

Houses

5 & 7 Garrett Street, Te Aro, Wellington



5-7 Garrett Street, Te Aro

(Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*)

Summary of heritage significance

- This pair of semi-detached houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street is rare. These are the sole surviving buildings of this type – a pair of timber residential dwellings – on the street.
- The Garrett Street houses contribute to a sense of place and community identity for Cuba Street. The houses hark back to a time when residential dwellings such as itself were common on Garrett Street and around Cuba Street.
- The houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street are associated with the expansion and establishment of Cuba Street, one of Wellington's oldest streets. The history of Cuba Street provides a wider reflection of Wellington's fortunes.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 127
Legal Description:	Pt Sec 152 of Wellington Town
Heritage Area:	No
HPT Listed:	No
Archaeological Site:	Risk unknown
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	1906: Construction
Architect / Builder:	Unknown
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	Outside Earthquake Policy (SR 267070)

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

The houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street are important historic structures in the context of the street. They are the oldest and only timber structures remaining on Garrett Street and are important survivors of the era in which they were built. They are relatively typical of the working class housing that was once predominant in this part of Te Aro.

Te Aro flats have long history of occupation and development, and the harbour, shoreline, wetlands and surrounding areas supported several settlements including Te Aro Kainga and the Puke-ahu Pa. The area was subdivided in 1840 by the New Zealand Company's Chief Surveyor Captain William Mein Smith, and the acquisition of this land – most particularly the subdivision of Te Aro Kainga – was one of many controversial actions of the New Zealand Company in Wellington.¹

The 1855 earthquake uplifted the land around Wellington Harbour by 1 – 2 metres and drained the Te Aro swamp.² By the end of the 19th century Te Aro was a densely populated city-fringe suburb, predominated by working class housing.³ By the early 20th century the area was considered overcrowded,⁴ and this led in part to the popularity of the new suburbs that soon developed with the introduction of the electric tram network. Te Aro fell into decline and by at least the 1930s, had been declared a slum and proposed for redevelopment.⁵

We know little about the history of the houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street. It appears that there was a cottage built on the section prior to 1900. Herman O. Manz, the owner of the section, applied to build additions to a workshop located at 5 Garrett Street in 1904.⁶ In 1906 this cottage was likely demolished as Manz applied to the Council to build a double home on the same site.

Manz's postal address at this time was 9A Garrett Street, so it seems likely that he was living at the neighbouring property at the time and these houses were designed, as many in the area were, as workers rental accommodation. Te Aro at this time was a working class area and these houses reflect that history. They have had predominantly working class occupants and have not been associated with any important events or occupied by noteworthy people. The houses do, however, add some historic authenticity to this area which has changed significantly since the time of their construction.

The houses next appear in council records in an application dated 19th December 1978 from the owner, Mr P. Sue, to 'reinstate' fire damage.⁷ The cost was estimated at \$4000, and the builder for the job was R J Blair. No cause for the fire is listed in the file but the damage seemed to have been interior.

¹ Michael Kelly and Russell Murray, *Courtenay Place Heritage Area Report* (Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006), 5-7.

² Chris Maclean. 'Wellington region - Creation stories and landscape', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 13-Jul-12 URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/wellington-region/page-2>

³ History adapted from information in: "Heritage Building – 32 Wigan Street", 2003, 1041-06-WIG32, Wellington City Council Records.

⁴ Overcrowded Wellington. *Timaru Herald*, 28 May 1904, Page 3

⁵ TE ARO FLAT *Evening Post*, 30 August 1930, Page 10

⁶ Wellington City Council Archive File 00053:110:6084

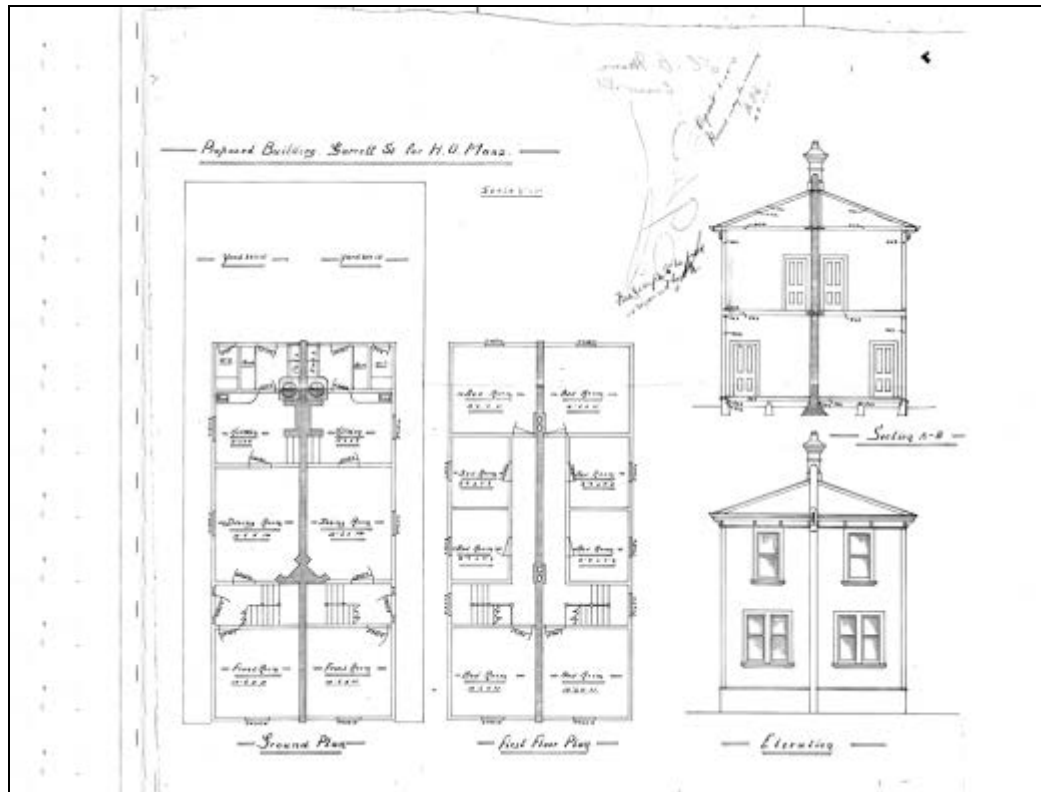
⁷ Wellington City Council Archive File 00058:1188:C51076

