

# Steeles Building

166 The Square, Palmerston North

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NZHPT Registration Number: 1270  
NZHPT Registration Type: Historic Place – Category II  
NZHPT Registration Date: 02/07/82  
City/District Council: Palmerston North City Council  
District Plan Status: Category 1

Other Names: Hepworth Building



## Brief History

This small commercial building was erected in 1917 for Herbert Hepworth, a pharmacist. Hepworth's pharmacy occupied the ground floor, and the upstairs portion was designed to serve as living quarters. Architect R. Thorrold Jaggard designed the building. Jaggard began his career in the firm of well-known local architect Oscar Jorgesen before establishing his own practice. Among the surviving examples of Jaggard's many commercial and domestic designs in Palmerston North are the King Street Flats (1925), Square Edge (1945), Ward Brothers building (1936), and a residence, 314 Church Street.

Wellington conservation architect Ian Bowman described the former Hepworth building as being in 'the late Edwardian Free style using some features of the Queen Anne, such as the oriel window, casements, combination of colours and some elements of the Classical orders'. According to Bowman, 'the use of a mixture of materials, including brick, tiles, timber, cement render, wrought iron, and pressed metal, is reminiscent of late Victorian public house design'. This former Hepworth Building with the adjoining former O'Connor and Tydeman Building represent an era when even smaller retailers built their own single shop premises. In the early 1940s, the building was purchased by the O'Connor family and leased to Steeles, whose name is still seen in relief above the upper storey windows. Peacock's Ladieswear later took the lease before Sound City purchased the building.

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*Principal Sources:*

Bowman, I. and Kelly, M. *Palmerston North CBD Heritage Inventory*. Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 1993.