a central Great Hall with a central projecting porch was a common feature, often with an intermediate floor to provide an upper storey. A wing extending either side of the hall was also common. Buildings from the Jacobean Period were symmetrical and dramatic.

Towards the end of the period, the move was back to a plainer, simpler style. By the end of the seventeenth century, the great timber framed period was over.

In summary, the Bath House can essentially be described as an Elizabethan Revival building, with Edwardian, Jacobean and Tudor influences. The desire to provide a homely atmosphere is Elizabethan in origin. Obvious features include its symmetry, half-timbered framing and the proliferation of gables. The tall square headed windows are from this period as is the exposed timber framing and highly decorative “strapwork”. The finials, decorative gables and towers are Elizabethan as are the original decorative ridge crestings. From this period also comes the grand staircase, the open well and the formal garden. Tudor details include the central hall abutted by two side wings and the projecting porch.



Figure 54 – Well preserved Tudor and Elizabethan buildings in Chester.
Source: European Year of Cultural Heritage

The verandah is an interesting addition and would not have been found on an original Elizabethan building and, in fact, the Inspector of Works of the day objected to its construction on the basis that it would compromise the architectural style. Wohlmann was determined however to have the verandah as a place where his patrons could promenade after taking the waters. They were, of course, a common feature of vernacular architecture of the period and an appropriate response to the relatively harsh conditions found in the antipodes. As it transpired, the verandahs became such an integral part of the Bath House building that it is now difficult to imagine it without them.



Figure 55 – The Rotorua Bath House depicted in a postcard after 1911.
Source: HipPostcard

5.5 Construction and Key Physical Changes

Despite the imposing appearance of the building, the internal area is surprisingly small."

K.B.Longmore¹⁷³



Figure 56 – Native timber being cut down for the construction of the Rotorua Bath House, circa 1905.

Source: Rotorua Museum

Construction and Materials

Subfloor

The Bath House can basically be described as a timber framed building on a concrete base. The ground floor is lightweight concrete suspended some 1.9 metres above the ground on pumice concrete foundation piers and walls. Barbed wire was embedded to reinforce both walls and floors.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ RM. K. B. Longmore, Assistant General Manager, Tourist Department, to the Minister of Tourist & Health Resorts 17 July 1957

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.rotoruamuseum.co.nz/visit-us/taking-the-cure/building-the-bath-house/>



Figure 57 – The pumice concrete columns and vaulted ceiling structure under construction, 1906.
Source: Rotorua Museum

Walls

The concrete basement walls extend up to sill level with timber framing above. The exposed Elizabethan style timber framing is uncommon in New Zealand and consists of vertical studs with horizontal nogs housed in to the studs and fixed with timber pegs. Totara was specified for the framing with Puriri for the pegs.

Traditionally, infill panels between the framing would have been wattle and daub, lath and plaster or brick. In the Bath House, it was recognised that the ground on which the building was to stand had poor bearing characteristics and the weight of the building had to be reduced. Brick as an infill was therefore out of the question. Plaster may have been thought to be lacking in durability.

The answer was extraordinary simply and probably revolutionary for its time. It involved mixing a light weight concrete and pouring it into moulds lined with newspaper. The resulting panels, only 15 mm in thickness, were then positioned into a rebate in the frame and held in place with timber battens. Although some cracks have occurred, the panels have proved exceptionally durable.

At various locations, decorative framing or “strapwork” was then fixed over the infill panels.

The 1983 addition used fibre cement board linings with battens fixed over the joints as a means of achieving economies. The result has been prone to leaks and the edges have had to be sealed with silicone. In this section, tanalised pine has been used in lieu of the original native timber. The hydrogen sulphide within the atmosphere has attacked the salts used to treat the timber with black staining being the result.



Figure 58 – The exposed timber framing with concrete panels on the west façade of the 1908 section of the building

Source: DPA Architects

Joinery

Apart from a reference to matai door sills, the timber from which the joinery was constructed is unknown. It is likely that kauri was used for the sills, however, this will need to be verified if repairs are required. Native timbers of kauri, tōtara, matai and pūriri were milled and used in the construction of the building.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ <http://www.rotoruamuseum.co.nz/visit-us/taking-the-cure/building-the-bath-house/>



Figure 59 – Original timber joinery in north wing (left) and Mud Baths (right)
Source: DPA Architects



Figure 60 – Original timber joinery on the east façade of the 1908 section of the building
Source: DPA Architects

Roof

The roof structure consists of timber trusses and rafters over which timber sarking was laid. It is believed that totara was used for the main structural members with kauri elsewhere.

The roof was originally sheathed with more ornate and darker coloured Bridgewater 'well-burnt' tiles as described in the original specification. These tiles can be seen in photographs of the building up until 1952 and some were found in the basement. The roof was re-sheathed with the present Marseille tiles.

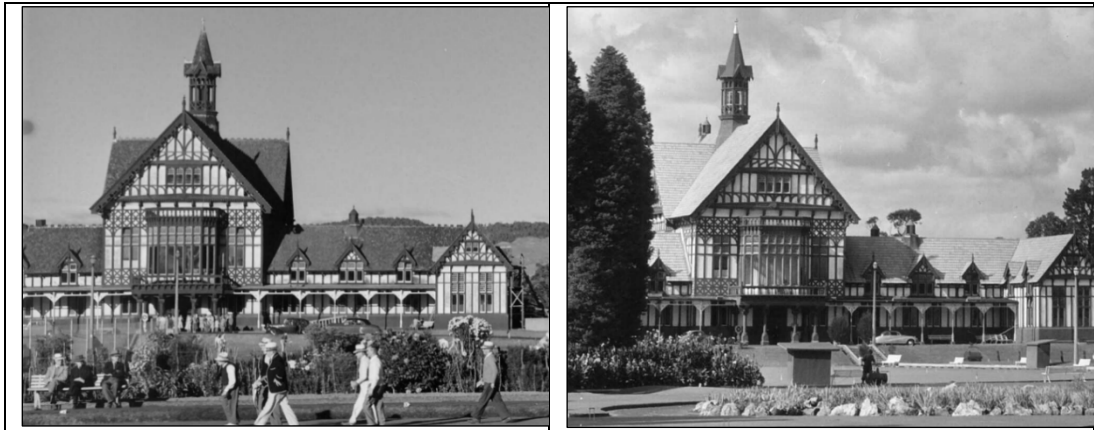


Figure 61 (left) – One of the last photos taken showing the original Bridgewater tiles (1950), and Figure 62 (right) – The new Marseille tiles in 1953. Note the considerable change in brightness.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library



Figure 63 - an original Bridgewater roof tile and ridge tiles from the Bath House.
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 64 - The original Bridgewater roof tiles in 1908.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

Floor Finishes

Within the central hall, the concrete floor slab was overlaid with tiles that were originally light coloured– it is assumed that all tiles were replaced in the 1920's with tiles of a different design and colour. At some point the main floor has been releveled and tiles have been replaced again in this area only. The 1920's tiles remain on the upper floor area.

Elsewhere on the ground floor, the floor slab appears to have been overlaid with a dense coloured plaster with tiles forming borders.

The upper floor is tongue and groove timber, believed to be matai although much of this has been lifted and replaced.



Figure 65 - The original light coloured floor tiles in the central hall and raised floor area.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library



Figure 66 - The original light coloured floor tiles in the central hall and steps.
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 67 - The original light coloured floor tiles in the central hall.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library



Figure 68 - The original light coloured floor tiles in the central hall.
Source: Alexander Turnbull Library



Figure 69 – The deep bath in the north wing showing the original floor tiles and tiled dado.
 NB: This photo was taken prior to the restoration work currently being undertaken, as this bath is now covered by plywood for safety reasons.
 Source: ExploringMyOwnBackyard



Figure 70 – The original floor treatment of the Central Hall Mezzanine.
 Source: Alexander Turnbull Library

Interior Wall Linings

Walls are generally plaster, either over concrete or timber laths where walls are timber framed. Dado moulds and, in some instances skirtings, have also been formed in plaster. In the areas that originally housed baths, glazed tiles and skirtings were fixed to the walls to provide an impermeable surface. Remnants of these tiled surfaces can be seen in the north east corner. Within the main hall at the entry level is a fine timber panelled dado. At the upper level can be found remnants of a simpler tongue and groove dado.



Figure 71 - The north wing corridor probably prior to the 1920s showing original dados.
Source: Rotorua Museum



Figure 72 - The corridor to the north wing showing the central hall through the foyer doors. The Rachel bath is immediately to the right.

Source: Alexander Turnbull Library, DPA Architects



Figure 73 – Wall constructed in the north wing showing remains of tiled dado on lath and plaster wall construction.

Source: DPA Architects



Figure 74 – Original dado, doors and architraves in the central hall.

Source: DPA Architects

Ceilings

Original ceilings were again generally plaster over laths fixed to joists. Cornice mouldings and roses were also formed in plaster.

Within the main hall, the ceilings at both levels consist of narrow tongue and groove boards, believed to be rimu. Roof beams at the upper level were also specified as rimu.



Figure 75 – Original plaster ceilings, ceiling roses and ceiling lights in the north wing
Source: DPA Architects

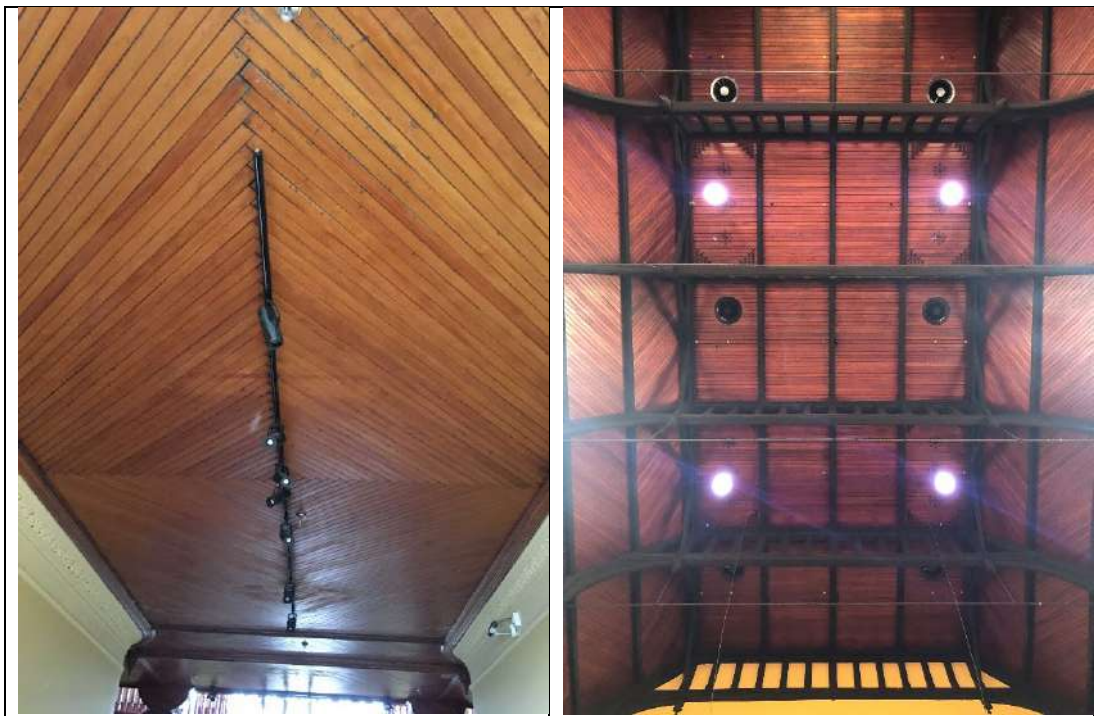


Figure 76 (left) – Original T&G ceilings, central hall, and Figure 77 (right) – Original roof trusses and sarking, central hall.
Source: DPA Architects



Figure 69 – Original coffered ceiling, north wing
Source: DPA Architects



Figure 78 – Original ceiling, rose and cornices, ground floor office
Source: DPA Architects

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Approach

Levels of Significance

The recommended levels of significance used to assess the elements of the Rotorua Bath House are based on the same principles published in James Semple Kerr's *The Conservation Plan*, which was first published in 1982 and has since evolved and expanded through six editions and twelve impressions. It has been widely used by heritage practitioners and owners worldwide. It outlines the logical processes of how to prepare a Conservation Plan to guide and manage change to a heritage item appropriately. In 2013, Kerr's publication was adopted by ICOMOS as a preferred guideline for the production and publication of Conservation Plans with specific regard to heritage buildings.

The following values have been established, based on Kerr's publication, for the assessment of significance:

Exceptional Significance – Elements which make a fundamental and essential contribution to the significance of the Bath House.

Considerable Significance – Elements that make a substantial contribution to significance, although some degree of modification or degradation may have taken place.

Some Significance – Elements which have lesser or minimal value. They may have undergone a higher degree of modification or degradation. It may also include fabric which is not historic but which still has significance.

No Significance – Elements with no significance within this particular category.

For the purpose of evaluating elements which obscure original fabric and are intrusive to the building, the following category has been added to Kerr's above values:

Intrusive – Elements which may obscure other fabric of greater value or may seriously detract from the overall significance of the building.

The Rotorua Bath House has **exceptional overall significance** as one of New Zealand's most renowned and visually distinctive buildings. It is also notable for its former use, its architectural style and its contextual influence. The different areas of the building have varying degrees of significance in their own right and have therefore been assessed individually to ascertain their values independently of the building as a whole. The following section assesses the heritage value of the different areas under various categories.

Criteria for Assessment of Significance - Heritage Values

The criteria used to assess significance of individual values in this Conservation Plan are those used by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT) in the document '*Sustainable Management of Historic Heritage Guidance – Assessment Criteria to Assist in the Identification and Assessment of Historic Heritage Values*'. For a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the significance of the various elements and areas of the building, the value of each section of the building has been assessed under the various categories in order of their construction date.

Physical Values

Archaeological Information

Does the place or area have the potential to contribute information about the human history of the region, or to current archaeological research questions, through investigation using archaeological methods?

Architecture

Is the place significant because of its design, form, scale, materials, style, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural element?

Scientific

Does the area or place have the potential to provide scientific information about the history of the region?

Technology and Engineering Significance

Does the place demonstrate innovative or important methods of construction or design, does it contain unusual construction materials, is it an early example of the use of a particular construction technique or does it have the potential to contribute information about technological or engineering history?

Rarity

Is the place or area, or are features within it, unique, unusual, uncommon or rare at a district, regional or national level or in relation to particular historical themes?

Representativeness

Is the place or area a good example of its class, for example, in terms of design, type, features, use, technology or time period?

Integrity

Does the place have integrity, retaining significant features from its time of construction, or later periods when important modifications or additions were carried out?

Vulnerability

Is the place vulnerable to deterioration or destruction or threatened by land use activities?

Context or Group

Is the place or area part of a group of heritage places, a landscape, a townscape or setting which when considered as a whole amplify the heritage values of the place and group/landscape or extend its significance?

Historic Values

People

Is the place associated with the life or works of a well-known or important individual, group or organisation?

Events

Is the place associated with an important event in local, regional or national history?

Patterns

Is the place associated with important aspects, processes, themes or patterns of local, regional or national history?

Cultural Values

Identity

Is the place or area a focus of community, regional or national identity or sense of place, and does it have social value and provide evidence of cultural or historical continuity?

Public Esteem

Is the place held in high public esteem for its heritage or aesthetic values or as a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment?

Commemorative

Does the place have symbolic or commemorative significance to people who use or have used it, or to the descendants of such people, as a result of its special interest, character, landmark, amenity or visual appeal?

Education

Could the place contribute, through public education, to people's awareness, understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures?

Tangata Whenua

Is the place important to tangata whenua for traditional, spiritual, cultural or historical reasons?

Statutory Recognition

Does the place or area have recognition in New Zealand legislation or international law including: World Heritage Listing under the World Heritage Convention 1972; registration under the Historic Places Act 1993; is it an archaeological site as defined by the Historic Places Act 1993; is it a statutory acknowledgement under claim settlement legislation; or is it recognised by special legislation?

6.2 Values Assessment

Levels of significance:

1. *National – possessing heritage values of significance to Aotearoa New Zealand*
2. *Local – possessing heritage values of significance to the people of the Rotorua Lakes District and/or the city of Rotorua*

Physical Values

Archaeological Information

Does the place or area have the potential to contribute information about the human history of the region, or to current archaeological research questions, through investigation using archaeological methods?