The houses have had few adaptations made to them since they were built and remain rental properties. These houses are surprising survivors in an otherwise heavily redeveloped townscape. The houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street serve as a symbolic reminder of what was there before. Their heritage value lies in the fact that these are the only surviving houses on a street that was formerly full of them. 5 & 7 Garrett Street are a testament to another time.

1.2 Timeline of modifications

c.1906: Construction

1978: Repair of fire damage



Plans Building Garrett Street for H.O. Manz (Wellington City Council Archive File 00053:125:6943)

1.3 Occupation history

Not assessed

1.4 Architect

Unknown

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

This semi-detached building possesses a relatively plain facade, with minimal decoration. The only concessions to ornamentation are eaves and window brackets. Clad in rusticated weatherboards, the building is divided by a brick party wall. The houses are an example of a semi-detached pair of inner-city residences, of which few remain.

2.2 Materials

Timber.

2.3 Setting

Garrett Street is a dead-end street, entered onto from Cuba on the block running between Vivian and Ghuznee streets. The street is connected to Bute Street by a barren carpark and to Ghuznee Street by the recently redeveloped Glover Park. The house at 5-7 Garrett Street is located roughly one third of the way down Garrett Street, over looking Glover Park.

The wider context of these buildings is Te Aro, once a working class suburb now a predominantly industrial area. The houses are now overshadowed by a number of multi-storey commercial and apartment buildings, and developments have severely compromised the heritage setting of this building. The houses at 5 & 7 Garrett Street are unique structures in the context of the street. They are the oldest and only timber structures on the street.

Also in the area of the house is Cuba Street, arguably Wellington's preeminent heritage area.⁸ Cuba Street was one of Wellington's earliest streets, surveyed in 1840. The section of Cuba Street adjoining Garrett Street took shape in the 1860s. Kirkcaldie and Stains was a famous 'resident', with a branch near the intersection with Ghuznee Street. This section of Cuba Street was almost full by 1891. These buildings have in large part survived, making it one of the oldest sections (by age of structures) of the street.

⁸ For an in-depth take on Cuba Street's heritage, see Wellington City Council, 'Cuba Street Heritage Area', Heritage Section 32 Report, 2006.

3.0 Sources

Kelly, Michael and Russell Murray. *Courtenay Place Heritage Area Report*. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

Maclean, Chris. 'Wellington region - Creation stories and landscape', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Updated 13-Jul-12 URL:
<http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/wellington-region/page-2>

Wellington City Council. 'Cuba Street Heritage Area', Heritage Section 32 Report, 2006.

_____. 'Heritage Inventory – 1995'

Wellington City Archive

00053:110:6084

00053:125:6943

00058:1188:C51076

Papers Past

'Overcrowded Wellington'. *Timaru Herald*, 28 May 1904, Page 3

'TE ARO FLAT'. *Evening Post*. 30 August 1930, Page 10

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?*

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?*

The house does have some townscape value in that it is a unique structure on the street – a small-scale timber residential dwelling – and because of this, provides some visual interest on a street lacking it.

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?*

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

The house at 5-7 Garrett Street is associated with the expansion and establishment of Cuba Street, one of Wellington's oldest streets. The history of Cuba Street provides a wider reflection of Wellington's fortunes.

Scientific Value:

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

This building is included 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?*

The Garrett Street house contributes to a sense of place and community identity for Cuba Street. The house harks back to a time when residential dwellings such as itself were common on Garrett Street and around Cuba 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?*

The Garrett Street house is rare in that it is the sole surviving building of its type – a timber residential dwelling – on the street.

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

The house is representative of a time when dwellings like it lined Garrett Street.

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?*

Aside from some restoration work done following a fire in 1968 the house has retained a good level of authenticity.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

The Garrett Street house is important on a local level.

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

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