

Cottage

9 Tonks Grove (Relocated from 5 Tonks Avenue)



Image: Charles Collins, 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- This cottage is thought to have been built by William Tonks for his employees. It is a simple, utilitarian building, constructed in timber and clad in weatherboard, and designed in the Victorian Georgian style that was popular at the time.
- This building is a part of a precinct of historic buildings, some of which were relocated to the space, that are coherent in age, scale, use, and style.
- This building has townscape value due to the contribution that it makes as a part of the Tonks precinct.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 312/3
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 414239
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	N/A <i>(Note: NZHPT covenant/encumbrance for former NZTA property)</i>
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City R27/270
Other Names:	N/A
Key physical dates:	c.1860/70s relocated
Architect / Builder:	Unknown – Possibly William Tonks
Former uses:	Residential - Cottage
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	<i>Unknown at time of writing</i>

Extent: Cityview GIS



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

This cottage is a significant element of the history of Tonks Avenue and Upper Cuba Street. It is a typical working class dwelling of the 1860s-70s, of which there are few left in central Wellington. It contributes significantly to the character of the inner city.



At Tonks Avenue, Wellington. Barton, Phillip Lionel, 1925-: Photographs. Ref: PA12-1824-05. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23019389>

The Tonks family is amongst the most well known of the early settler families in Wellington. William Tonks (1837 – 1916), who arrived in New Zealand in 1842 aboard the *Burman*, was involved in the early reclamation of the city.¹ He acquired a block of land in Upper Cuba Street, where the family established the Tonks Brick Works. The bricks were primarily made up of clay taken from ‘clay hill’, where the Mt Cook School was once situated and opposite the former National Museum. Tonks Avenue was named for the family and two of the larger homes were occupied by members of the family and at least four others in the avenue were built by Kate Tonks (nee Helyer) who by the turn of the century had become a successful property manager in her own right.²

This cottage is thought to have been built by William Tonks for his employees. It is a simple, utilitarian building, constructed in timber and clad in weatherboard, and designed in the Victorian Georgian-style that was popular at the time. It has an uneven gable roof that is characteristic of the 1860s-70s.

¹ ‘Mr William Tonks’, *Evening Post*, 28 August 1916, page 2

² Wellington City Council, ‘House – 5 Tonks Avenue’, *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995*, Wellington City Council 1995.

In 2005, Transit New Zealand began the construction of a bypass through the central city. This cottage, as well as a number of others, was in the way of the proposed project. Following major debate it was decided that the cottages were of sufficient importance to deem relocating them. The cottage was relocated from the original Tonks Avenue to a new precinct named Tonks Grove, located just off Cuba Street.



'5 Tonks Avenue – Relocation preparation', Transit New Zealand, accessed 28 March 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/5-Tonks-gallery-2.html>

As a part of the relocation, the cottage was fully restored. It was relocated 30 metres north-east of its original position, sitting between the relocated 1 and 3 Tonks cottages and the existing Footscray Avenue buildings.

1.2 Timeline of modifications (original plans unavailable)

1860-70	Original construction
1991	Dwelling additions and alterations (00059:461:E22472)
1995	Dwelling alterations (00061:79:12433)
2005	Relocated to new site ³
2010	Interior alterations to create one new bedroom, new kitchen, and bathroom (00078:3693:212689)

1.3 Occupation history

(Only if known – check Heritage Area Spreadsheets PC 48 / Section 32 reports)

1.4 Architect

Unknown

³ '5 Tonks Avenue' NZTA website accessed January 2014
<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/5-Tonks.html>

2.0 Physical description

Based on Kelly, Michael, and Russell Murray. Cuba Street Heritage Area Report. Wellington City Council: Unpublished report, prepared for Plan Change 48, 2006.

2.1 Architecture

This building is a simple vernacular structure built as workers accommodation. It is typical of the period in which it was built, being influenced by the Victorian Georgian style. It is a double gable box cottage with little ornamentation. The porch appears to be a later addition.

2.2 Materials

Timber weatherboard cladding, iron roofing, timber frame.

2.3 Setting

This cottage is an important reminder of a typical working class dwelling. The building is an important element of the history of Tonks Ave and upper Cuba Street and is an essential element of the heritage and architectural character of the area.

Tonks Avenue is a unique enclave of small workers cottages, and Edwardian housing that tell the story of early Wellington and the central city.

3.0 Sources

'5 Tonks Avenue – Relocation preparation', Transit New Zealand, accessed 28 March 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/5-Tonks-gallery-2.html>

'5 Tonks Avenue – History', Transit New Zealand, accessed 28 March 2013, <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/wicb/buildings/5-Tonks.html>

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

Wellington City Council, 'House – 5 Tonks Avenue', *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995*, Wellington City Council 1995.

Alexander Turnbull Library

Ref: PA12-1824-05. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/23019389>

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?*

9 Tonks Grove is a good representative example of a Victorian workers' cottage.

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 building has townscape value due to the contribution that it makes as a part of the Tonks Grove precinct.

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 building is a part of a precinct of historic buildings, some of which were relocated to the space, that are coherent in age, scale, use, and style. It makes a positive contribution to the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Historic Value:

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

This building is associated with the Tonks family and the early development of Wellington.

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?*

The site has been much disturbed by 2006 road-works but is located within the Central City NZAA 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?*

The heritage properties around upper Cuba Street, Abel Smith, Tonks Avenue and upper Willis Street that were affected by the Wellington Inner City Bypass route are

known to be held in high public esteem. This can be seen from the objections raised to the roading scheme including in submissions to the Environment Court.

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?

Although the original context, and much of the original materials, of this building have been lost due to its relocation, it continues to make a positive contribution to the streetscape of the Cuba Street Heritage 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?*

This building is a good representative of a 1860s/70s workers dwelling, and is one of few remaining in the central city.

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 building retains some authenticity although it has been relocated and extensively restored. It is still a good representative of its period and is a physical reminder of Wellington's early history.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

This building is important at a local level due to its association with the Tonks family, the early settlement of Wellington, and as a representative of a specific building type.

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*