

## Houses

125 and 127 Aro Street



*125 Aro Street – Image: Charles Collins – 2015*



*127 Aro Street – Image: Charles Collins – 2015*

## Summary of heritage significance

- Despite some alterations, 125 and 127 are important representative examples of the modest workers cottages that typify pre 1900 European settlement in the Wellington region.
- They contribute significantly to the wider historic townscape of workers cottages and larger villas that make up Wellington's Aro Street contributing visual interest as an almost matching pair.
- These houses contribute to the sense of place and continuity on Aro Street due to the retention of their original features and their long standing place on the street.

### No. 125

District Plan:	Map 11 , reference 14/1
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 10683
Heritage Area:	
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 4119
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 Building
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1899
Architect / Builder:	Builder: Possibly George Baker
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269257

### No. 127

District Plan:	Map 11 , reference 14/2
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 10683
Heritage Area:	
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 7203
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 Building
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1899
Architect / Builder:	Builder: Possibly George Baker
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269258

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

The houses at 125 and 127 Aro Street have had quiet histories but are important representative examples of the modest workers cottages that typify pre 1900 European settlement in the Wellington region. The land that these cottages now occupy was originally settled by Maori, and subsequently placed in Maori ownership following the subdivision and the colonisation of Wellington.

The section of land that these cottages are now on was originally owned by Kuraheke Pumipe (Section 15) who sold the lot in around 1889 to John Blair. Blair divided the land, selling part to Robert Mason, and part to William Webb.

These two cottages were built for land owner Robert Mason in 1899, possibly by George Baker, a well-known builder and developer in Wellington. Baker was responsible for a number of developments in Mount Victoria and Te Aro at this time, and is thought to have built similar cottages at 205 and 207 Aro Street.

The cottage at 125 by 1945 had been placed in the name of Pearl Mason, wife of William Mason, who was named as the owner of 127. In 1945 both properties were sold to Geoffrey Charles Broad, who then on sold them individually in 1950.

No. 125 was sold to Eric and Alice Morrisley, who owned the property for a number of years. Following the death of Alice in 1967, Eric was made the sole owner. In 1971 the property was transferred to the Public Trustee and soon sold to Alfred Hall. 1973 saw the property sold again, to Clifford Harris Mills. The property remained with Mills until 1985 when it was purchased by Gary Fisher and Evelyn Scarfe. It was sold in 1993 to Michael Dreaver and Sarah Murphy. It was sold again in the late 1990s, and remains in the ownership of Catriona Macleod.



No. 125 appears to have had more extensive alterations completed upon it including the addition of a much larger bay window, windows on the side elevations, and cladding in weatherboard rather than corrugated iron as seen at 127 and 205-207.

No. 127 has had a number of owners as well. Following the sale by Geoffrey Broad, it was purchased by K.G. Hedges, a married woman, in 1950. In 1965 the house was transferred to John Hedges (possibly a son). In 1971 the house was sold to David Gibb, who on sold to E & S Cotsilinis Limited. By 1985 the property was again for sale and was purchased by Beryl Te Wiata, who sold it a year later to Ernst Fuhrer. The house was sold two years later to Callum McKenzie and Kathryn Levy. In 1992 the house was purchased by Anne McKenzie and Henry Beckford who sold the house in 1997 to the current owner. No. 127 has had some alterations but appears to be in reasonably authentic condition as compared to 205 and 207 Aro Street. A small window has been cut above the bay on the front façade.

### **1.2 Timeline of modifications** (original plans cannot be accessed)

1994 125 Aro Street, dwelling alteration (00061:12:10364)  
1994 127 Aro Street, dwelling alterations (00060:137:5021)  
1998 127 Aro Street, new storm water drain (00078:627:46627)

### **1.3 Occupation history**

Not assessed

### **1.4 Architect**

#### **Baker, George - Builder<sup>1</sup>**

George Baker was a well-known builder and developer in Wellington. Baker was responsible for a number of developments in Mount Victoria and Te Aro, including the twin cottages located at 125 & 127 Aro Street, and the cottages at 205 & 207 Aro Street.

## **2.0 Physical description**

### **2.1 Architecture**

These workers cottages are singled gable, rectangular in plan, and one room wide. They have rusticated weatherboards and a bay window on the street façade, and corrugated iron side walls. The bay windows give some depth to otherwise flat and uninteresting elevations. The cover board beneath the window sills are a feature of many early houses. The simplicity and small scale of these cottages add to the character of the Aro Valley streetscape.

---

<sup>1</sup> Historic Places Trust, 'George Baker – Builder', *Professional Biographies*, accessed 29 August 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Baker,+George>

## **2.2 Materials**

- Rusticated weatherboard
- Corrugated iron roof and sides
- Timber window joinery

## **2.3 Setting**

These cottages are situated on Aro Street, in the Aro Valley. They are a pair of valuable additions to one of the best preserved precincts of period workers dwellings in Wellington.

### **3.0 Sources**

Historic Places Trust. 'George Baker – Builder'. *Professional Biographies*. Accessed 29 August 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?CPName=Baker,+George>

#### **Certificate of Title**

WN 50/57  
WN 61/9  
WN 507/285  
WN 46/124  
WN 507/286

#### **Wellington City Archive**

00061:12:10364; 125 Aro Street, dwelling alteration 07 Nov 1994  
00060:137:5021; 127 Aro Street, dwelling alterations 27 Apr 1994  
00078:627:46627; 127 Aro Street, new storm water drain 1998

## 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?*

Despite some alterations, 125 and 127 are important representative examples of the modest workers cottages that typify pre 1900 European settlement in the Wellington region.

**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?*

They contribute significantly to the wider historic townscape of workers cottages and larger villas that make up Wellington's Aro Street contributing visual interest as an almost matching pair.

**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?*

They are a pair of valuable additions to one of the best preserved precincts of period workers dwellings in Wellington. These buildings are a part of the largest collection of intact working class buildings in Wellington, giving them an important local significance.

#### **Historic Value:**

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

While the historical associations may appear slight, as these buildings have not been associated with any events of great importance, their historical significance is associated with the fact that the area as a whole has an almost unbroken history of working class life, and the houses consistently reflect this history.

**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?*

These cottages are in an area known to have pre 1900 human activity associated with it, and were built pre 1900. Risk of accidental discovery is high.

**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?*

These houses contribute to the sense of place and continuity on Aro Street due to the retention of their original features and their long standing place on the street.

**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?*

These houses are representative of the types of workers dwellings from the turn of the century. They are 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?*

These houses retain a significant amount of authenticity having had few exterior modifications.

**Local/Regional/National/International**

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

These buildings are a part of the largest collection of intact working class buildings in Wellington, giving them an important local significance and should be recognised for their outstanding group heritage value.



## 4.0 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*