

# Old club faces 10m shift to make way for office complex

by Nikki Preston

The 107-year-old Hamilton Club will be shifted 10m closer to the Waikato River on its existing Grantham St site after the developer abandoned plans to sell the building to the council for \$1.

The historic building will be lifted away from the site next month while ground work is carried out and will then be replaced slightly forward from the original spot to make room for a planned office development on the prime riverfront site.

Either the Hamilton Club will return to the heritage building or it is likely to be used as a restaurant.

The 1904-09 structure will be saved, but a 1950s concrete-block addition will be demolished.

The building will be relocated 3m from the site's western boundary.

The developer, Project Grantham, fronted by Lyall Green, was in negotiations with the council this month because it felt the proposal maintained the original values of the existing club. Mr Green did not respond to *Herald* calls.

In May, the Hamilton City Council agreed in principle to buy the building from Mr Green for \$1 and move it to vacant council-owned land in lower Victoria St.

Mr Green had offered to pay for the move to the new site, as well as restoration and earthquake-proofing costs.

But Hamilton Mayor Julie Hardaker said there was never a final agreement with

## TIMELINE

- **1904-1909:** Hamilton Club built.
- **1950:** Concrete-block extension added to the Hamilton Club.
- **August 2009:** Purchased by developer Lyall Green and business partner Brian Bartel for \$1.75 million to build riverside multifunctional office and retail block.
- **May 2011:** Project Grantham offers the Hamilton City Council the building for \$1 and to pay for relocation costs to a council-owned vacant site in lower Victoria St.
- **September 2011:** Resource consent approved for Hamilton Club building to be moved forward on the original site.

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Mr Green and the idea was just an option he presented to the council. She welcomed the plan for a new office block on a key site in the central city.

Hamilton Club will be the last tenant to vacate the old building. President Peter Clough said it had been offered the use of the Hamilton Cosmopolitan Club and had not decided whether it would return to the old building once it was relocated.

The Historic Places Trust area manager, Gail Henry, said it was a good outcome for both parties and moving the building 10m forward would position the building to the sun.