The site may hold pre-1900 archaeological significance for Ngati Whakaue as it appears it was a place of human activity prior to the acquisition of the land by the Crown in the late 19th century.

Architecture

Is the place significant because of its design, form, scale, materials, style, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural element?

a) The Building as a Whole

Architecturally, the Bath House draws from many architectural influences and styles such as Edwardian (1901-1918) and Elizabethan Revival (the original Elizabethan style is considered to have originated between the years of 1570 and 1630, but the style had a resurgence in popularity in the early 1900's). There are also influences from the Tudor (1485 – 1558) and the Jacobean (1603 – 1620) periods of English architecture within the building. This eclectic amalgamation of English styles was highly unusual for the locality at the time and, as a result, the building is considered to have **exceptional** architectural significance due to its design, form, scale, materials, overall style, use of ornamentation, and craftsmanship.

b) 1908 Section

The original 1908 section of the Bath House is a rare example of an attempt to construct a building using the Elizabethan Revival architectural style in New Zealand. Influences such as the half-timbered construction, gables, joinery and the grand staircase are readily discerned. In 1954 the New Zealand Herald quoted a description of the Bath House as “one of two unique buildings in New Zealand,”¹⁷⁶ and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Trust describes it today as “the most impressive Elizabethan Revival building in New Zealand.”¹⁷⁷

The building is in the form of a large manor house which was successfully adapted to accommodate its original use as a Bath House. It was also modified from its traditional form to suit New Zealand conditions and preferences – the addition of the verandahs (now considered to be one of the most defining features of the building) would have been

¹⁷⁶ 'New Zealand Herald,' 1 September 1954. (The other unique structure referred to was the Canterbury Provincial Building)

¹⁷⁷ Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Trust, *The Bath House (Former) Summary*

considered an unusual feature and one that was possibly at odds with the building's Elizabethan architectural style when it was completed.

However, as an attempt to create an essentially Elizabethan antipodean spa building which is aesthetically pleasing, the building is highly successful. Its decorative exposed timber framing, towers, collection of gables below sweeping roofs and articulation of forms all make for a delightful composition.

The Bath House is without doubt the best-known building in Rotorua and has **considerable** landmark significance. The roof, and in particular the tower, can be seen from many vantage points in the city. Due to budget constraints in 1908 the main central tower was reduced in size, and the extreme north wing and main south wing omitted. Decisions such as the reduction of the tower size were immediately regretted.¹⁷⁸

The original interior spaces, including the central hall and north wing baths, have **exceptional** significance as relatively intact examples of the original 1908 Bath House building. Its foyer, a stunning space, was conceived as a pump room and concert hall. It reflects a pre-world war fondness for public gatherings for musical entertainment.

It was planned as the centre-piece of the developing Sanatorium Reserve gardens. Arthur Wohlmann was particularly pleased with the site for the Bath House, a fact most evident when he stated: *"The building site selected is almost ideal. Close to the centre of town, with a large open lawn in front, gay flower-beds, lakelets and winding paths, a belt of trees behind hiding the springs and mud pools, beyond this the blue expanse of Lake Rotorua, and circling all the green and russet and purple hills."*¹⁷⁹

c) 1911 Section

The 1911 addition has similar architectural values to the 1908 section as it was constructed only three years subsequently, although there was controversy surrounding the inclusion of certain architectural elements.

When first constructed, the addition was highly criticised by the Minister of the Tourist Department at the time, who considered the addition so out of character with the 1908 building that he insisted a gable be included to give cohesion to the south wing. The design was changed accordingly, and it was essentially built to the plans envisaged by Wohlmann some ten years prior.

The 1911 addition was eventually demolished in 2011 with the exception of the front façades. The remaining north and west facades make an important contribution to the original 1908 heritage fabric of the Bath House as they represent the first attempt towards the full realisation of the original architectural scheme.

d) 1983 Section

The 1983 addition made the building symmetrical for the first time, albeit not fully realising Wohlmann's scheme in its entirety as the extreme north and south wing additions were yet to be built. It has architectural significance as a continuation of the same style.

¹⁷⁸ WNA. TO-1 1908/135/9 T.E. Donne to B. S. Corlett 20 October 1908

¹⁷⁹ RM. (unsourced, but probably from TO-1 Series, WNA). A. S. Wohlmann to T. E. Donne

The 1983 addition was demolished in 2011 with the exception of the front (west) façade. This remaining facade is an important contribution to the building as it was the first major addition following the closure of the bath house and the reopening of the building as the Rotorua Museum. When first constructed adjoining the 1911 addition, it was the subject of some criticism when the decision was made to machine-press ornamentation details instead of using traditional authentic Edwardian reproduction techniques.

a) 2008 Section

The 2008 addition would essentially realise Wohlmann's original scheme to the northern end of the building, albeit the interior was designed to cater specifically for the Rotorua Museum and many of the exterior openings were reconfigured.

b) 2011 Section

The 2011 addition completed the total symmetry of Wohlmann's original scheme, however, as with the 2008 addition, the interior was designed to cater specifically for the Rotorua Museum and some of the exterior openings were reconfigured.

The architectural significance of the later additions lies in the realisation of the original overall scheme for the Bath House envisaged by Wohlmann and built in a replica of the original the same architectural style as the original 1908 building, despite not using the same traditional construction methods.

Scientific

Does the area or place have the potential to provide scientific information about the history of the region?

a) 1908 Section

The original 1908 section of the Rotorua Bath House itself is of no scientific value, however, within its history is an informative tradition of medical experimentation and observation in the field of hydrotherapy, which could have the potential to provide scientific information about medical practices used in the region at the time.

Although many of the medical findings of the past have been superseded, if not discredited, the Bath House once provided a centre for invalids of all kinds, whether suffering from nerves, skin conditions, or rheumatoid diseases. It also provided a centre for specialist doctors struggling to provide relief for suffering and utilising local mineral waters in conjunction with the most advanced overseas equipment at the time. As a result, the 1908 section of the Bath House presents **considerable scientific value**.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 part of the Rotorua Bath House is similarly of no scientific value, but within its history is an informative tradition of medical experimentation and observation in the field of hydrotherapy and other treatments.

c) 1983, 2008, and 2011 Sections

These sections of the building have no known scientific value.

Technology and Engineering Significance

Does the place demonstrate innovative or important methods of construction or design, does it contain unusual construction materials, is it an early example of the use of a particular construction technique or does it have the potential to contribute information about technological or engineering history?

a) 1908 Section

The building of the 1908 part of the Rotorua Bath House would have represented a considerable feat at the time of its construction and is a tribute to the skills of the Edwardian workmen. At the time the Bath House was built, the use of reinforcing, fire-proof slab walls and even electricity, demonstrates that its architects and builders were at the forefront of technology at the time.

The half-timbered method of construction is of interest in a country where 100 x 50 studs sheathed with weatherboards were considered standard. The technique was adapted to New Zealand conditions with the use of precast concrete infill panels. Although the use of precast panels became common later, particularly in the 1960s, this was the first recorded use of such a technique. As a result, the 1908 section of the Bath House presents **exceptional technology and engineering significance**.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 part of the Rotorua Bath House, although considerably smaller in size compared with the 1908 building, is also considered technologically significant as it was built using the same style and construction methods only three years later than the original building, likely by the same Edwardian workers.

c) 1983 Section

The 1983 part of the building has no known technological significance.

Unlike the 1908 and 1911 segments of the building, the 1983 addition featured fibre cement panels with decorative timber framing attached to the exterior as a veneer as opposed to the framing being a crucial load bearing element of the façade with precast concrete infill panels sitting within the timber structure. This method was continued through to the 2008 and 2011 additions.

d) 2008 and 2011 Section

The 2008 and 2011 sections of the building have no known technological significance.

Rarity

Is the place or area, or are features within it, unique, unusual, uncommon or rare at a district, regional or national level or in relation to particular historical themes?

a) 1908 Section

The 1908 building is a rare example of an Edwardian attempt to construct a building using the Elizabethan Revival style of architecture within a New Zealand context. Elements such as the half-timbered construction, gables, joinery and the grand staircase are all features of this style that were highly unusual in New Zealand. Due to these unique elements, it has **considerable rarity value**.

The half-timbered method of construction with pre-cast concrete panels was also rare in New Zealand where the use of 100 x 50 timber studs sheathed with weatherboards were considered to be standard.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 addition is considered to have similar rarity value as the original 1908 building, as it was built using the same style and construction methods only three years subsequently.

c) The 1983, 2008 and 2011 Sections

These additions, although constructed much later than the original 1908 building and 1911 addition, are still considered to have some rarity value due to the continuation of a unique English style, although constructed using modern building techniques.

Representativeness

Is the place or area a good example of its class, for example, in terms of design, type, features, use, technology or time period?

a) 1908 Section

The 1908 building is an exceptional and unique example of a half-timbered Elizabethan Revival building in New Zealand built during the Edwardian period and is therefore a good example of its design type, features, technology and time period. The combination of this particular style gives the Bath House **exceptional representative significance** at a national level. Today, it continues to provide a unique setting for its new use as a museum and art gallery.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 addition is also an exceptional example of Elizabethan Revival architecture and construction built in the southern hemisphere during the Edwardian period, giving it **considerable representative significance** as a continuation of the same style.

c) 1983, 2008 and 2011 Sections

These additions, although constructed much later than the original 1908 building and 1911 addition, are still considered to have some representative significance due to the continuation of a unique architectural style, although constructed using modern building techniques.

Integrity

Does the place have integrity, retaining significant features from its time of construction, or later periods when important modifications or additions were carried out?

a) 1908 Section

Although many of the internal spaces of the 1908 building were demolished and rebuilt during the 1960s and 70s, much of the original interior fabric survives, including original floor surfaces, baths, ceilings, staircases and dados. The exterior of the building is essentially original apart from the replacement of the original dark coloured Bridgewater roof tiles and subsequent additions to the north and south. The concrete precast infill panels have also been painted at some point after the 1930s. Some of the original external windows and doors

have been boarded up or replaced and some windows and doors have since been added. As a result, the majority of the 1908 building is still largely intact and the 1908 section of the building is assessed as having **exceptional integrity value**.

b) 1911 Section

Although the interior of this part of the building was demolished and rebuilt in 2011, the original north and west facades survive and are essentially in original condition. The exterior of the 1911 section of the building is assessed as having considerable integrity value.

c) 1983, 2008, and 2011 Sections

As these sections of the building are later additions designed to match the style of the 1908 and 1911 buildings, they have some integrity value.

Vulnerability

Is the place vulnerable to deterioration or destruction or threatened by land use activities?

a) 1908 Section

In August 2017 a Detained Seismic Assessment Report (DSA) was completed by GDC Consultants Ltd for the Rotorua Lakes Council. This report rated the 1908 building at 15% of the New Building Standard (NBS). This resulted in the building being vacated and closed to the public as buildings under 34% NBS are considered to be earthquake prone. Although the south wing was rated at 80% NBS, the entire building overall is rated less than 19%. As a result, the building as a whole and particularly the 1908 section, is considered to be potentially vulnerable to deterioration or destruction.

Accordingly, a preferred option to strengthen and repair the building was chosen and in September 2018 DPA Architects of Auckland were appointed to carry out design work for the upgrading of the building in conjunction with Rotorua firm Carling Architects. GDC Consultants were appointed engineers for the seismic upgrade of the building which is expected to be completed in 2021.

Other factors which contribute to the building's vulnerability include the risk of fire, and general weathering.

b) 1911, 1983, 2008, and 2011 Sections

As mentioned above, the entire building is considered to be earthquake prone and therefore vulnerable to deterioration and destruction as parts of the building including the 1911 section are rated less than 34% of the New Building Standard (NBS). Although parts of the building are rated at 80% NBS, the building as a whole is rated at less than 19% NBS.

Context or Group

Is the place or area part of a group of heritage places, a landscape, a townscape or setting which when considered as a whole amplify the heritage values of the place and group/ landscape or extend its significance?

The former Rotorua Bath House building is, without doubt, the best-known building in Rotorua and has **exceptional contextual value** as a landmark in the local area. The roof, and in particular the tower, can be seen from many vantage points within the city. Regardless of

which direction one approaches it from, the building's architectural and topographical prominence is obvious.

The building is also located in close proximity to other heritage buildings including the Blue Baths (1933) and Princes Gate Hotel (1897, transferred to Rotorua from Waihi in 1917), making it part of a group of local heritage buildings constructed in the early 1900s with a focus towards tourism and leisure activities. The surrounding Government Gardens (previously known as the Sanatorium Gardens) also contribute to the contextual value of the group.

Historic Values

People

Is the place associated with the life or works of a well-known or important individual, group or organisation?

a) 1908 Section

The 1908 Rotorua Bath House building is associated with a number of notable people which contribute to its historic value and significance. Foremost among these individuals is the Government Balneologist at the time, Dr Wohlmann, who initially conceptualised the building. His observations and comments are referred to consistently throughout this document and have provided exceptional insight to the complicated and fascinating history of the Bath House.

Other notable individuals associated with the Bath House were Messrs Corlett and Trigg, who translated Dr Wohlmann's ideas into reality with assistance from J Campbell - the well-known Government Architect of the time. James Wrigley, another prominent architect, also provided architectural services. The building was opened by Rear-Admiral Sperry of the United States Navy along with 200 of his officers and New Zealand Prime Minister Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward.

The Australian sculptor, Charles F Summers, designed twelve out of the thirteen statues that originally graced the foyer. Summers had originally come from Melbourne and had studied in Rome for 32 years. The remaining statue is by Fossi.

b) 1911 Section

There is no known association of this part of the building with a well-known or important individual or organisation, although, the design of this part of the building prompted an intervention from the New Zealand Government. The Minister of the Tourist Department at the time considered the design of the 1911 addition so out of keeping with the rest of the building that he decided that a gable should be included to give uniformity to the building.

c) 1983 Section

There is no known association of this part of the building with a well-known or important individual or organisation.

d) 2008 Section

The 2008 part of the building is associated with the Rotorua Museum Centennial Trust which was established with the purpose of raising funds for the completion of the Rotorua Bath House building to the original design concept as envisaged by Dr Wohlmann.

The project was divided into three stages. The first stage was completed in 2006 when the north wing viewing platform was reinstated. The platform was in place when the building opened in 1908, however, it was removed sometime in the late 1930s or 40s, probably after the 1931 Napier Earthquake.

On the 4th of July 2008, the Prime Minister and Minister for Art, Culture and Heritage, Helen Clark, announced a significant grant to complete the final stage of the project. The \$7.5 million grant allowed the Rotorua Museum Centennial Trust to effectively finally realise Wohlmann's vision.

e) 2011 Section

The 2011 south wing was named to commemorate Rotorua historian Don Stafford, to acknowledge the considerable contribution he had made to Rotorua Museum and to the Rotorua community.

Don Stafford was delighted to receive this honour but passed away prior to the completion of the Don Stafford Wing in 2011.

Events

Is the place associated with an important event in local, regional or national history?

a) 1908 Section

The opening event of the 1908 building is of considerable historic significance. The opening of the Bath House coincided with the visit to Rotorua of Rear-Admiral Sperry and 200 of his naval officers. After the rousing and colourful Arawa welcome in the Sanatorium Reserve, featuring poi dances, haka and speeches in Maori, Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward officially opened the main doors. Then, from the first-floor balcony, he addressed the gathering, outlining the recent rapid changes in Rotorua and the modernity of the facilities within the new building.

Sir Joseph formally declared the Bath House open and the crowd cheered. Following tributes by the Prime Minister to Balneologist Arthur Wohlmann, Tourist and Health Resorts general manager T. E. Donne, the architects Corlett and Trigg, resident engineer Lawrence Birks and the builder Hutchison, Rear Admiral Sperry was asked to say a few words and said that “as for the building, he would like to take it away with him.”

The ceremony over, the public was admitted to the building accompanied by a string orchestra providing music. Meanwhile the Tourist Department provided the personnel of the American fleet with printed material and photographs of the new spa building to ensure some publicity in the United States.

b) 1911, 1983, 2008, and 2011 Sections

There is no known association of these sections of the building with an important event in local, regional or national history.

Patterns

Is the place associated with important aspects, processes, themes or patterns of local, regional or national history?

a) 1908 Section

Historically, the Rotorua Bath House is a monument to the New Zealand Government's first major commitment to the tourist industry, illustrating the beginning of a pattern of Government driven development in the tourism sector. Although other spas had previously been established (at Te Aroha for example), Rotorua was both the first, and last, full-scale attempt to create a spa town in the southern hemisphere with the hope of attracting northern visitors. The construction of the Bath House was the culmination of this pattern of spa development.

