

Houses

206, 208, 210, & 212 The Esplanade



206, 208
210, 212

Images: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Summary of heritage significance

- These houses are typical examples of speculator housing and have architectural value as contemporaneous villas representative of housing during the early part of the 20th century.
- These houses contribute greatly to the townscape in Island Bay as they create a homogenous streetscape along The Esplanade. Each building is similar, yet different, and have been designed harmoniously with one another.
- These houses have historical significance for the period in which they were all associated with Italian fishermen and their families. The role of the Italian community on Island Bay is an important one in the history and development of the suburb

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| District Plan: | Map 4, reference 407 |
| Legal Description: | 206 – Lot 4 DP 3522 208 – Lot 3 DP 3522 210 – Lot 2 DP 3522 212 – Lot 1 DP 3522 |
| Heritage Area: | - |
| HPT Listed: | - |
| Archaeological Site: | Associated Maori Sites of Significance |
| Other Names: | |
| Key physical dates: | Built: 1906-09 |
| Architect / Builder: | Builder: M. Sullivan |
| Former uses: | Residential |
| Current uses: | Residential |
| Earthquake Prone Status: | EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269402 210 – SR 269404 |

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

These houses appear to be typical examples of the speculator housing that can be found dating from the early part of the 20th century, and it could be assumed that their histories would also be as modest. These timber villa's, however, have historic significance above that of the average villa through their association with the Italian community in Island Bay, each having been owned and occupied by Italian fishermen and their families. These houses are an interesting representative grouping and physical reminders of the social development and history of Island Bay.

Speculative developer John McManeman purchased land on The Esplanade in the early 1900s and planned to build four houses on four subdivided titles. The houses were not built at the same time, but completed over a three year period. The first was begun early in 1906 and the builder of all four houses was M. Sullivan.

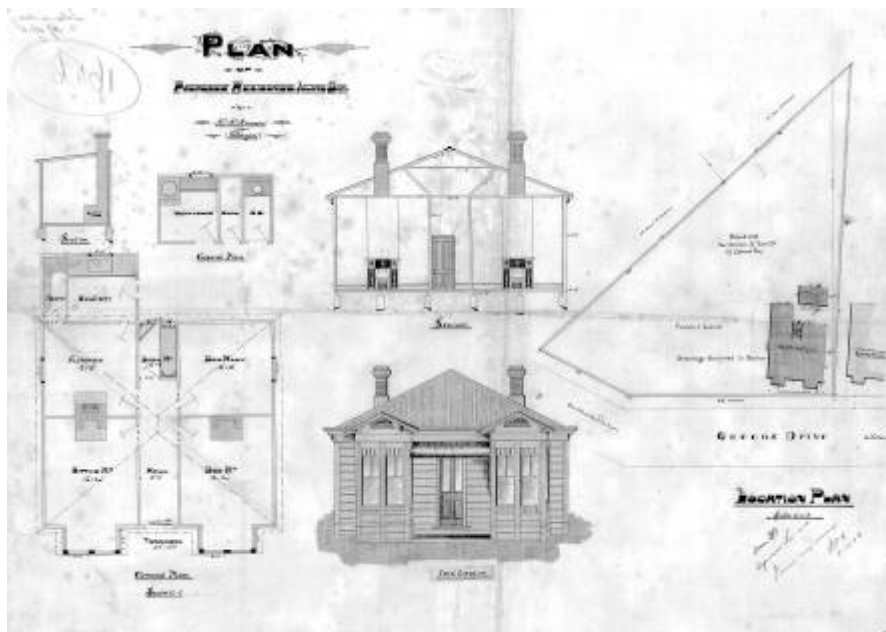
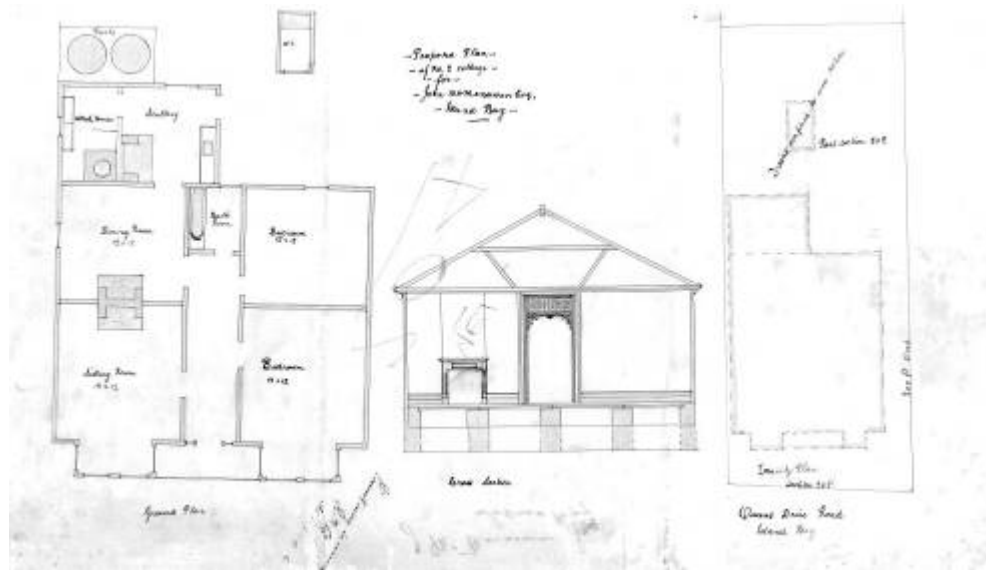
Around 1900, a number of Italian ex-gold miners began fishing at Island Bay living in nearby homes. It is since this time that these houses have come to be regarded as Italian 'fisherman's cottages', and all four have been associated with the Island Bay Italian community. 206 and 208 were owned by Italians from early on, while others were later acquisitions. While never large in number, the Italian community in Island Bay continues to be influential, with a great many involved in the fishing industry. During the Depression, the fishermen created the Fisherman's co-operative, to sell the fish that they caught and it is reported that the fisherman fished and worked for three months without pay to get the business on its feet.

