

## Cottages

5a, 5b, 5c St Mary Street



Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

### Summary of heritage significance

- These cottages have architectural value as a representative of a simple Italianate design. The style, type of construction, and materials are representative of typical workers dwellings of the day.
- These cottages have townscape value due to their position with the other workers dwellings in Thorndon. They are prominent due to their position above smaller cottages on a rise.
- These cottages are an important part of the local community and make a contribution to the wider setting of Thorndon. They contribute significantly to the sense of place and continuity in the Thorndon area.

District Plan:	Map 17 , reference 265
Legal Description:	Lot 8, 9, 10, 11 DP 376
Heritage Area:	-
HPT Listed:	-
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 Buildings
Other Names:	-
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1870 (at least by 1890)
Architect / Builder:	-
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	Awaiting EQ Prone Status, Outside EQ Policy – SR 267473

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



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## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History

The three cottages that make up 5a, 5b, and 5c St Mary Street are fine examples of the kind of home that was constructed for the working classes during the later part of the nineteenth century.

Thorndon is one of New Zealand's oldest residential suburbs and due to the difficult Wellington topography has architecture and streetscapes that are not found around other parts of New Zealand. The social divisions of the nineteenth century can be seen in the workers cottages that are found on the steep slopes and the large villas on the flat land. This division, the materials, design, and scale of the surviving houses in the area give an insight into how the people of early Wellington lived and worked.<sup>1</sup>

These three cottages, constructed some time in the 1870s, clearly show the early pattern of settlement and housing. The narrow frontages and side boundaries, and the high density of the development, are representative features of early worker's dwellings throughout Wellington. These three cottages are an important group as they are matching buildings. They typify the scale and design of worker's domestic buildings of inner city Wellington during the mid-Victorian period and are notable as a group rather than as individual houses.

The cottages are designed in a simplified version of the Italianate style with classically proportioned openings, symmetry, and round headed upper windows with keystones. The addition of the verandah is a typically New Zealand modification of the style. The design of the cottages is a common style for the period and locality, and they possess a particular charm and character that makes them a significant element of the townscape in Thorndon.<sup>2</sup>



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Thorndon, Wellington, includes houses in St Mary Street. Ref: 1/2-052479-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22762192>

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<sup>1</sup> Louise Ormsby, 'The Historic Context and Heritage Values of Thorndon', Report prepared for Wellington City Council, August 2009, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Wellington City Council, 'Three Cottages – 5a, 5b, 5c St Mary Street,' *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory 1995*. (Wellington City Council 1995).

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

- 1870 Original construction
- 1991 5B St Mary Street, dwelling additions and alterations (00059:469:E22732)
- 1997 5A St Mary Street, dwelling, amendment (00078:1666:29745)
- 1999 5C St Mary Street, renovations to existing dwelling (00078:405:57432)
- 2010 5B St Mary Street, Partial Re-pile of building (00078:3357:209235)

## **1.3 Occupation history**

Not assessed

## **1.4 Architect**

Unknown

## **2.0 Physical description**

### **2.1 Architecture**

The cottages are designed in a simplified version of the Italianate style with classically proportioned openings, symmetry, and round headed upper windows with keystones. The addition of the verandah is a typically New Zealand modification of the style. The design of the cottages is a common style for the period and locality, and they possess a particular charm and character that makes them a significant element of the townscape in Thorndon.

### **2.2 Materials**

- Rusticated timber weatherboard
- Timber joinery
- Corrugated iron roofing

### **2.3 Setting**

These three cottages are found in Thorndon and are closely associated with the early settlement of the area. They are a significant element of the streetscape as they are situated on a rise above other smaller cottages.

### **3.0 Sources**

Ormsby, Louise. '*The Historic Context and Heritage Values of Thorndon.*' Report prepared for Wellington City Council. August 2009.

Wellington City Council. 'Three Cottages – 5a, 5b, 5c St Mary Street'. *Wellington Built Heritage Inventory 1995*. Wellington City Council 1995.

#### **Wellington City Archive**

1991 5B St Mary Street, dwelling additions and alterations (00059:469:E22732)

1997 5A St Mary Street, dwelling, amendment (00078:1666:29745)

1999 5C St Mary Street, renovations to existing dwelling (00078:405:57432)

2010 5B St Mary Street, Partial Re-pile of building (00078:3357:209235)

#### **Alexander Turnbull Library**

Thorndon, Wellington, includes houses in St Mary Street. Ref: 1/2-052479-F.

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

<http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22762192>

## 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?

These cottages have architectural value as a representative of a simple Italianate design. The style, type of construction, and materials are representative of typical workers dwellings of the day.

***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?

These cottages have townscape value due to their position with the other workers dwellings in Thorndon. They are prominent due to their position above smaller cottages on a rise.

***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?

This house is an important element in the historic area of Thorndon and the wider Wellington area and has high group value with the many other domestic buildings of the era in Thorndon.

#### **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?

This house has had a modest and typical history for a residential dwelling in Wellington. It is associated with the early settlement of Thorndon.

#### **Scientific Value:**

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

These cottages were constructed pre 1900 in an area known to have pre 1900 human activity associated with it. The risk of accidental discovery is unknown, but possible.

***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 cottages are an important part of the local community and make a contribution to the wider setting of Thorndon. They contribute significantly to the sense of place and continuity in the Thorndon area.

***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 cottages are good representatives of an Italianate influenced workers cottage, built in materials and using techniques common to the period. They have had modest and representative histories for residential buildings.

***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 cottages have few listed modifications and retain a relatively authentic quality. They have authenticity of style, craftsmanship, materials, and setting.

***Local/Regional/National/International***

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

These cottages are locally significant for their architectural, townscape, and group values, their historic associations, their archaeological and technical values, and their authenticity.

## 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*