Thus, while the attractions of Rotorua had previously been seen as marketable commodities to the tourist industry, the construction of the Bath House emphatically put the city on the tourist map. The city's emphasis on tourism as a means of attracting revenue continues to this day. The Bath House also shows a pattern in the community's belief and investment in therapeutic treatments, with the spas believed to possess medicinal and therapeutic values.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 addition to the Rotorua Bath House is associated with a further Government commitment to expanding the tourist industry in Rotorua.

c) 1983 Section

There is no known association of this part of the building with important aspects, processes, themes or patterns of local, regional or national history. However, the 1983 addition reflects a growing sentiment among locals and New Zealanders alike to retain and adapt New Zealand's built-heritage for new uses. The nationwide development of museums during the time period also demonstrates a pattern of local or regional history and investment in cultural values.

d) 2008 and 2011 Sections

There is no known association of these sections of the building with important aspects, processes, themes or patterns of local, regional or national history. However, the 2008 addition reflects a growing sentiment among locals and New Zealanders alike to retain and adapt New Zealand's built-heritage for new uses.

Cultural Values

Identity

Is the place or area a focus of community, regional or national identity or sense of place, and does it have social value and provide evidence of cultural or historical continuity?

a) 1908 Section

The Bath House was conceived as a social centre for the Edwardian township of Rotorua, as well as an exotic leisure centre for the visitors it hoped to attract from overseas. This emphasis on tourism and a communal centre for the city helped to form the identity of the place, which

has a strong presence even over a century later. The area is undoubtedly a focus of local and regional community with a strong sense of place, providing evidence of both cultural and historical continuity, and giving the Bath House **considerable identity value**.

The Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Bill 1963 decreed that Rotorua City Council “*will take over the control of that building and convert it for use as a community centre ...*”¹⁸⁰ following its closure in 1966. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, after the building had ceased to function as a formal bath house, it instead served as a venue for a wide variety of community activities. Among the many uses of the Bath House during recent years have been book launches, poetry readings, dance and musical performances, lectures, film screenings and antique and collectors’ fairs. These activities helped to re-shape the identity of the place as a community hub and destination for local events, as well as still attracting overseas visitors as a significant site for its past history and use.

In his report, “The Bath House: Rotorua’s Art & History Museum – A Development Proposal”, Rodney Wilson stated “*The Bath House is Rotorua’s collective memory. It is the district’s treasure house, the protector of the community’s knowledge of itself. As such it is the City’s most precious possession.*”¹⁸¹

Both quotations demonstrate the perception of the Bath House held by those outside the district and the emotional attachment of residents in the city. Museum Consultant Ken Gorbey called it “*a Rotorua icon*”.¹⁸²

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 part of the building marks the first stage in the full-realisation of the original design for the Rotorua Bath House building and therefore, provides evidence of cultural and historical continuity and the determination of the Rotorua community to complete the building and further consolidate the identity of the place.

c) 1983 Section

The 1983 has social value as the first addition to the building following its closure as a bath house and reopening as the Rotorua Museum. The 1983 section of the building also provides evidence of cultural and historical continuity and the determination of the Rotorua community to complete the building and further consolidate the identity of the place.

d) 2008 and 2011 Sections

The 2008 and 2011 sections of the building mark the second stages in the full-realisation of the original design for the Rotorua Bath House building and, therefore, provides evidence of cultural and historical continuity and the determination of the Rotorua community to complete the building and further consolidate the identity of the place.

Public Esteem

Is the place held in high public esteem for its heritage or aesthetic values or as a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment?

a) 1908 Section

¹⁸⁰ RLC. RCI 002-0681 Main Bath Building – Negotiations

¹⁸¹ T. L. R. Wilson. ‘The Bath House Rotorua’s Art & History Museum: A Developmental Proposal’, section 3.2, 1989

¹⁸² Gorbey 1987:25

The Rotorua Bath House is, and always has been, held in high public esteem, with a considerable amount of pride taken by residents of the city in their local icon. Its high heritage and aesthetic values are a focus of cultural sentiment for the community at a regional level. When spa facilities ceased at the Bath House in 1966, the Rotorua Borough Council, and later the Rotorua City Council, supported strongly by residents picked up Wohlmann's initial concept and proposed new community roles for the building, with the suggestion of new museum and art gallery facilities.

The Bath House also has significance in that it has unique potential to shed light on the intimate details of early 1900's lifestyles when Edwardian New Zealanders utilised the spa facilities. Although much of the fabric relating to this use has been obliterated, remnants such as wall tiles, duct and pipe work as well as fragments of baths survive.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 part of the building is similarly held in high public esteem for its use as unique spa facilities and then as the building was adapted for use as gallery spaces for the Rotorua Museum.

c) 1983 Section

By the 1980s the image of the building had become synonymous with Rotorua and it has longed served as one of its symbols. The Bath House used to feature on the letterhead of the Rotorua Borough Council; it appears again on the Rotorua District Council's "Official Handbook and Services Guide 1993-1994," showing the value both citizens and local officials alike put on the building. The use of the building as a local icon on a number of official Government documents clearly illustrates that it was held in high esteem.

d) the 2008 and 2011 Sections

The 2008 addition to the building is a tribute to the people of Rotorua who were determined to see the building retained and completed and to those who were instrumental in seeing it fulfil a new role as the Rotorua Museum, continuing the building's long held iconic value and appreciation by the public.

Commemorative

Does the place have symbolic or commemorative significance to people who use or have used it, or to the descendants of such people, as a result of its special interest, character, landmark, amenity or visual appeal?

a) 1908 Section

The 1908 Rotorua Bath House building has considerable commemorative value as a symbol to the people of the region as a place of special interest, character and landmark appeal. As a Government and Local Council operated facility frequented by the community for over one hundred years, the building has become a symbol in its' own right and has featured frequently on commemorate items.

The Post Office, for Rotorua's centenary in 1980, issued a postage stamp illustrating the Bath House, a geyser, and a Maori carving, signifying the building's place in the regional and national consciousness. Runners completing the 30th Fletcher Challenge Marathon in 1994

received a bronze medallion featuring the Bath House on its obverse side, the race starting and finishing alongside the historic building.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 section of the building similarly has symbolic and commemorative significance to the people of New Zealand and their descendants as a Government and Local Council operated facility frequented by the community for over one hundred years.

c) 1983 Section

The 1983 section of the building has symbolic significance as part of the main front façade of the building which constitutes the former Rotorua Bath House building.

d) 2008 Section

The 2006 section of the building has commemorative significance as the first stage of the Rotorua Museum Centennial Trust project to raise funds for the completion of the Rotorua Bath House building to its original design concept envisaged by Dr Wohlmann in 1906.

This section of the building also has symbolic significance as part of the main facades and roof form of the building which constitutes the former Rotorua Bath House building.

e) 2011 Section

The 2011 south wing was named the 'Don Stafford Wing' to commemorate Rotorua historian Don Stafford and acknowledge the considerable contribution he had made to both the Rotorua Museum and to the Rotorua community. The 2011 section of the building also has commemorative significance as the last in the Rotorua Museum Centennial Trust project to raise funds for the completion of the Rotorua Bath House building to its original design concept envisaged by Dr Wohlmann in 1906.

This section of the building also has symbolic significance as part of the main facades and roof form of the building which constitutes the former Rotorua Bath House building.

Education

Could the place contribute, through public education, to people's awareness, understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures?

a) 1908 Section

The building contributes to people's awareness, understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and culture through public education using the Rotorua Museum as a medium to achieve this. The museum not only celebrates the history of Rotorua and its people but also of the Bath House building itself.

The Bath House has educational significance in that it has a unique potential to illustrate rare details of early 1900's lifestyles in Edwardian New Zealand. Although much of the fabric relating to this use has been obliterated, remnants such as wall tiles, duct and pipe work as well as fragments of baths survive. The building also provides insight to Elizabethan construction techniques, which are uncommon in New Zealand.

b) 1911 Section

The 1911 part of the building similarly contributes to people's awareness, understanding and appreciation of New Zealand history and cultures through its use as the Rotorua Museum.

c) 1983, 2008 and 2011 Sections

The 1983, 2008, and 2011 sections of the building contribute to people's awareness and understanding of the cultural heritage of the Rotorua Bath House building as a representation of part of the original concept envisaged by Dr Wohlmann in 1906.

Tangata Whenua

Is the place important to tangata whenua for traditional, spiritual, cultural or historical reasons?

The former Rotorua Bath House building is sited within Government Gardens, originally known as the Sanatorium Reserve, the largest of a number of reserves set aside by Ngati Whakaue by the 'Agreement for a Township...' negotiated by F. D. Fenton, Chief Judge of the Maori Land Court, signed 25 November 1880. The purchase by the Crown in 1889 of the Pukeroa-Oruawhata Block, and subsequent conveyances, according to the 1973 Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Rotorua Township Reserves, "included all the reserve areas so that the Crown's title to them is from a legal point of view quite clear and unassailable." The 1948 Royal Commission found that the Sanatorium Ground was among reserves gifted by Ngati Whakaue prior to the 1889 purchase. Therefore, the site has significant value to Tangata Whenua for its traditions, cultural influence and history.

Statutory Recognition

Does the place or area have recognition in New Zealand legislation or international law including: World Heritage Listing under the World Heritage Convention 1972; registration under the Historic Places Act 1993; is it an archaeological site as defined by the Historic Places Act 1993; is it a statutory acknowledgement under claim settlement legislation; or is it recognised by special legislation?

The former Rotorua Bath House building is listed as a Category 1 Place by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (List Number 141). The Bath House building and its setting are also listed in the Rotorua Lakes District Plan under the Cultural Historic Heritage Inventory.

Summary of Cultural Significance

- i The building has **exceptional** historic value as a monument to the early days of the New Zealand tourist industry and to the popularity of therapeutic spas.
- ii The Bath House has architectural significance as an **exceptional** example of a half-timbered Elizabethan Revival styled building, unusual to New Zealand at the time.
- iii The building has **exceptional** aesthetic qualities, including its half-timbered walls, grand-scaled roofs and many gables, which are clearly evident. It forms a pleasing composition and backdrop to the Rotorua gardens.
- iv The building has **considerable** scientific value through evidence of its past use as a therapeutic spa and the experimental use of water as medicinal treatment.

- v The community activities that have taken place in the Bath House, both as part of its original and later uses, provide it with a **considerable** social significance.
- vi There is **exceptional** technological value in the building which comes from evidence of the use of innovative and uncommon building techniques used in the early 1900s and the initial installation of services such as electric power.
- vii The Bath House has **considerable** emotional significance as a building with which local residents have formed a high degree of attachment to due to its continued presence and influence in the history and development of the area.
- viii The building has **exceptional** significance as a readily identified symbol of Rotorua, as well as being recognised at a national level.
- ix Past and present uses provide the Bath House with **considerable** functional significance.
- x It has **considerable** significance through its association with the Government Balneologist, Dr A. S. Wohlmann and Government architect, J Campbell, among many other notable individuals and organisations.
- xi The building is a local landmark with topographic dominance which can be seen from many vantage points in Rotorua, giving it **exceptional** contextual significance.
- xii The Bath House has **exceptional** educational value and considerable potential as a source of information into the early spa industry and local history.
- xiii The building has **considerable** scarcity value as a building that uniquely combines a formal use with a distinctive building.

Overall, the Bath House is assessed as being a building with **exceptional significance**. Many of the individual elements making up the composition are also considered to have considerable, and in places, exceptional significance.

For this reason, it is imperative that the building be conserved, retaining as much of the original fabric as possible in order to retain historic authenticity. The building also has considerable heritage potential as a 'living museum' showcasing its own history, which could be realised with appropriate conservation strategies in place.

6.3 Statement of Significance

This section comprises a revised Statement of Significance as part of this Conservation Plan.

The Rotorua Bath House is of national significance for its finely executed Elizabethan Revival architecture and its function as a major museum. The Rotorua Bath House is of local significance for its role as a museum that houses artefacts and creates contemporary community connections with Rotorua's past. The building contributes to a nationally significant precinct of exemplary heritage buildings within Government Gardens in Rotorua, including the Blue Baths.

The prominent location of the Rotorua Bath House building within the Government Gardens, with its towers and elegant exterior detailing and ornamentation, makes it a central pivot of the townscape and a regional icon.

National Significance

Historically, the Rotorua Bath House is a monument to the New Zealand Government's first major commitment to the tourist industry. It was also the first (and last) full-scale attempt to create a spa town in the southern hemisphere to which it was hoped to attract northern visitors. The construction of the Bath House was the culmination of this spa development.

Thus, while the attractions of Rotorua had previously been seen as marketable commodities to the tourist industry, the construction of the Bath House emphatically put the area on the tourist map for its therapeutic benefits. Although the building no longer functions as a Bath House, the city's emphasis on tourism as a means of attracting revenue continues to this day.

Following the end of its use as a bathing establishment in 1966, part of it was used as a restaurant and nightclub. In 1969, it entered a new phase of development becoming the Rotorua Museum. It also became the city Art Gallery in 1977. The Art Gallery and Museum have now merged to form the Rotorua Museum as one organisation.

Local Significance

The Rotorua Bath House building has particular local cultural significance to the communities of the Rotorua Lakes District and Rotorua City as an important reference point in community identity. The Bath House building is of local cultural significance as a symbol of continuity, familiarity and survival, holding safe the stories, objects and knowledge that are regarded as community treasures.

The Rotorua Bath House is of local cultural and spiritual significance to tangata whenua for the taonga held within the Museum and for the relationships between people, objects and stories facilitated by the Museum's existence, values and roles which have existed since its inception.

The Rotorua Bath House is held in high community esteem for its architectural qualities derived primarily from the Elizabethan buildings in England and its contextual setting. It is a cultural and physical landmark with its position on a major city axis.

The Rotorua Bath House is of local contextual significance as an outstanding feature within the wider Government Gardens and Rotorua town centre, contributing to both these precincts.

Through its strong visual relationship with the Blue Baths and former Gardener's Cottage, the Bath House building contributes to the significance of the wider city centre.

The Rotorua Bath House is a well-preserved remnant of the pioneer vision of Rotorua as a spa town that emulated those of England.

The interior of Rotorua Bath House as it is today, including its public galleries and back of house spaces, reflects more than a century of social, cultural and technological change and major shifts in cultural attitudes. These changes demonstrate that Rotorua Bath House building was and still is, a vital part of the cultural heritage of the city and the region.

6.4 Heritage Inventory

Heritage Fabric in the following section can be defined as having:

- **OHF1** (Original Heritage Fabric - 1908): Fabric that dates from when the building was constructed in 1908.
- **OHF2** (Original Heritage Fabric - 1911): Fabric that dates from the 1911 addition.

Non Heritage Fabric in the following section can be defined as having:

- **RHF** (Replica Heritage Fabric): This includes fabric that has been provided to replace original heritage fabric that has either been damaged or lost, or fabric built to the same design and architectural plan as the original 1908 building.
- **LHF** (Later Heritage Fabric): Fabric that was subsequently added and is now considered to have value as it contributes to the social context and meaning of the building.
- **NHF** (Non-Heritage Fabric): Fabric that was subsequently added and neither detracts nor adds to the building's heritage value and may be necessary for the building's functionality.
- **INT** (Intrusive): Fabric that detracts from the heritage values of the building.

Tangible Heritage Attributes

Tangible attributes include physical layout, structures and buildings, fabric, interior elements and spaces and the external setting, physical relationships between the museum and related places, buildings and/or phases of development as well as uses. Relative significance of elements of the place:

1. An element is of **primary** significance if it is a key component of the heritage place and is generally highly intact. Elements and aspects of the place that are of primary significance have high cultural heritage value and form an essential piece of the history and meaning of the place. Conservation is a priority and changes to these elements will require a defined and compelling need and/or demonstration that significance of the place will be retained, reinforced or revealed as a result.

2. An element is of **supporting** significance if it contributes to the heritage values of the place. These elements and aspects play a role in conveying the cultural heritage values of the place but may be less highly intact. Contributory elements and aspects should be conserved, although a greater degree of change to these elements is possible than those of primary significance.

Non-Heritage Attributes

1. An element is of **little** significance **or none** if it does not contribute to the heritage values of the place or has a low level of intactness. These elements and aspects are commonly more recent additions or have been carried out in an ad hoc or piecemeal way. Change to, or removal of, these elements or aspects is likely to be acceptable.

