



View of Glasgow Wharf looking south from the landward end, 2012.

Glasgow Wharf (1901)

1.0 Outline History

1.1. History

Glasgow Wharf was named for the Earl of Glasgow, who, as Governor General took a considerable interest in the operations of the Wellington Harbour Board. It was built by John McLean and Son and opened in 1901. At the same time two large sheds were constructed on the deck (originally called Sheds S and T, later known as sheds 23 and 25), and equipped with hydraulic cranes. The drawings for the sheds are signed by William Ferguson, engineer to the Wellington Harbour Board, and are dated April 1901.

The wharf was serviced by rail and handled frozen meat, as well as other produce that required cool storage such as cheese. For many years it was the main export loading berth particularly for the meat trade.

In 1929 new 2 ½ ton cranes were installed, and the deck was re-laid with timber blocks to bring the deck flush with the railway tracks. This suggests that the timber blocks overlaid the existing deck. In 1964 the Harbour Board set about a major strengthening and reconstruction of the Glasgow Wharf, laying a new concrete deck and six new railway tracks (three on each side) and installing five new Stothert and Pitt three-ton electric cranes close together on each side of the wharf; this required the strengthening of the wharf with further piles to the outer edges. Shed 23 and half of Shed 25 were demolished at this time. The work was not completed until 1967.

Shortly after this, the growth of containerisation led to the reclamation of a large area to the east for the new container port, although this did not directly affect the Glasgow Wharf. The last remaining crane was restored and placed on Queen's Wharf in 2000.

In 1992 the wharf became the base for the *Straitsman*, a roll-on roll-off vessel that could carry livestock on her upper deck; a second vessel, the *Suilven* joined her in 1995. Both have since been replaced. The Bluebridge Ferry Service has operated a daily Wellington to Picton service from the wharf since 2003; a ferry terminal building was built nearby for the company that same year. The wharf is still used for marshalling vehicles for ferry sailings.

The wharf did suffer damage in the Kaikoura earthquake in 2016, mainly where the wharf meets reclaimed land on its north end; there was some movement of piles. There are no major structures on the wharf today, although there is still a network of rail lines running along either side.

2.0 Location

2.1. Map



2.2. Legal description

None evident.

3.0 Physical Description

3.1. Setting

Glasgow Wharf is a finger wharf, oriented approximately north – south and parallel to others nearby including King’s Wharf to the east and Railway Wharf to the west. The wharf deck is open and is used for storage and the movement of freight; vessels can moor alongside either side of it.

The wharf is part of the working area of the port controlled by CentrePort Wellington, so that the setting is an industrial one of containers, cranes, rail and trucking. It is not able to be visited, but it can be clearly viewed from the seaward side.

3.2. Item

Glasgow Wharf is founded on timber piles, which support a heavy superstructure of timber beams, joists, bracing, decking and bollards.

The design drawings for the wharf do not exist so that it is difficult to describe the hidden parts of the structure in any detail. Suffice to say that it appears to be of standard construction for the time, similar to adjacent timber wharves (Kings, Railway and Waterloo Wharves). Major upgrading of the structure in 1964 (which is documented in drawings) provides evidence of wharf design some 60 years after the wharf was built.

The wharf originally had two major cargo storage sheds (these are fully documented in a set of original drawings); these have gone, as have the cranes, so that today the wharf deck is devoid of any major structures. The Kaikoura earthquake of 14 November 2016, caused some damage to the wharf, although it remains operational today, for shipping and for the marshalling of trucks and vehicles for Bluebridge ferries.

3.3. Chronology, modifications

Date	Activity
1899	Contract for construction of the wharf let to John McLean and Son.
1901	Glasgow Wharf opened; sheds built on the wharf.
1964	Major upgrading of the wharf carried out; Shed 23 and half of Shed 25 demolished, ten tripod cranes installed following strengthening of outer edge of each side of wharf.
2000	Last crane removed from the wharf.
Post-2016	Any remaining structures removed from wharf following the Kaikoura earthquake, 14 November 2016. Part of concrete deck resurfaced.
n.d.	The foundations have been subject to periodic repairs, mostly replacement of timbers.

4.0 Assessment of Significance

The criteria for this assessment of significance are taken from policy 20 of the proposed Regional Policy Statement (GWRC 2009).

4.1. Historic Values

These relate to the history of a place and how it demonstrates important historical themes, events, people or experiences.

Glasgow Wharf has a history dating back to 1901 and since that time it has been an integral part of the shipping and cargo handling facilities of Wellington's working port. Its period as the main berth for the meat trade gives it particular historic significance. It retains its on-going usefulness, partly because of a major upgrading in 1964 and through its use by Bluebridge ferries. This long period of use, of more than 115 years, gives the wharf considerable historic and representative value.

4.2. Physical Values

Architectural Values

The place is notable for its style, design, form, scale, materials, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural values.

The architectural values of Glasgow Wharf relate to those aesthetic qualities that arise from a well-designed engineering structure, one that is fit for its purpose in servicing a heavy industrial process. It is an intelligent structural design, making sound use of materials that were chosen for fulfilling a demanding engineering brief.

Technological Values

The place provides evidence of the history of technological development or demonstrates innovation or important methods of construction or design.

The technological value of the wharf is high, since it is a major wharf structure built in timber. It is a significant technical achievement in heavy timber construction, exemplified by its having had a useful life over more than 115 years.

Integrity

The significant physical values of the place have been largely unmodified.

Enough of the original sub-deck framing and the piling of the wharf remains for it to have a moderate level of integrity, and the major upgrading work of 1964 has technical interest in its own right. The original wharf sheds have been completely removed, a significant heritage loss.

Age

The place is particularly old in the context of human occupation of the Wellington region.

The wharf, having been built in 1901, is now of some interest for its age in the context of wharf structures in the port and harbour.

Group or Townscape Values

The place is strongly associated with other natural or cultural features in the landscape or townscape, and/or contributes to the heritage values of a wider townscape or landscape setting, and/or it is a landmark.

Glasgow Wharf has some associational value with the Kings Wharf to the east and Railway and other timber wharves to the west; it reinforces the strong geometric pattern of the north-south orientation of Wellington's inner harbour wharves. The townscape value of the wharf is slight, by the nature of its discreet form, and its location in a working port area that is not easily accessible to the public.

4.3. Social Values

Sentiment

The place has strong or special associations with a particular cultural group or community.

No special association has been identified.

Recognition

The place is held in high public esteem for historic heritage values or contribution to the sense of identity of a community.

Glasgow Wharf could not be seen to hold any place of note in the public esteem.

4.4. Surroundings

The setting or context of the place contributes to an appreciation and understanding of its character, history and/or development.

The surroundings of Glasgow Wharf are entirely appropriate for such a structure, since the activities it supports are fundamentally those that it was built for. It is part of an industrial shipping landscape and fits in seamlessly in this context.

4.5. Rarity

The place is unique or rare within the district or region.

The wharf is not rare, but it is noteworthy in being built in timber.

4.6. Representativeness

The place is a good example of its type or era.

It is a good representative example of a timber wharf of the first years of the 20th century.

5.0 Recommendation

The wharf has sufficient heritage value to merit listing on the GWRC heritage inventory.

6.0 Photographs



Western edge of Glasgow Wharf, 2018.



The deck of Glasgow Wharf, looking north to the landward end.

References

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