

House

112 Abel Smith Street



Charles Collins – 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- The house at 112 Abel Smith Street is a typical single storey Victorian cottage and has aesthetic value for its design, proportions, and ornamented façade.
- This house has had a modest, uneventful, and typical history that is representative of many inner city residential properties.
- This house is a good representative of a timber cottage, with a history that is representative of the area, and was constructed in materials and using techniques that were common to the period.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 3/3
Legal Description:	Pt Section 117 Town of Wellington
Heritage Area:	-
HPT Listed:	-
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 Building, NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	-
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1874
Architect / Builder:	-
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy- SR 269337

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

This cottage is an important historic structure in the context of the street. It is among the oldest timber structures remaining on Abel Smith Street and is an important survivor of the era in which it was built. It is one of three cottages on Abel Smith Street that make up a small precinct of similar cottages. They are relatively typical of the working class housing that was once predominant in this part of Te Aro.

The house at 112 Abel Smith Street has had a quiet history, typical for a residence in this area. It is a representative example of the modest workers cottages that typify pre-1900 European settlement in the Wellington region.

The site that this house occupies was originally part of town acre 117, one of the original 1100 town sections created during the settlement of Wellington. The property was purchased by William Short in 1874. It appears that 112 Abel Smith Street is the original building constructed on this site, and was built by 1892 as it appears on the 1892 Thomas Ward map.¹

William Short remained the owner until his death in 1906 when the property was transferred to his wife, Jane. In 1907 Jane remarried to John William McLean Field. In 1909 Jane and John were named as the joint owners of the property. In 1939 the property was transferred to Thomas Field Crichton and Richard Edward Tripe as executors. Immediately it was transferred to Catherine Mary Crichton. It appears that she remained the owner until 1990 when it was transferred to Russell Feist and Keith Matthews as executors, and in 1993 it was sold to Uptown Properties. In 2006 the property was transferred to Aro Restoration Limited, which remains the owner in 2013.²

It is difficult to ascertain what modifications, additions, or alterations have been made to this cottage, as no building permit records survive.

¹ Thomas Ward Map 1892, accessed 4 October 2013, <http://wellington.govt.nz/webmap/wccmap.html?xmin=1747759&ymin=5427052&xmax=1749533&ymax=5428719&base=0&map=0&moredata=0>

² Land Information New Zealand, Certificate of Title WN4/94

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

It appears that 112 Abel Smith Street is the original building constructed on this site, and was built by 1892 as it appears on the 1892 Thomas Ward map. It is a simple cottage with two windows on the front façade. It has rustic timber profile weatherboards, and a decorative verandah. It appears to have a typical simple configuration of a house from this period, with four main rooms in the building and a small lean to at the rear.

2.2 Materials

- Timber joinery
- Rustic weatherboard cladding
- Steel cladding/roofing

2.3 Setting

This house is situated on Abel Smith Street between a similar single storey cottage and a modern garage building. This block is made up of a number of timber houses that act as a reminder of the residential use of this area and upper Cuba Street, but this setting has been impacted upon by the construction of the Wellington urban motorway and Karo Drive which detract from the aesthetic value of these buildings and the area.

3.0 Sources

Thomas Ward Map 1892, accessed 4 October 2013,
<http://wellington.govt.nz/webmap/wccmap.html?xmin=1747759&ymin=5427052&xmax=1749533&ymax=5428719&base=0&map=0&moredata=0>

Land Information New Zealand

WN4/94

Wellington City Archive

00432: 49: 3338

4.0 Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: *Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?*

The house at 112 Abel Smith Street is a typical single storey Victorian cottage and has aesthetic value for its design, proportions, and ornamented façade.

Townscape: *Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?*

This house is of townscape value as it adds to the character and sense of place on Abel Smith Street, particularly in relation to its immediate neighbours, which act as a reminder of the residential use that this area and Upper Cuba Street once had.

Group: *Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?*

Historic Value:

Association: *Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?*

This house has had a modest, uneventful, and typical history that is representative of many inner city residential properties.

Association: *Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?*

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: *Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?*

This house is likely to predate 1900, and is found in the NZAA Central City Archaeological area R27/270.

Educational: *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

Technological: *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:

Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?

Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

Sentiment/Connection: *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

This house is a good representative of a timber cottage, with a history that is representative of the area, and was constructed in materials and using techniques that were common to the period.

Authentic: *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

This house has retained a significant amount of original exterior fabric and has authenticity.

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

This house is locally important for the role that it plays in the streetscape, and for its representative values.

5.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

Background research

Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*