2. An element is **intrusive** if it detracts from the integrity or understanding of the place. Removal of intrusive elements should be encouraged to expose elements of the place that are of contributory or primary significance or to help reveal the significance of the place or an aspect of that place.

Site and Setting

The setting of the Rotorua Bath House is of **exceptional** significance as contributing to the surrounding heritage buildings and streetscape.

Views: The Rotorua Bath House makes a significant contribution to the surrounding streetscapes as viewed from Hinemaru Street, Queens Drive, Oruawhata Drive, Hatupatu Drive and the Government Gardens itself. There is a strong link between the Bath House building, the Blue Baths and former Caretaker's Cottage. The Bath House has a dominant visual presence with the immediate area. The views out from the building are also of importance.	exceptional
Context: The Rotorua Bath House building contributes to a larger heritage precinct that includes the Blue Baths, Gardener's Cottage, Rotunda, Prince's Arch and Gateway. The surrounding Sanatorium Gardens precinct (now known as the Government Gardens) that the Bath House was originally built within is still present and contains a number of trees listed within the New Zealand Register of Notable Trees, although none have a direct impact on the building. The Gardens themselves are classified as a historic area - which includes associated structures, buried archaeological deposits, historic plantings and geothermal features.	exceptional



The setting of the Rotorua Bath House in the Government Gardens

1908 Section

Exterior

The original 1908 section of the building on the site is now partially enclosed by later additions to the north and south, although the majority of the original heritage fabric is still visible.



West elevation of the Rotorua Bath House and main entrance



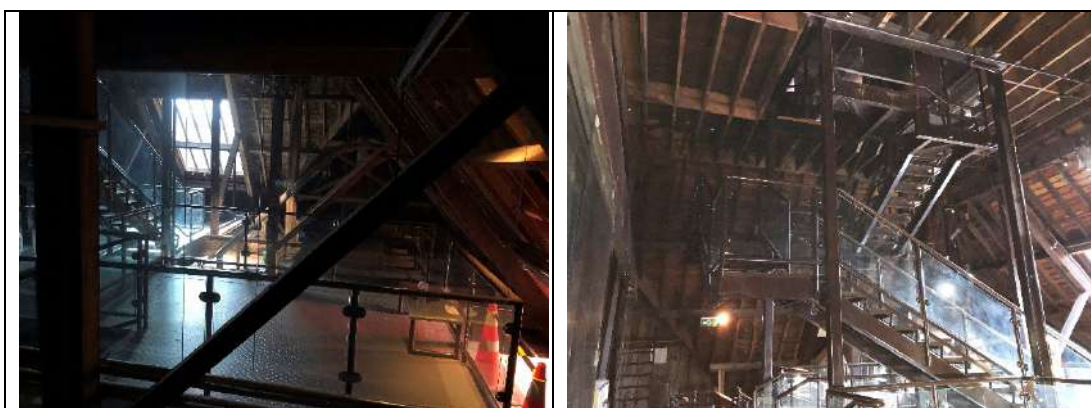
Verandah space (left), and Main entrance doors and windows (right)



Reinstated turrets (left), and roof and cladding including reinstated ventilation towers (right)



Reinstated ventilator towers (left), and reinstated tiles and ridge cap detailing (right)



North wing attic

Roof		
Gable roof forms, dormers, finials, bargeboard trims, exposed framing	OHF1	exceptional

Main tower above central hall	OHF1	exceptional
Roof structure – timber sarking over timber purlins with exposed rafters	OHF1	exceptional
Replacement roof towers	RHF	considerable
Roof cladding – 1950s, 2008 and 2011 Marseille tiles	RHF	considerable
Gutters, downpipes and flashings – all steel	NHF	none
Air handling ducts and other service plant	INT	intrusive

Walls

East façade – verandahs, fretwork, balusters, posts	OHF1	exceptional
East façade – exposed framing, concrete infill panels	OHF1	exceptional
West façade – exposed framing, concrete infill panels	OHF1	exceptional
West façade – verandahs, fretwork, balusters, posts	OHF1	exceptional
East façade – infill walls beneath 1908 verandahs	LHF/NHF	some/none
North wing rear verandah grilles	INT	intrusive
West façade – fire brigade inlet	NHF	intrusive
West façade – double doors from café to front verandah	NHF	intrusive

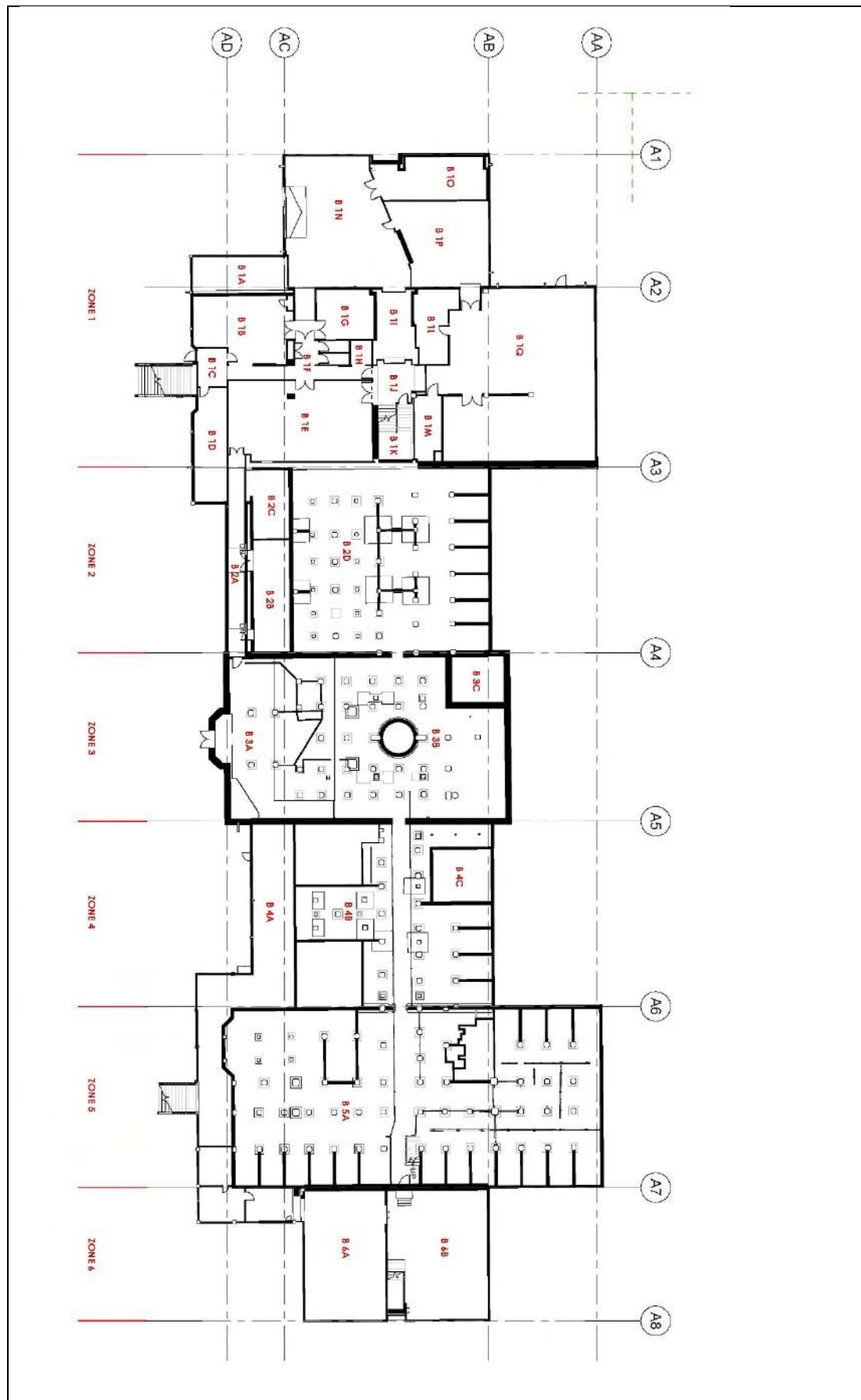
Openings

East wall – window joinery, stained glass windows	OHF1	exceptional
West wall – window joinery, stained glass windows	OHF1	exceptional
West wall – Double doors from café to front verandah	NHF	intrusive

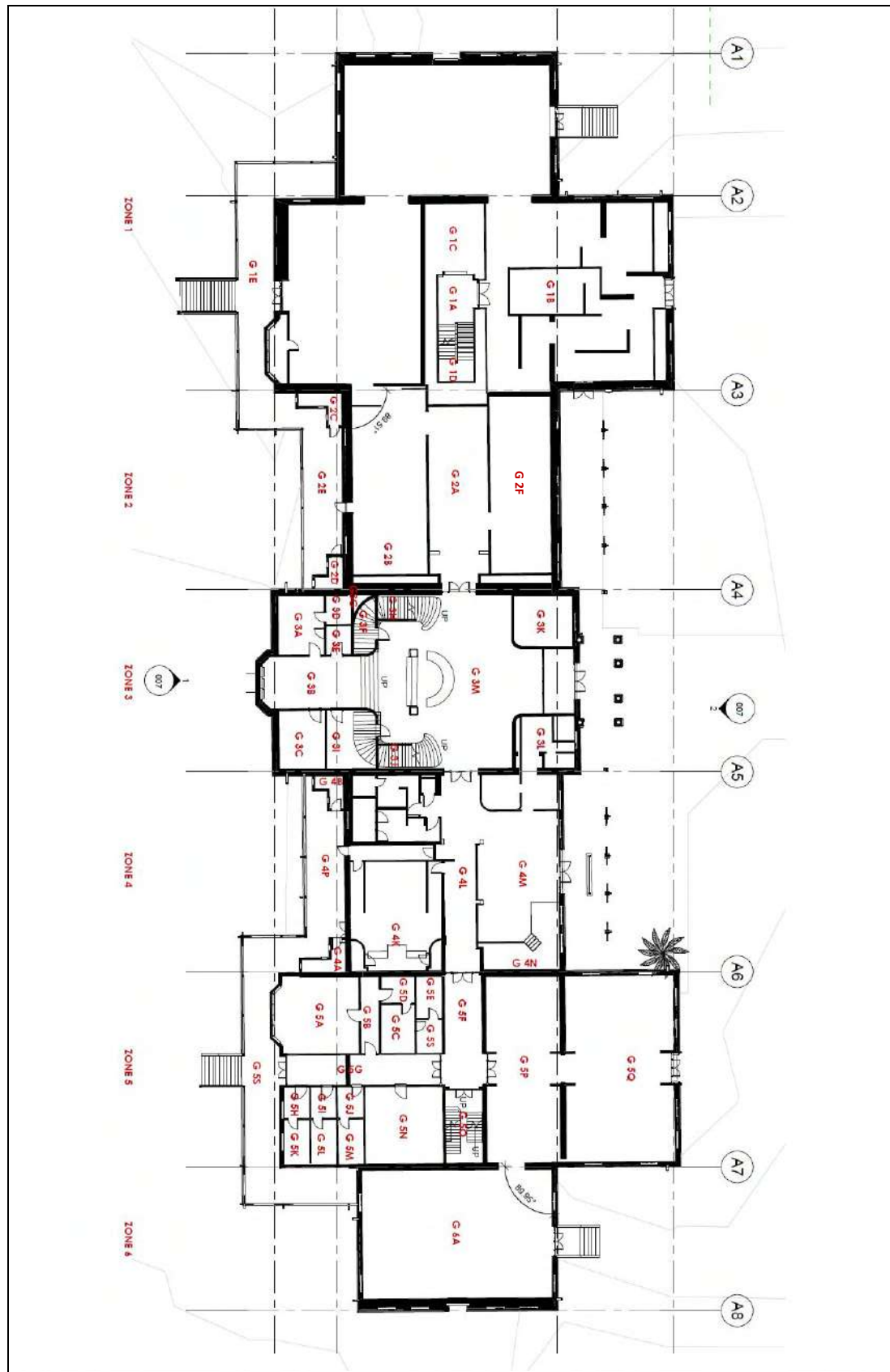
Interior

The 1908 spaces are of **exceptional** significance.

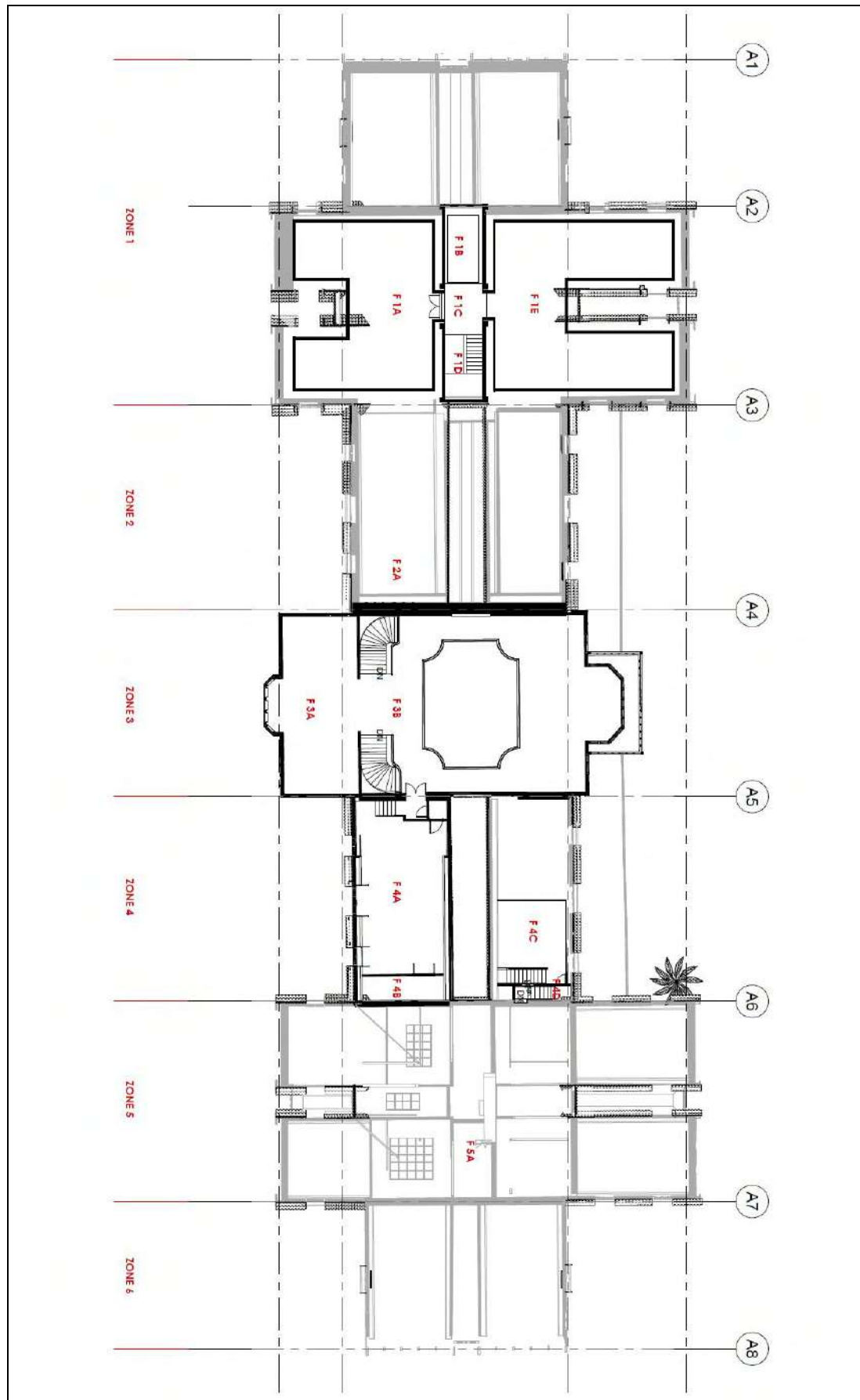
The earliest 1908 section is the most intact internally of the 1908 and 1911 parts of the building. The original spatial configuration has been retained in some areas. The roof structure comprises trusses which have been retained. The interior originally allowed for natural light, however, now generally relies on artificial light. The original plan layout has been reconfigured in most places with some structural elements in the original locations. Some door openings have been concealed or filled in but could be re-instated. Suspended ceilings and partition walls have also been added and many of the original full-height and half-height walls removed. The following plans of the building in its current state (2019) have been included, with each room being designated a coded number for easier identification in the following inventory.



Basement floor plan with room codes.

