

Case Study: Old Government Buildings, Wellington, NZ.



The Building

New Zealand's original Government Buildings, completed in 1876, are the second largest wooden building in the world. Using kauri, one of the country's premier native timbers, they were built to resemble an Italian stone palace. Today, these beautifully restored and maintained buildings, close to the large and scenic harbour, provide a home for the Victoria University School of Law and the Department of Conservation (DoC) information centre.



The Problem

The architecture of these grand buildings provides many natural perching and nesting places for pigeons, seagulls, and other birds. Before the building was lovingly restored, the birds contributed to the deterioration of the façade and the insanitary fouling of window ledges and other areas.

Reasons for installing proofing

The DoC technical Support Officer for upkeep of the buildings, Richard Nester, explains that there were a number of factors in the decision. These included the historical importance of this architectural gem as part of the national legacy; the high cost of frequent wash-downs and re-painting; the cost of maintaining the structure and fabric of the building; and the fact that the building is among the most photographed by Kiwis and overseas visitors.

"The Ace Birdnet system installed by Kwikill Environmental Services has successfully met DoC's objectives. It has been in place for 10 years, and has slashed maintenance costs. Furthermore, by being almost

invisible, it solved the unsightly fouling problem while allowing visitors to take photographs of these impressive buildings.” (Richard Nester, Doc Technical Support Officer)



Which proofing system was used?

After DoC and the main contractor for the restoration project, McKee Fehl Constructors, held discussions with ACE Birdproofing and Kwikill Environmental Services, it was decided to install Network Bird Post and Wire system on the majority of the building, supported by some Network Bird Net on the verandahs and inside the pedimented window heads. Ace Birdproofing supplied all Network materials and technical support.

Installing the Network Bird System

Managing director of Kwikill, Mike Hermansson, says: “As we were not permitted to drill into the lead flashings of the historical buildings, we installed stainless steel Bird Posts with Network nylon bases. These have proved to be very durable. Remarkably few have been replaced during the decade they’ve been in service. The tightly strung nylon coated stainless wire fastened to stainless springs completed the system. The quantity of Network Bird Wire used was a staggering 6500 metres for the 365 metre circumference of building.”

He adds:

“Similarly, the Network Bird Net is easy to fit and has proved to be tough in the waterfront conditions of ‘windy Wellington’.

It has protected the elegant verandahs without harming the birds --- just frustrating them!”



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