Two of the best known inhabitants of the cottages were Giuseppe Greco at 206, who arrived in Wellington in 1906 aged 16 and Santo Saffiote at 208, both of whom were fishermen. They and their families lived in the villas for decades. 210 was initially owned by Robert Fordyce but it was purchased by Giuseppe and Francis Muollo in 1931. The house was sold again in 1972 following the death of Francis Muollo. No. 212 passed into the hands of Raffiello Greco in 1945 and has remained in the Greco family ever since. In more recent years most of the houses have had a reasonably frequent turnover of occupants.

The houses have remained in reasonably authentic condition, with each undertaking some small external changes. The most apparent of these is at No. 206, which has had a conservatory constructed on the front façade.

¹ History adapted from Wellington City Council, '206-212 The Esplanade', *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory – unpublished heritage assessment*, (Wellington City Council, 2001).

1.2 Timeline of modifications (original plans)



No. 206

- 1905 Queens Drive [206 The Esplanade], cottage (00043:8:640)
- 1971 206 The Esplanade, additions & alterations (00058:750:C33918)
- 1990 206 The Esplanade, conservatory (00059:382:E20026)
- 2005 206 The Esplanade, installation of free-standing fireplace (00078:1526:129364)

No. 208

- 1906 Queens Drive [208 The Esplanade], cottage (00043:10:704)
- 1983 208 The Esplanade, additions and alterations (00058:0:C63133)
- 1994 208 The Esplanade, plumbing (00060:182:6582)
- 2000 208 The Esplanade, installation of free-standing fireplace (00078:355:63420)

No. 210

- 1908 Queens Drive [210 The Esplanade], residence (00043:30:1656)
- 1997 210 The Esplanade, repile (00078:97:33113)

No. 212

- 1908 Queens Drive [212 The Esplanade], cottage (00043:31:1680)

1.3 Occupation history

Not assessed

1.4 Architect

Architect Unknown- builder M. Sullivan

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

These houses are bay villas constructed in timber. Typically, two square bay windows flank the central entrance and a decorated canopy between the bays creates an entrance porch. The bays are capped by ornate gabled roofs. The roofline is articulated by eaves brackets. While the houses have more or less the same floor plan, there are some variations. 206 has only a single bay and 212 has an angled southern bay to improve the views to the sea and to help turn the bend in the road. Interestingly this variation of the bay windows is not shown on the submitted drawings of the houses and may have been an on site decision designed to make best use of the sites.

2.2 Materials

- Timber weatherboards
- Timber joinery
- Corrugated roofing

2.3 Setting

These villas create a continuous streetscape of contemporaneous bay villas along the Esplanade. They are a prominent feature in the Island Bay townscape.

Sources

Wellington City Council. *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: unpublished heritage assessment*. Wellington City Council, 2001.

Wellington City Archive

No. 206

00043:8:640; Queens Drive [206 The Esplanade], cottage 01 Dec 1905
00058:750:C33918; 206 The Esplanade, additions & alterations 16 Sep 1971
00059:382:E20026; 206 The Esplanade, conservatory 1990
00078:1526:129364; 206 The Esplanade, installation of free-standing fireplace
2005

No. 208

00043:10:704; Queens Drive [208 The Esplanade], cottage 02 Feb 1906
00058:0:C63133; 208 The Esplanade, additions and alterations 26 Sep 1983
00060:182:6582; 208 The Esplanade, plumbing 25 Oct 1994
00078:355:63420; 208 The Esplanade, installation of free-standing fireplace
2000

No. 210

00043:30:1656; Queens Drive [210 The Esplanade], residence 09 Oct 1908
00078:97:33113; 210 The Esplanade, repile 1997

No. 212

00043:31:1680; Queens Drive [212 The Esplanade], cottage 10 Nov 1908

3.0 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 houses are typical examples of speculator housing and have architectural value as contemporaneous villas representative of housing during the early part of the 20th century.

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 houses contribute greatly to the townscape in Island Bay as they create a homogenous streetscape along The Esplanade. Each building is similar, yet different, and as a group they have been designed harmoniously with one another.

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?

These houses have significant group value for their homogeneity, their age, scale, building type and construction, as well as for their history from the period in which they were all owned by Italian fishermen.

Historic Value:

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

These houses have historical significance for the period in which they were all associated with Italian fishermen and their families. The role of the Italian community on Island Bay is an important one in the history and development of the suburb.

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 houses were constructed post 1900, but are in an area known to be associated with pre 1900 human activity as well as associated sites of significance to Maori. Archaeological risk is unknown.

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?

These villas have been constructed in materials and using techniques common to the period, there is some technical interest in the ways in which they have been designed to form a group of similar, yet different, dwellings and the way that each support the continuity of the group.

Social Value:

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

These houses have a high social value and due to their long association with the Italian community in Island Bay are held in high public esteem as an interesting representative grouping of homes that Italians have lived in and of the social history of the area.

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?*

These houses are representative of speculator housing from the early 20th century.

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 remain in reasonably authentic condition having had few external modifications with the most significant addition being the conservatory added to No. 206.

Local/Regional/National/International

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

These houses are important at a local level for their value as representatives of speculator housing, their association with the Italian community in Island Bay, for the visual contribution that they make to the streetscape, and for their historic significance.

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*