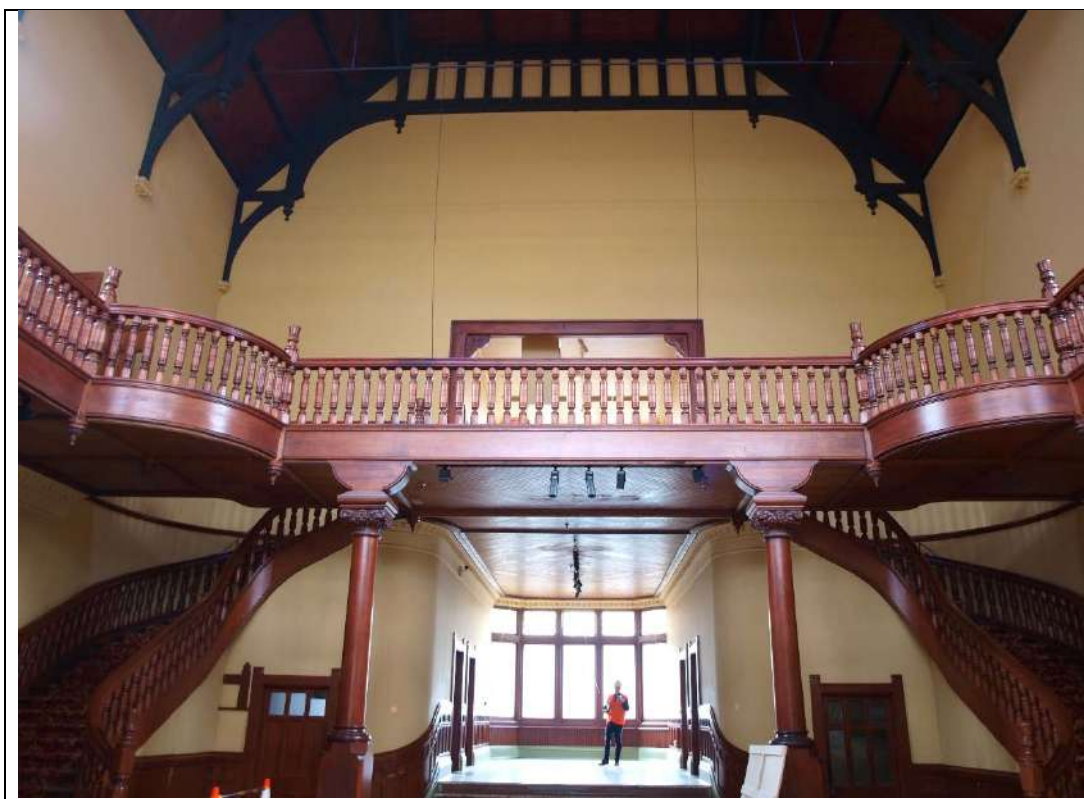


Ground floor plan with room codes.



First floor plan with room codes.

Central Hall (G 3M) and associated spaces



The 1908 central hall, mezzanine, and staircases in space G 3M

Roof trusses and corbels, steel ties	OHF1	exceptional
Handrails, balustrades, newel posts, dados	OHF1	exceptional
Timber staircases from ground to mezzanine level	OHF1	exceptional
Carved columns supporting mezzanine floor	OHF1	exceptional
Roof and ceiling timber sarking	OHF1	exceptional
Walls: Lath and plaster and concrete	OHF1	exceptional
Doors: Timber and stained glass doors	OHF1	exceptional
Timber arched opening in rear wall of mezzanine	OHF1	exceptional
Original ceiling cornices, skirtings, facings, architraves (G 3K, G 3L, G 3C, G 3I, G 3A, G 3E, G 3D, G 3G)	OHF1	exceptional
Original door and steps (blocked off) G 3G	OHF1	exceptional
Floor tiles to rear of foyer on raised area and steps (ground floor)	LHF	some
Carpet to stairs and mezzanine	NHF	none
Additional metal handrails to stairs	NHF	none
Floor tiles at ground floor	NHF	none
Office walls to rear of mezzanine level	NHF	none
Partition walls and cupboard doors beneath staircases	NHF	intrusive

Central Hall Rear Offices (G 3A, G 3C)



Space G 3A (left), and G 3C (right)

Ceiling rose and cornices	OHF1	exceptional
Skirtings, windows, doors, architraves, cement dados	OHF1	exceptional

Central Hall Office (G 3I)



Space G 3I

Doors	OHF1	exceptional	
Suspended ceiling, non-original architraves	NHF	intrusive	

Central Hall Front Offices and Kitchen (G 3K, G 3L)



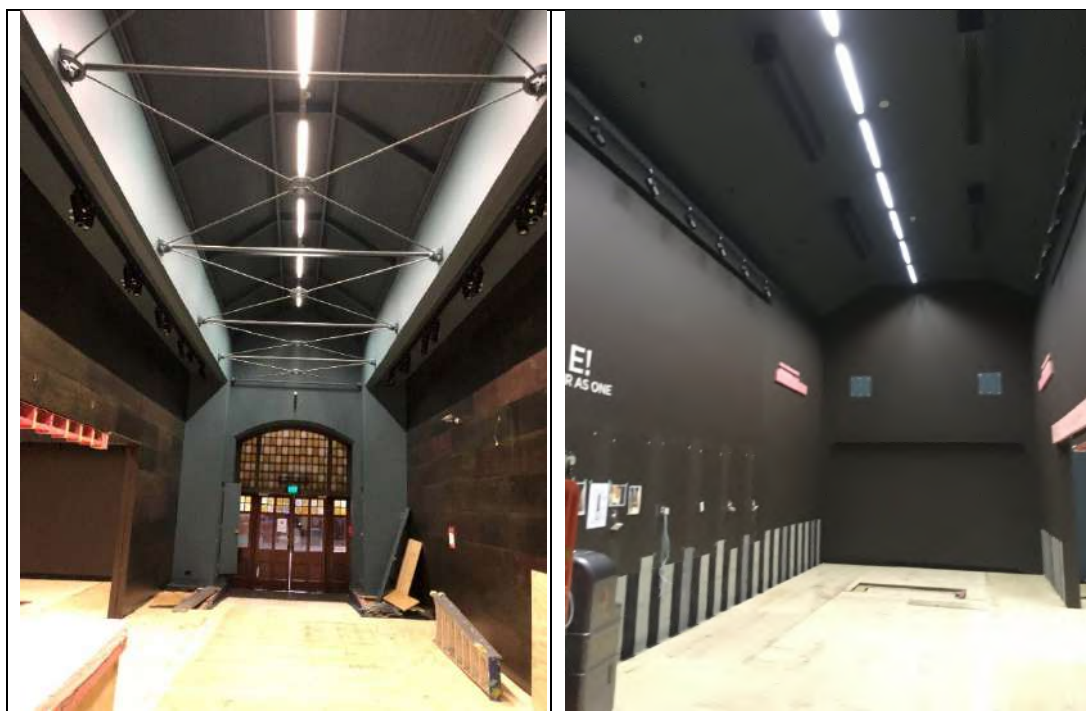
Space G 3K



Space G 3L

Ceiling rose and cornices	OHF1	exceptional
Skirting, windows, cement dados, doors, architraves	OHF1	exceptional
Original ticket windows (modified and partially blocked off)	OHF1	exceptional
Suspended ceiling in G 3L	NHF	none

South Wing (G 2A, G 2B)



G 2A (left), and G 2F (right)

Coffered ceiling (excluding Reid Bracing in G 2A)	OHF1	exceptional
---	------	-------------



G 2B

Full-height concrete wall with early and original paint colours (located within in cupboard behind partition wall)	OHF1	considerable
---	------	--------------

Café, Toilets and associated spaces (G 4M and G 4H)



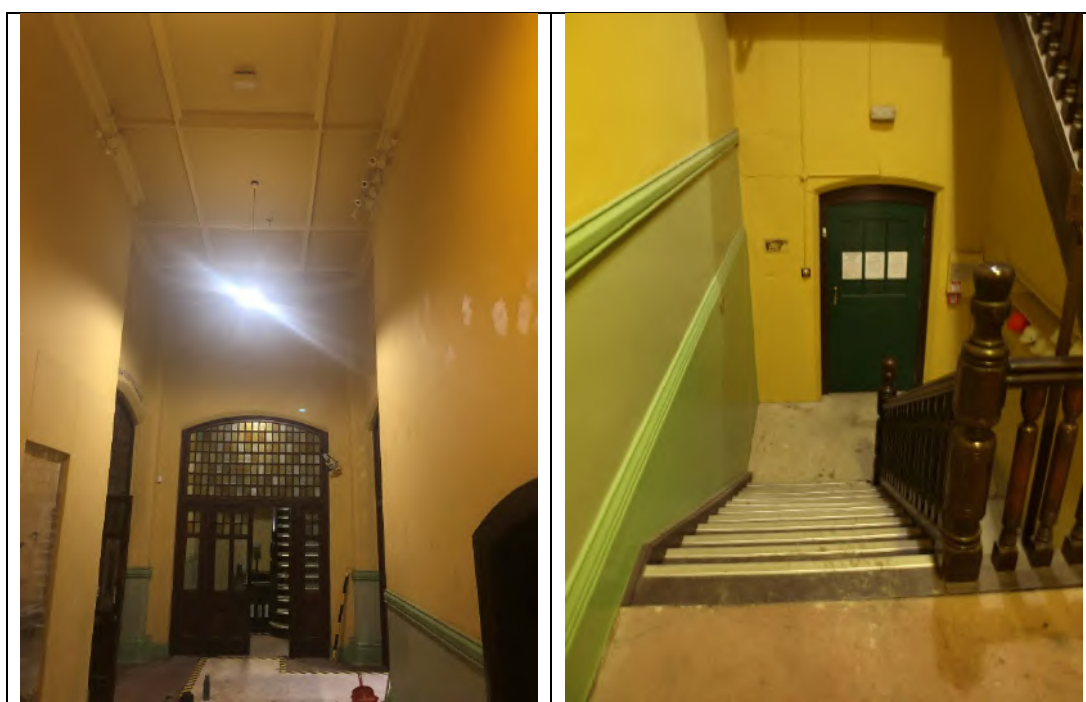
Former Rachel Bath and private bath area, now café, spaces G 4M and G 4H

Remains of original tiled dado located behind later wall linings in G 4M (café)	OHF1	exceptional
The foundations and remains of the Rachel Bath and other individual baths located beneath the floor in G 4M (café)	OHF1	considerable
Remains of original coloured cement floor finish in G 4M (café) beneath later floor coverings	OHF1	considerable
Doors to verandah in G 4M (café)	NHF	intrusive

North Wing Corridors G 4L, G 5F, G 5G, G 5O



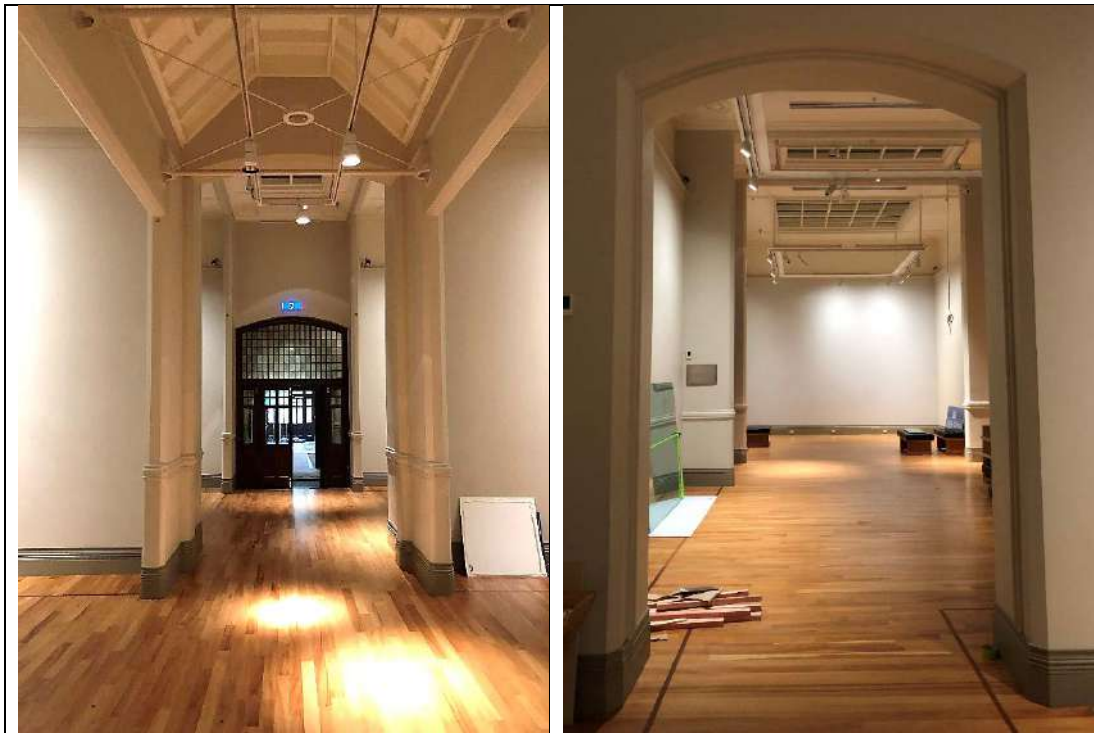
Space G 4L (left), and space G 5G (right)



Space G 5F (left), and G 5G (right)

Dados, skirtings, architraves, doors, plaster ceilings, cornices	OHF1	exceptional
Coffered ceiling in G 4L (located above suspended ceiling) and G 5G	OHF1	exceptional
Staircase, balusters, newel posts, skirtings, dado in G 5O	OHF1	exceptional
Tiled and coloured cement floors, floor grills	OHF1	exceptional

North Wing Galleries G 5P, G 5Q



Spaces G 5P (left), and G 5Q (right)

Dados, architraves, doors, plaster ceilings, cornices	OHF1	exceptional
Coffered and plaster ceilings, roses, cornices	OHF1	exceptional
Original exterior doors located behind partition wall	OHF1	exceptional
Ceiling and roof lights	OHF1	exceptional
Timber skirtings	NHF	considerable
Partition walls in front of windows	NHF	intrusive
Laminate floor	NHF	intrusive
Later floor grills	NHF	intrusive

North Wing Private Baths G 5H, G 5I, G 5J, G 5K, G 5L, G 5M, G 5N



Spaces G 5M (left), and G 5K/G 5H (right)



Spaces G 5I (left), and G 5M (right)

Tiled dado	OHF1	exceptional
Baths and associated fixtures, taps	OHF1	exceptional
Tiled and coloured cement floors, floor grills	OHF1	exceptional
Plaster ceiling ornamentation, cornices and roses (excluding rooms G 5K, G 5L and G 5M)	OHF1	exceptional

Deep Bath (Honeymoon Suite) G5C, G 5D, G 5E, G5S



Original Deep Bath before construction works in space G 5G (left)¹⁸³, and space G 5C (right)



Spaces G 5D (left), and spaces G 5S/G 5E (right)

Tiled dado	OHF1	exceptional
Deep Bath, tiles, steps	OHF1	exceptional
Tiled and coloured cement floors	OHF1	exceptional
Plaster ceiling ornamentation, cornices and roses	OHF1	exceptional
Display case	NHF	intrusive

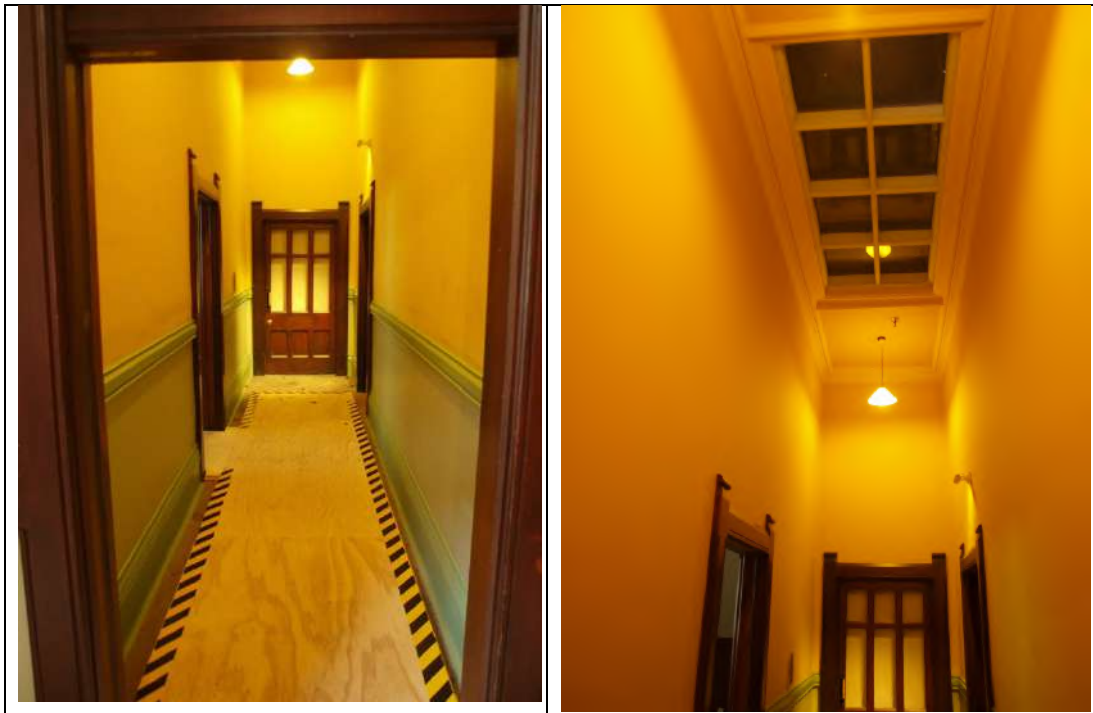
¹⁸³ <https://exploringmyownbackyard.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/img6759>

Former Cooling Room (G 5A)



Space G 5A

Ceiling and cornices, ceiling light	OHF1	exceptional
Timber floor, architraves, dado and door	OHF1	exceptional
Floor mounted radiator	OHF1	considerable
Glass in ceiling light	NHF	considerable

Corridor (G 5B)*Space G 5B*

Ceiling, dado, skirtings, architraves, doors	OHF1	exceptional
Coloured cement floor	OHF1	exceptional

Mud Bath Exhibition Area (B 3A)



Space B 3A



Space B 3A

Joinery, concrete walls, columns and ceilings	OHF1	exceptional
Original parts of concrete floor	OHF1	exceptional
Tongue and groove panelling excluding later replica wall(s)	OHF1	exceptional
Royal Doulton Baths and shower	OHF1	exceptional
Tongue and groove cupboard	OHF1	exceptional

1911 Addition

Exterior

The 1911 addition was largely demolished in 2011 with only the two north and west facades being preserved and incorporated into the new south wing. There is no heritage fabric remaining in the interior.



The 1911 addition

Roof		
Gable roof forms, finials, bargeboard trim, exposed framing	OHF2	exceptional
Replacement towers	RHF	considerable
Roof structure – rebuilt in 2011	RHF	considerable
Roof cladding – 2011 Marseille tiles	RHF	considerable
Gutters, downpipes and flashings – all steel	NHF	none
Air handling ducts and other service plant	INT	intrusive

Walls		
West façade – exposed framing and concrete infill patterns	OHF2	exceptional
West façade – fire brigade inlet	NHF	intrusive

Openings		
West wall – original joinery, stained glass windows	OHF2	exceptional

1983 Addition

Exterior

The exterior of the 1983 addition was designed to generally match the original design concept envisaged by Wohlmann in 1902. The interior was designed and built to the requirements of the Rotorua Museum.

The 1983 addition was largely demolished in 2011 with only the east exterior facade being preserved and incorporated into the new south wing. There is no 1983 fabric remaining in the interior.



The 1983 addition and entrance

Roof		
Gable roof forms, dormers, finials, bargeboard trim, exposed framing	RHF	considerable
Towers	RHF	considerable
Roof cladding – 2011 Marseille tiles	RHF	considerable
Roof structure	NHF	none
Gutters, downpipes and flashings – all steel	NHF	none
Air handling ducts and other service plant	INT	intrusive

Walls		
South façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
West façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
Steps and handrails	RHF	considerable

Openings		
West wall – joinery, stained glass windows	RHF	considerable

2008 Addition

Exterior

The exterior of the 2008 addition was designed to generally match the original design concept envisaged by Wohlmann in 1902. The interior was built and designed to the requirements of the Rotorua Museum.



The 2008 north wing addition

Roof		
Gable roof forms, dormers, finials, bargeboard trim, exposed framing	RHF	considerable
Towers	RHF	considerable
Roof cladding – 2008 Marseille tiles	RHF	considerable
Roof structure	NHF	none
Gutters, downpipes and flashings – all steel	NHF	none
Air handling ducts and other service plant	INT	intrusive
Walls		
North façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
East façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
West façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
Steps and handrails	RHF	considerable
Openings		
North, East and West walls – joinery, stained glass windows	RHF	considerable

2011 Addition

Exterior

The exterior of the 2011 addition was designed to generally match the original design concept envisaged by Wohlmann in 1902. The interior was designed and built to the requirements of the Rotorua Museum.



The 2011 addition

Roof		
Gable roof forms, dormers, finials, bargeboard trim, exposed framing	RHF	considerable
Roof towers	RHF	considerable
Roof cladding – 2011 Marseille tiles	RHF	considerable
Roof structure	NHF	none
Gutters, downpipes and flashings	NHF	none
Air handling ducts and other service plant	INT	intrusive

Walls		
South façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
East façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
West façade – timber battens, infill panels	RHF	considerable
Verandah (including posts, balusters, fretwork) and steps	RHF	considerable

Openings		
West facade – joinery, stained glass windows	RHF	considerable

Intangible Heritage Attributes

Intangible attributes include use, meanings, associations/connections, cultural practices, traditions and knowledge and language associated with the place.

1. Rotorua Museum – as an institution – embodies **traditions** and **cultural practices** that contribute to its significance. These include:

- The strong sense of continuity and connection that arises from its continuing purpose as a guardian of cultural treasures and Maori taonga
- The practices of care, conservation and research
- The traditional point of entry experienced across generations
- The memories evoked by long-standing exhibits and galleries
- Keeping alive and continuing to regenerate cultural meanings, important stories and traditions across generations of Rotorua citizens
- Naming of buildings and exhibits which helps retain memories of important people and events relevant to the people of Rotorua.

2. Rotorua Museum acts as a repository of **knowledge** for the community and supports knowledge transmission and experiential learning through engagement with the exhibits and staff.

Supplementary Photographs



The north wing (2008) view deck looking towards 1908 roof.



1908 roof and reinstated ventilation towers.



Exterior view of windows to the 1908 central hall showing deteriorated paintwork.



The west façade of the 1908 building showing detail of a gable end and tower



Verandah detail on the 1908 north wing



1908 west façade and main entrance



1908 west façade and main entrance



1908 east façade with 2011 addition to the left



1908 north wing verandah



Assumed 1920's step nosing tile, rear of central hall.



Assumed 1920's tessellated tiles and step nosing tiles at rear of 1908 central hall.



1908 central hall mezzanine looking towards doors to south wing



1908 central hall mezzanine looking towards rear offices.



1908 hatch in the floor of room G 3K and ladder to strong room (B 3C)



Original 1908 ceiling, window, architraves in office (G 3D) to rear of central hall



Original 1908 door, dado and steps to blocked off corridor (G 3G)



1908 north wing original floor grate (G 5G).



Original concrete columns, walls, ceiling and cast iron fixtures, 1908 north wing basement (B 4B)



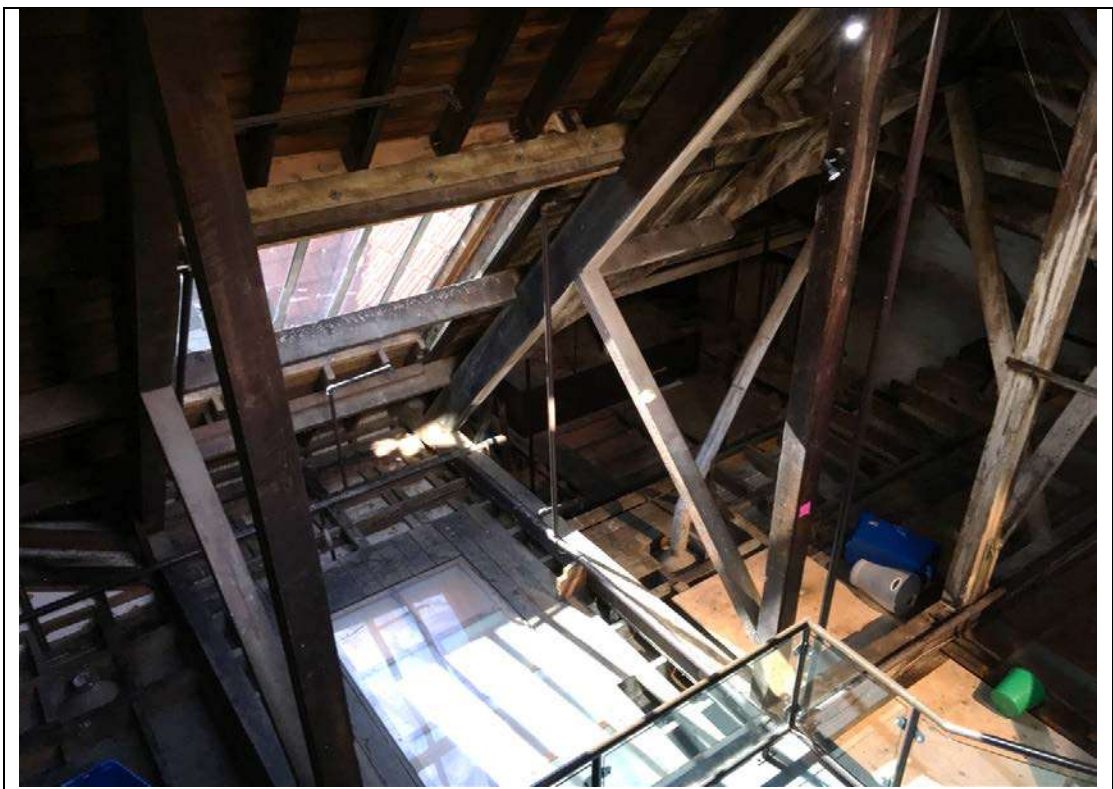
Cast iron relic and pipework, basement (B 4B) (left), and full-height pumice concrete wall viewed from 1908 north wing attic (right)



Vaulted ceiling, basement (B 4B)



Original stairs to 1908 north wing attic



1908 north wing rooflight and ceiling light to baths below



1908 roof space above the central hall. Inside face of timber wall framing and concrete infill panels. Note water staining.



1911 north and west facades



Intrusive grilles in the infilled space of the north wing rear verandah



Intrusive grilles in the infilled space of the north wing rear verandah

PART TWO:

CONSERVATION OF THE PLACE

7.0 DEVELOPMENT OF CONSERVATION POLICY

A number of constraints will impact on any conservation policies that are formulated for the Rotorua Bath House building. Identified constraints affecting the Bath House include the following:

- The cultural significance and heritage values of the building.
- The requirements of the owner and occupier.
- The requirements of heritage protection.
- The requirements of the Resource Management Act as it relates to listed buildings.
- The requirements of the Building Act (fire egress, access for disabled persons, structural integrity).
- The need to maintain conservation standards.
- The physical condition of the building.

7.1 The Requirements of the Owner and Occupier

It is the intention of the Rotorua Museum to continue to be part of the wider Government Gardens tourist precinct, whilst developing exhibitions and displaying its extensive collection to the wider public.

The Rotorua Museum is the repository for community memory and objects and has remained in constant use as a public building since 1908. The requirements of the owner will need to be balanced against preservation of the architectural values. The conservation of unique heritage features will need to be reflected in any design proposals that may involve changes to spatial arrangement.

To retain the current function of the Rotorua Bath House as a key cultural institution, new gallery, exhibition and education spaces are required. Front of house visitor facilities and staff and conservation spaces require upgrading and expansion to meet twenty-first century expectations and standards.

There is also a need for improved physical and visual connections to be created between the main museum gallery spaces and the Mud Bath Exhibition area in the basement.

7.2 Heritage Protection

Heritage New Zealand Trust Pouhere Taonga

Heritage New Zealand has listed the Rotorua Bath House building as a Category 1 Historic Place. The list number is 141. The listing appears to make no distinction in the value of the component parts of the Museum. Category 1 Historic Places are defined as to places of *special or outstanding historical or cultural heritage significance or value*. The Bath House is located within the Government Gardens which are listed by Heritage New Zealand as a Historic Area.

Archaeological evidence is regarded as material located below-ground that may relate to any former occupation of the site of the Rotorua Bath House. It is possible that archaeological remains from the previous occupation of the site by Māori may have survived beneath the building.

Rotorua Lakes District Plan

In the Operative Rotorua Lakes District Plan, the Rotorua Bath House building is scheduled as Category 1 item.

ICOMOS New Zealand

The acronym ICOMOS stands for the International Council for Monuments and Sites and is a world-wide body dedicated to the protection of heritage. In 1993, ICOMOS New Zealand was established with its own Charter (the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value, revised in 2010) and that continues to be the principal guiding document for heritage conservation in this country.

7.3 Legislation

Resource Management Act

The Resource Management Act of 1991 is the formal legislation that manages the environment. It promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources such as land, air and water.

Section 6 of the RMA refers to Matters of National Importance. The RMA Amendment Act 2003 added the “protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development” to the list of matters of national importance.

As noted, the Rotorua Bath House is listed as Category 1 Historic Place by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. The building is also listed in the Rotorua Lakes Council District Plan, Appendix A1 – Cultural Historic Heritage Inventory.

A Resource Consent will generally be required for any alterations proposed to be undertaken at the Rotorua Bath House.

Building Act 2004

The Building Act 2004 is the legislative framework whereby building work and building practitioners are required to comply with the Building Code. The purpose of the Building Act is primarily to ensure that buildings are “safe and sanitary” for users. If major alterations are proposed to an existing building or if its use changes, requiring alterations, Section 46(2) of the *Building Act* requires the territorial authority to be satisfied on reasonable grounds that, in its new role, the building will comply with the provisions of the Building Code, as nearly as possible if it were a new building.

Under Section 47(j) of the Building Act, territorial authorities are expected to have due regard to special cultural and historical value. A Building Consent is likely to be required for any work undertaken at the Rotorua Museum, other than maintenance.

Earthquake Prone Buildings¹⁸⁴

Rotorua’s previous earthquake-prone building policy was replaced by the Building Amendment Act 2016 which came into effect 1 July 2017 and is based on the core framework contained in

¹⁸⁴ Building Amendment Act 2016, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

the Building Act 2004. It is a nationally consistent system for managing earthquake-prone buildings and changes the way they are identified, assessed and managed.

The Act categorises New Zealand into three seismic risk areas (high, medium, and low) and sets time frames for identifying and taking action to strengthen or remove earthquake-prone buildings. Rotorua sits in the 'medium' seismic risk area. Local territorial authorities are to determine if a building or part of a building is earthquake prone using the EPB (Earthquake-Prone Building) methodology, a document which sets out how territorial authorities identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings, how engineers undertake engineering assessments, and how territorial authorities determine whether a building or part is earthquake prone, and if it is, its appropriate earthquake rating. There is also a publicly accessible EPB Register which contains information on all publicly accessible buildings in the high and medium seismic risk areas which are currently categorised as earthquake prone.

Territorial authorities may receive applications from owners of earthquake-prone heritage buildings for an extension of up to 10 years to strengthen their buildings. In order to qualify for this extension, the building in question will need to be a Category 1 Historic Place on the New Zealand Heritage Pouhere Taonga List or included on the National Historic Landmarks list.

In August 2017 a Detained Seismic Assessment Report (DSA) for the Rotorua Bath House building was completed by GDC Consultants Ltd. This report rated the majority of the building at 15% of the New Building Standard (NBS). The building was immediately vacated and closed to the public as buildings under 34% NBS are considered earthquake prone. Although the south wing was rated at 80% NBS, the entire building becomes less than 19% when considered as a whole. It was decided to strengthen and repair the heritage building with completion of the works expected in 2021.

As per *Policy 8.5 Caring For The Building Fabric* - any earthquake strengthening work should include seismic connections which allow for movement between sections of the building. These should be designed to minimise impact on heritage fabric. Where seismic joints are required between buildings efforts should be made to locate them in places of least significance.

Access and Provisions for Persons with Disabilities

Section 118(1) of the Building Act 2004 outlines specific provisions of access for people with disabilities in buildings. If a building is to be altered, adequate access provisions and sanitary facilities must be provided for persons with disabilities. Reasonable and practicable access to buildings for people with disabilities is acknowledged in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified by New Zealand in 2008) and as a right under the New Zealand Human Rights Act (1993).

Safety from Fire

Section C of the Building Code outlines requirements to safeguard people from unacceptable risk of injury and illness caused by fire. Materials used as internal surfaces must meet performance criteria regarding spread of flame. Section 47 of the Building Act notes that Fire and Emergency New Zealand may provide advice to the building consent authority regarding means of escape from fire.

7.4 Conservation of Standards

As a way of maintaining the integrity of the place all work should conform to principles set out in the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value (ICOMOS New Zealand Charter Revised 2010). Proposals for work on the building should be reviewed by relevant authorities.

Any proposals for work on the building should be discussed at an early stage with Heritage New Zealand and the Rotorua Lakes Council, to ensure that the work is generally in accordance with the principles and policies as set down in this conservation plan and the requirements of the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value. Appropriate standards should be maintained when work is carried out to the building.

As the building is listed under the Rotorua Lakes District Plan and Heritage New Zealand a Resource Consent will be required for any modification to the building's exterior.

Records should be kept of any changes that might occur to the building. This is particularly important in areas where heritage fabric is being removed or modified.

7.5 Current Condition of the Building

A number of condition and structural reports have been prepared for the former Rotorua Bath House building in recent years. These have included a *Detained Seismic Assessment Report* (DSA), August 2017, GDC Consultants Ltd; *Air Quality and Timber Wall Framing Testing to Honeymoon Room during Remedial Works*, September 2016, PRENDOS; *Rotorua Museum North Wing Internal Roof Inspection*, 12 January 2012, BSK Consulting Engineers; *Rotorua Bath House Museum July 2014 Cracking Inspections – Interim Report*, 31 July 2014, SIGMA. It is not the intention of this conservation plan to repeat the findings of these reports.

Structural Condition

In August 2017 a Detained Seismic Assessment Report (DSA) was completed by GDC Consultants Ltd for the Rotorua Lakes Council. This report rated the majority of the building at 15% of the New Building Standard (NBS). This meant that the building had to be vacated and closed to the public as buildings under 34% NBS are considered earthquake prone. Although the south wing was rated at 80% NBS, the entire building becomes less than 19%.

As such, a preferred option to strengthen and repair the building was adopted and in September 2018 DPA Architects of Auckland were appointed to carry out design work for the upgrading of the building in conjunction with Rotorua firm Carling Architects. Completion of the works is expected in 2021.



Diagram showing the seismic strength of the various sections of the building in NBS.

Source: Rotorua Museum

Roofing

The roof areas of the 1908 and 1911 sections of the building comprise Marseilles roof tiles which were laid in the 1950s to replace the original tiles. The roofs of the later additions were sheathed with Marseilles pattern tiles to match.

The fixings which may be steel or copper are liable to fail over time, causing the tiles to become detached. Combined with the hydrogen sulphide atmosphere and high wind, many tiles are dislodged or cracked at the time of writing. Proprietary membranes used to overlay flat roofs also are prone to failure if not laid or maintained properly. The membrane roofs of the building, located in valleys and on the roof view decks, should be periodically examined for signs of deterioration or leaking. Temporary protection should be provided immediately to prevent water egress prior to the repairs being undertaken.

The roof areas should be inspected periodically to locate defective tiles that are cracked or otherwise deteriorated or dislodged and repairs made as required.

All water collection points such as spoutings, internal gutters and sumps should be routinely inspected for leaks and other defects and any debris cleared as part of a planned maintenance regime. This will highlight potential problems before they cause significant issues.

The roof turrets and view decks should also be periodically checked for defects which may allow the ingress of moisture into the fabric. In particular, tiles may slip off the steeply pitched main tower, allowing water to enter the building. The roof turrets should be regularly inspected and remedial work undertaken as required. The membranes, handrails, access hatches and fixings to the roof view decks should also be regularly inspected to identify signs of decay that could lead to water entering the roof space.

A report should also be compiled that assesses the likely life span of the various sections of the roof, noting when replacement may be required to enable budgets to be set.

Exposed timber framing and concrete infill panels: Walls

The earlier sections of the former Rotorua Bath House building have external walls that consist of substantial timber members arranged horizontally and vertically in typical Elizabethan composition. The timber members appear to be Totora. Within each timber frame are pre-cast concrete panels which appear to have been first painted sometime after the

1930s. Around the base of the 1908 building is a pumice concrete nib wall. The base of the 1983, 2008 and 2011 buildings are rendered concrete block to mimic the finish of the pumice concrete walls.

Totorua is generally considered a durable timber type native to New Zealand and was often used in ship construction during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Although untreated, the timber stick construction does not appear to show any signs of decay although the exterior paint is showing signs of blistering and some timber elements are exposed to the weather. Such defects to the exterior paintwork should be attended to immediately.

The timber stick construction and pre-cast concrete panels should be regularly surveyed for defects as part of a planned maintenance regime. This will highlight potential problems before they cause significant issues. One of the main sources of deterioration of the building is water penetration, either through weathered paintwork or where joints between timber members may have opened up. The building should be repainted on a regular basis as part of a planned maintenance regime. Any particular defects such as where the paintwork has weathered, exposing bare timber, should be attended to as they become apparent.

Timber Joinery

Timber joinery can deteriorate where it is exposed to the sun which causes it to crack and sometimes twist. Water penetration into the joints and where the timber has cracked can cause decay. Deteriorated or missing putty can also accelerate decay in timber joinery. Joinery should be regularly inspected as part of a programmed maintenance regime and then maintained to slow down the rate of decay.

Water ingress

The Museum is located within the Rotorua Government Gardens and the potential exists for water ingress into the building fabric if the gardens are over-mulched, overwatered or if plantings are untrimmed and allowed to grow in close proximity to the building. The gardens around the building should be regularly surveyed to ensure that the presence of vegetation and watering is not causing the ingress of moisture into the building. In particular, the vines towards the rear of the building could potentially grow over the basement walls of the east façade.

7.6 Risks

Every building of heritage value faces a number of risks to the fabric and whatever may be contained within. The Rotorua Bath House is located in a zone that is particularly seismically and thermally active and this places both the building and, as a museum, potentially the historical collections at risk.

Although work has previously been undertaken to structurally upgrade the building, the heritage fabric and contents are still considered to be at high risk from seismic activity although life would likely be preserved. Risks identified as being faced by the Rotorua Bath House include the following:

1. Damage to building fabric and contents as a result of seismic activity.
2. Water ingress through faulty roofing, gutters and downpipes causing damage to building fabric and contents.

3. Damage to building fabric including concrete panels, timber framing and joinery and roof tiles through natural weathering processes.
4. Damage to building fabric including joinery through lack of maintenance.
5. Flooding due to excessive rainfall.
6. Damage particularly to contents through ingress of vermin including insects, birds, mice and rats.
7. Vandalism to building fabric including graffiti.
8. Damage to exhibits through public interaction.
9. Theft of contents.

Further work should be undertaken to identify risks and weaknesses and measures should be put in place to mitigate these risks.

8.0 CONSERVATION POLICY

The following conservation policies have been developed to ensure all works, development proposals and/or changes of use respect the cultural heritage significance of the Rotorua Bath House. The policies are to provide guidance for the ongoing and future conservation and management of the building.

The conservation policies apply generally to the entire building and include all significant elements and internal spaces. They have been developed with regard to the assessed significance of the place and the elements of which it is comprised and are framed to:

- Ensure the significant heritage values of the area including views to key buildings as outlined in Section 6.0 are maintained.
- Ensure the significant external and internal fabric of the Rotorua Bath House and elements on the site are retained.
- Ensure the setting and relationship of the buildings on the site are maintained and managed. Provide for adaptation and new works which are compatible with the above and to outline procedures by which the above objectives may be achieved.

Informed by the Values Assessment (6.2) and Statement of Significance (6.3) and considering statutory requirements, a series of conservation policies have been formulated to care for the place in the future. Specifically, the objectives of policies are to:

- Retain the elements of and spaces within, the building that contribute to its heritage value and to identify ways to protect and care for them.
- Identify elements which detract from the heritage values of the place with a view to their removal or modification.
- Identify areas where reconstruction or restoration may reveal building features and forms which have since been lost.
- Provide a sustainable approach for the conservation of building fabric.
- Recognise that the building may need to be adapted to accommodate new uses.

Wherever work is proposed to be undertaken to the Rotorua Bath House, statutory approval may be required from the Rotorua Lakes Council and Heritage New Zealand. In addition, consultation may be required with the following interested groups; Museum (Board, Staff and Friends), community organisations (Heritage Aotearoa, Civic Trust, NZ ICOMOS), local community interest groups and local iwi.

The Museum is recognised as a store house for Māori taonga. Opportunities should be explored to work more closely with tangata whenua and local iwi in activities designed to recognise and interpret their culture, heritage and connections to the museum.

8.1 Policy Principles

The following policy principles have been developed to inform the conservation policies for the management of the Rotorua Bath House and guide its future development:

- That the heritage values of the Rotorua Bath House and its site should be preserved.
- That all museum functions, activities and operations be retained on site where possible.
- That the Museum continues to contribute to the cultural life of the Rotorua Lakes District.
- That any proposals be consistent with the principles of the ICOMOS New Zealand Charter.
- That any proposals comply with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
- That early consultation with internal and external stakeholders relevant to the proposed changes be implemented, including consideration of values held by associated communities not able to be directly consulted.
- That any changes to intact original elements and areas of 'primary significance' should be minimised.
- That, wherever possible, changes should be confined to elements and areas having 'little or no significance'.
- That removal of 'intrusive' elements should be encouraged where this work may further reveal the heritage values of the Museum buildings.
- That all fabric be recorded prior to any demolition, removal, alteration or modification.
- Documentation of the proposed use or operational requirements justifying the works or actions including, once completed, a log of actions cross-referenced to the Building Conservation Plan and identification of relevant statutory obligations and steps taken to ensure compliance.
- That maintenance and repair work be undertaken by appropriately skilled trades and crafts people.
- That any work to the building including new work, work to further adapt the building to accommodate Museum requirements and remedial work be overseen by qualified heritage professionals.
- That reconstruction of original missing elements should be encouraged where evidence exists for this to be undertaken accurately and without conjecture.

8.2 Statutory Approvals

Rationale

Any proposals for works or development to the Rotorua Bath House is likely to require building and resource consents to be obtained from the Rotorua Lakes Council as the local territorial authority. The proposals should comply with the Building Act and the requirements of the Rotorua Lakes District Plan.

Works requiring a building consent may trigger the need for the Rotorua Bath House to be upgraded with respect to fire protection and facilities for persons with disabilities.

Policies

The following policies should inform upgrades to the building fabric and systems required by legislation:

1. *Seismic upgrading and any other structural work required by legislation should respect the Rotorua Bath House's heritage values.*
2. *Works required to upgrade fire detection and prevention systems should respect the Rotorua Bath House's heritage values.*
3. *Alterations to improve universal access and facilities for persons with disabilities should respect the Rotorua Bath House's heritage values.*

8.3 Alignment with Current Heritage Guidance

Rationale

The management of the Rotorua Museum and any future work to the building should be in accordance with best international practices and conservation standards for work on significant heritage buildings.

Policies

The conservation and management of the built forms and heritage fabric of Rotorua Bath House shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of, and the guidance offered, by the following heritage documents and organisations.

1. *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value (2010).*
2. *Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, TAPUWAE Te Kōrero a te Kaunihera Māori o te Pouhere Taonga (2017).*

8.4 Engaging with Community and Stakeholders

Sustaining Significant Associations

Rationale

The Rotorua Bath House / Rotorua Museum is highly valued by the communities of Rotorua for its building, exhibitions, collection and the experiences it offers. These associations are recognised within this Building Conservation Plan as part of the significance of the Rotorua Bath House.

The Rotorua Bath House is of spiritual and cultural significance to tangata whenua for the taonga held within the museum and for the relationships between people, objects and stories facilitated by the existence of the museum and by its roles. As such it may be regarded as a place of Māori heritage.

The ways that groups and communities seek to express their connection to the Museum may evolve and change over time, in response to new understandings of the past or new cultural practices and changing relationships between cultural groups and with the museum. This

may result in requests to make changes to elements of the Museum that form part of its heritage significance.

Policies

The following policies aim to guide how significant associations may be sustained:

- 1. Respect and help sustain significant associations between the communities of Rotorua, including Māori (tangata whenua and local iwi), with the Rotorua Museum as a place and as a repository that holds significant objects and reflects aspects of community identity.*
- 2. Support engagement of community stakeholders with the museum and undertake activities within the museum that represent or interpret their associations.*
- 3. Where an element of the museum has a significant association with a specific group of people, these associations should be documented and respected. The significance attributed to those parts of the Museum should be understood as part of future management planning.*
- 4. From time to time, associated groups or communities may seek changes to an element that is significant to them so that it better reflects changing cultural needs or perspectives. Such changes should be considered with due respect to the contribution of that element to the significance of the place as a whole and the impact of the proposed changes on the heritage values attributed by that associated group or community.*

Engagement and Communication When Change is Proposed

Rationale

Engagement and communication with associated communities, cultural groups and other stakeholders is best undertaken prior to decisions being taken and changes being implemented.

Policies

The following policies aim to guide the involvement of community stakeholders:

- 1. Use consultative approaches that are transparent, well-communicated and able to be understood by associated communities and cultural groups and when changes are proposed, inform stakeholders of such proposals and, provide them with an opportunity to comment and/or seek further information. All such decisions and the associated actions undertaken will be documented and these records kept for future reference.*
- 2. Maintain a register of relevant stakeholders and identify the scope of their interests and the specific areas or features that are of the greatest significance to them. The register should be used to maintain regular contact and to ensure that the Museum can consult effectively when change is mooted.*

8.5 Setting

Rationale

The Elizabethan Revival architecture of the Rotorua Bath House and the Museum's position on a principal city axis, gives it prominence within the Rotorua cityscape. The Rotorua Bath House is sited within the Government Gardens and is situated within a precinct of other heritage buildings including the former Gardner's Cottage and Blue Baths.

The physical connections between the Rotorua Bath House, the Prince's Arch and Gates, the Gardener's Cottage, the Blue Baths and the former tearooms are of particular significance.

Policies

The following policies aim to protect the setting and contextual values of the Rotorua Bath House:

- 1. Important vistas into and out from museum should be maintained.*
- 2. The streetscape and 'contextual' values which contribute to the unique identity of the surrounding area should be maintained.*
- 3. The current relationship of Rotorua Bath House to the surrounding Government Gardens should be maintained.*
- 4. The relationship between the Rotorua Bath House with the Sportsdrome building should be considered. Any future works involving the buildings should respect and, where possible, enhance the heritage values of the Bath House.*
- 5. In the future, visual connections should be improved between the rear of the Rotorua Bath House and the Government Gardens.*

8.6 Caring for the Building Fabric

Rationale

The former Rotorua Bath House building appears overall to be in good structural condition, however, requires a seismic upgrade to achieve a minimum of 34% of the New Building Standard (NBS).

Fabric that provides evidence and an understanding of the cultural significance of the Rotorua Bath House should be retained and conserved. A regular maintenance programme should be incorporated into the management of the Rotorua Museum to help reduce the need for significant repairs in the future.

Policy

The following policies have been formulated to guide the management and care of building fabric:

1. *The building fabric should be cared for by a planned cyclical maintenance and periodic repair programme.*
2. *Any maintenance and repair work should be undertaken by individuals who are skilled in the work required to ensure the work is of a high standard.*
3. *Any significant remedial or maintenance work should be overseen by qualified heritage professionals.*
4. *Materials used for repairs should match that of the heritage fabric. If original materials are not available or their use is no longer appropriate, compatible materials with a close visual match should be used. Traditional building techniques should be used where appropriate.*
5. *Care should be taken to ensure that rainwater systems such as gutters, downpipes and stormwater drains that convey water away from the building are maintained in good condition.*
6. *The design and installation of building services should not adversely impact on the heritage fabric of the Rotorua Bath House. New openings in historic fabric to enable the introduction of services should be minimized and should avoid elements of primary significance.*
7. *Environmental sustainability should follow the Heritage New Zealand Sustainable Management of Historic Heritage guidelines.*
8. *Earthquake strengthening and any seismic joints that may be required should be designed and where possible located in places where the impact on heritage fabric is minimised. Where seismic joints are required between sections of the building they should be located in locations of least significance.*
9. *Solutions to allow access for maintenance should avoid impacts on heritage fabric.*
10. *Pest management and humidity control systems need to be addressed and any implementation should be discreetly located.*

8.7 Building Policies

1908 Section

Rationale

The 1908 building was the first to be constructed on the site and currently houses a café, exhibition galleries, meetings rooms and other facilities including toilets. Since it was constructed, the Rotorua Bath House has been extended to the point where the 1908 building is now adjoined by later structures. The central hall of the building has generally been restored and is in relatively original form, comprising a double height space with a gallery at first floor level and exposed timber trusses.

The 1908 section was the original section of the Rotorua Bath House and the first section of Wohlmann's vision to be realised. It is considered to have primary significance and could have the status of a 'museum within a museum'. In any future development, the potential exists for currently hidden heritage fabric to be revealed including the covered baths and any tiled dados currently concealed behind later wall linings.

Policies

Policies to conserve and enhance the 1908 building include:

- 1. Consideration could be given to re-sheathing the roof with replicas of the original tiles to return this section of the building as closely as possible to its original form. All available documentary and physical evidence should be examined to ensure all restoration work is authentic and avoids conjecture. It should be noted that only the earliest (1908 and 1911) sections of the building had these original tiles, the later sections have only had Marseille tiles.*
- 2. Suspended ceilings should be removed and original ceilings exposed.*
- 3. Later partition walls and other linings should be removed, particularly those in front of windows.*
- 4. Following work required to the building, such as a structural upgrade, the building should be returned to its present form.*
- 5. There exists the potential to reinstate the original thirteen marble statues that existed within the 1908 section of the building as decorative elements. These statues are currently in storage in various areas around the building.*
- 6. Consideration should be given to reintroducing views from within the building out to the Government Gardens by reactivating blocked windows and doors, particularly in the north wing.*
- 7. The areas beneath the rear verandahs were originally open but have since been infilled to house services. The grilles are intrusive elements and consideration should be given to their removal.*

1911 Section

Rationale

The first addition to the 1908 section of the building was constructed in 1911 and faces out to the Government Gardens. It is proposed that the original facades of the building should generally be retained in their present form.

Policy

Policies to conserve and enhance the 1911 building include:

- 1. Consideration could be given to re-sheathing the roof with replicas of the original roof tiles to return this section of the building as closely as possible to its original form. All available documentary and physical evidence should be examined to ensure all restoration work is authentic and avoids conjecture.*
- 2. Consideration should be given to reintroducing views from within the building out to the Government Gardens by reactivating blocked windows and doors.*

1983, 2008 and 2011 Section

Rationale

The exterior of the 1983, 2008 and 2011 additions were built essentially to the original concept envisaged by Wohlmann in 1902.

The interior spaces are potential locations for redevelopment, although the exterior facades should be retained as they contribute to the heritage values of the Rotorua Bath House and its context. Within these spaces, new galleries could be constructed.

Policy

Policies to conserve and enhance the 1983, 2008 and 2011 additions include:

1. *Retain the exterior façades and roof towers.*
2. *New development could take place within the envelope of these parts of the building.*

8.8 Visitor Experience

Rationale

Consideration should be given to improve aspects of the current experience of visitors to the Rotorua Museum whenever work to the building is proposed. If visitors to the Rotorua Museum have a positive experience, they are more likely to perceive value in their visit and to undertake return visits. Improvements to the visitor experience including enhanced public entrance, wayfinding, circulation and visitor facilities will make it clearer for an individual, family, associated communities and cultural groups to navigate their way through the Museum and their enjoyment and satisfaction levels are likely to increase when viewing the exhibits on display. Likewise, upgraded café and retail offerings may potentially increase sales as well as improving the overall visitor experience.

The building provides a strong visual connection with the Government Gardens, although this has been particularly compromised in the north and south wings by the blocking up of original windows to form gallery spaces. Originally there was a strong visual connection through window placement on the west and east elevations. These were subsequently partitioned over and the visual connection was lost. Consideration should be given reinstatement of visual links to the Government Gardens from within the Museum.

Provision should be made to enhance the experience for researchers as well as school and other educational groups through the provision of research and educational facilities. The provision of these facilities may require changes to the existing building.

The interpretation of the building occupied by the Rotorua Museum can contribute to a more meaningful visitor experience and public appreciation of the architectural design and craftsmanship of the 1908 and 1911 buildings. It can also help tell the story of the evolution of the development and function of the Museum and record elements that have been lost. Interpretation can take the form of traditional plaques or information boards but may include web-based content or mobile phone apps using multimedia or augmented reality techniques.

Policy

1. *The following policies seek to guide changes to enhance the visitor experience:*
2. *The principal public entrance should remain in its historic location accessed through the 1908 porch.*
3. *The 1908 building – particularly the atrium and bath areas – should retain their interior volumes and continue to be accessible to the visiting public.*
4. *Back of house, storage and visitor comfort facilities should be located in spaces of lesser significance such as the twentieth century buildings.*
5. *Any work to, or in the vicinity of, the Sportsdrome building should respect the significance of the Bath House.*
6. *New educational or other large public spaces should be located in spaces of lesser significance such as 1983, 2008 or 2011 sections of the building.*
7. *New vertical circulation including lifts and stairs should be located in spaces of lesser significance. These may include the or highly modified parts of the original 1908 section or the later additions.*
8. *Support significant community connections and participation in cultural activities at the museum by enabling continued access to key areas for each group and providing suitable amenities.*
9. *New way-finding, egress and other signage, toilet facilities and gathering spaces should be positioned to avoid damage to heritage fabric and should not detract from or obscure significant fabric.*
10. *The option of providing improved visual connections for visitors between the Museum and the Government Gardens by reinstating the previously blocked up doors and windows should be investigated.*
11. *Interpretation should communicate the recognised heritage values of the Rotorua Museum and displays and the like should be located so as not to damage, detract from or obscure significant fabric. To the extent that interpretation relies on or uses information from associated communities, cultural groups, other stakeholders or contributors, they should be consulted throughout the interpretation planning process.*
12. *Consideration could be given to the establishment of a new type of 'friends' group as a way of engaging the wider community – including volunteers, external researchers, regular visitors, interest groups and others – in the appreciation of the museum's heritage values.*

8.9 Operation of the Building

Rationale

The Rotorua Museum's public responsibility encompasses the ethical care, use and display of collections, as well as proper institutional management. The Rotorua Museum preserves the Rotorua District's collective memory as expressed tangibly and intangibly and should use a variety of methods to inform and engage associated communities and stakeholder groups on the management of the building's heritage values. The Museum should maintain proper operating systems and procedures which follow accepted museological practices.

Museum staff are an important resource and the offices, meeting rooms and other facilities supplied for them should reflect their value to the organisation as well as exceeding statutory requirements in terms of safety and comfort. Separate circulation spaces from those used by the visiting public may be required including a lift for transporting exhibition objects.

Policies

The following policies seek to guide changes to enhance facilities for staff and volunteers and to improve museum operations:

- 1. The creation of separate circulation routes for staff and volunteers should avoid the need to form new openings within heritage fabric of primary and supporting significance.*
- 2. Museum offices, meeting rooms, conservation and other facilities for staff should be located in spaces of lesser significance such as the twenty first century sections including the 2008 north and 2011 south wings.*
- 3. Loading docks, parking and collections receipt and handling should be located on the southern side of the Museum. No new openings should be created in the original 1908 facades.*
- 4. New vertical circulation for staff, volunteers and collections movement including stairs and a lift for exhibition objects should be located in the 2008 and 2011 sections.*
- 5. Collections storage should be located within dedicated spaces designed to provide the appropriate level of security and environmental control and to meet the spatial requirements of significant objects.*
- 6. New wayfinding, egress and other signage should be located and fixed to avoid damage to heritage fabric.*

8.10 Future Development

Rationale

Over the years, the Rotorua Bath House building has expanded as the need for additional exhibition spaces, storage and other facilities has arisen. The earliest addition took place in 1911, however, the building was not extended again until 1983.

In the early twenty-first century, the need for further space increased substantially and larger additions were constructed in 2008 and 2011. The design of all the additions was based on the original concept envisaged by Wohlmann in 1902 and have generally respected the scale and form of the original building.

In terms of its bulk, the building in its present form has now realised Wohlmann's original concept. Any future additions that may be required should respect the present form of the building which essentially means that are probably going to comprise separate structures that may be lightly linked to the present building. Future additions should respect the present building but should not seek to emulate its architectural style and character.

Within the present building, any future development should respect the areas of the Rotorua Bath House that have the highest heritage value. Consideration should also be given to revealing elements of the 1908 fabric that is currently not visible as a way of enhancing the Museum's heritage values and the visitor experience.

Policies

The following policies should guide any future development at the Rotorua Bath House:

- 1. Elements that are 'Intrusive' or detract from the significance of the Rotorua Bath House should be removed or demolished especially where their removal will help reveal significant fabric. In the future, this may include replacing the current roof tiles with replicas of the original Bridgewater tiles.*
- 2. Elements that are of 'little or no' significance may be removed or demolished as long as this does not adversely affect fabric of 'supporting' or 'primary' significance.*
- 3. Elements of 'supporting' significance should generally be retained although alteration or modification may be considered.*
- 4. Elements of 'primary' significance must be retained although limited alteration or modification may be considered.*
- 5. New work within the present building should be distinguishable from heritage fabric and the reproduction of heritage details in any new development should be avoided.*
- 6. New work within the present building should not obscure original building forms or heritage fabric.*
- 7. Reversible, contemporary and visually lightweight elements are a recognised method of linking heritage fabric to new developments.*
- 8. If additional space in the form of new structures is required at some future date, the massing, scale, form and articulation of new built forms should maintain the prominence of the historic Bath House and avoid inappropriate or incompatible contrasts with the heritage fabric.*
- 9. Preference should be given to the use of recessive materials, finishes and colours that may reference existing materials and colour palette while avoiding inappropriate or incompatible contrasts with the heritage fabric.*

10. The architectural design and articulation of any new development should complement the heritage forms and fabric of the existing building while being contemporary in style as a way of ensuring that it is not mistaken as heritage fabric.

11. New built forms should not be higher than, or be visible above, the roof lines of the existing building to avoid dominating and overshadowing the existing building.

8.11 Universal Access Policy

Rationale

Rotorua Museum recognises and values persons with disabilities as equal participants who need to be able to move independently and safely. Wheelchair access and access to sanitary facilities that meet the universal access design standard are required for staff, volunteers and visitors alike.

Policy

The following policies should inform the introduction of facilities to enable universal access:

- 1. Access solutions should seek to improve accessibility to the building while maintaining heritage fabric.*
- 2. A strategy should be developed to address accessibility rather than piecemeal and incremental improvements.*
- 3. Any improvements should be designed to ensure they can potentially be reversed at some future date.*

9.0 ADOPTION, USE AND REVIEW OF CONSERVATION PLAN

This document should be formally adopted by Rotorua Museum and serve as a recognised guide for the ongoing conservation, management and development of the building. The Plan should inform the ongoing management of the Rotorua Bath House as well as physical works and major development proposals.

Endorsement of the Plan should be sought from the Rotorua Lakes District Council and Heritage New Zealand as key stakeholders. It is anticipated that this document will inform statutory decision making and referral responses from these bodies.

Once adopted and endorsed the Plan should be made available on the Rotorua Museum's website to provide transparency to the broader community regarding the heritage values of the Rotorua Bath House and the policies that will inform their long-term management and future development.

It is also important that provision be made for the Plan to be reviewed on a regular basis to allow for changing circumstances, knowledge and community values to be incorporated. Periodic review of the Plan will ensure it is kept up to date and continues to be an essential tool to assist in the management and conservation of the Rotorua Bath House. The Plan should be reviewed on a five-yearly basis or more frequently if significant new information is discovered or major changes are proposed to the building.

10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Published Sources

Anonymous, *The Auckland Provincial Handbook - Auckland Provincial Court Executive*: Auckland (for New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition) 1925.

Anonymous, *The New Zealand Index*, H. Wise & Co: Dunedin, 1921.

Iles, A. J., *Tourist Guide to Rotorua and the Hot Lakes District*. Rotorua, 1925.

Kerr, J. S., *The Conservation Plan A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance - 2nd Edition*. National Trust of Australia (NSW): Sydney, 1985.

Rockel, I., *Taking the Waters: Early Spas in New Zealand*. Government Printer: Wellington, 1986.

Savage, P., *The Government Gardens*. Rotorua District Council: Rotorua, 1980.

Stafford, D. M., *The New Century in Rotorua: A History of Events from 1900*. Ray Richards & Rotorua District Council, 1988.

Tapsell, E., *A History of Rotorua: A Brief Survey of the Settlement of Rotorua and Environs by Our Pioneers, Maori and Pakeha*. Rotorua, 1972.

Wohlmann, A. S., *The Mineral Waters and the Health Resorts of New Zealand. Part I – Rotorua*. Government Printer: Wellington, 1904.

Wohlmann, A. S., *Mineral Waters and Spas of New Zealand*. Government Printer: Wellington, 1914.

Feilden, Sir Bernard M., *Conservation of Historic Buildings*. Butterworth & Co, London. 1982.

Ashurst, John & Nicola, *Practical Building Conservation (English Heritage Technical Handbook). Volume 5 – Wood, Glass and Resins*. Gower Technical Press Ltd: England, 1989.

Cochran, Chris, *Conservation Bulletin 1, Historic Timber Structures*. New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1992.

Harris, Richard, *Discovering Timber-Framed Buildings*. Shire Publications Ltd.: Dyfed, 1979.

Shaw, Peter, *New Zealand Architecture from Polynesian Beginnings to 1990*. Hodder and Stoughton: 1991.

ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value.

Unpublished Sources

Bennett, P. R., *Tudor Towers – The Rotorua Baths*. Victoria University of Wellington, Thesis, 1984.

Gorbey, K., *Report on the Proposed Amalgamation of Rotorua Art Gallery and Rotorua Museum*. Report for Rotorua District Council:1987.

Hillary, S. L., *The Problems of Hydrogen Sulphide at the Rotorua Art Gallery: Discussion and Recommendations.* Rotorua District Council: 1985.

Hocking, G., *Report to Rotorua District Council.* Hocking & Verrall & Associates: Rotorua, 1984.

Sewell, J. R., *Pigments and Pollution : a DSIR Report on the Effect of Hydrogen Sulphide on Paintings in Rotorua 1973.* Chemistry Division: DSIR, 1973.

Wilson, T. L. R., *The Bath-House: Rotorua's Art & History Museum – A Development Proposal.* Report for Rotorua District Council: 1989.

Archives and Private Collections

Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)

National Archives Auckland (ANA)

Rotorua Lakes Council Archives (RLC)

Rotorua Museum Records (RM)

National Archives Wellington (WNA)

Newspapers

Andrews, P., *Rotorua's Bath-House 'Just Magic',* Daily Post, Saturday 7 August 1993, p.4.

Andrews, P., *Bath-House Name Honours Its History,* Daily Post, Saturday 12 February 1994, p.4.

Auckland Weekly News 13 August 1908; 20 August 1908

Plans and Elevations

Among plans, sketch plans and elevations of the Bath House available in the archives of Rotorua District Council, the following are useful references:

RCI 002-0688	early north block and north wing ground floor plan.
RCI 002-0681	proposed repositioning of Rachel Pool & Pyretic Shower 1964.
RCI 002-0689	north block galleries.
RCI 002-0685	ground floor plan & lighting plan circa 1964.
POO-O-30	record of building as at February 1979.

section and side elevation of central portion.

section and side elevation of north wing.

basement showing drainage & water service.

section and front elevation north block.

existing ground and first floor plan March 1964.

In addition, the Rotorua Art and History Museum holds three original ground floor plans on framed board.

Appendix A - Other Key Relevant Drawings

The following images are a selection of drawings of the Rotorua Bath House sourced from the Rotorua Museum and Works Consultancy Limited which have informed research contained within this Conservation Plan.

NB: The following drawings have been sourced from the previous Conservation Plan, and the room codes as such are different from those listed within the plans contained in this 2019 Conservation Plan.

		TITLE: ROTORUA DISTRICT COUNCIL THE BATH-HOUSE CONSERVATION PLAN		GROUND FLOOR - AS BUILT & 1912 ADDITION		JOB / CODE / 7101		SHEET 102	
		SCALE: 1:250		FILE 21243.00		CAD FILE 21243102		REVISION	
WORKS Consultancy Services Auckland P.O. Box 5048 Auckland, New Zealand Phone 0-9-309 6863, Fax 0-9-377 1525		BY CHECKED DATE		DESIGN DATE		12/94		102	
AMENDMENT		APPROVED		DATE		STATUS		102	

