

Commercial building and cottage

282 Cuba Street



WCC (2011)



Charles Collins, 2014

Summary of heritage significance

- The cottage at 282 Cuba Street is one of the oldest buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and is typical of the Carpenter Gothic style. Any aesthetic / architectural value is somewhat diminished by the addition of a c.1920s shop-front, that was designed in a functional style, and which obscures the older building.
- The original cottage is one of the oldest remaining buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area, and is associated with the earliest period of sustained European settlement in Wellington. It has an uneventful history that is typical of many similar buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area.
- This cottage is one of many buildings with a Tonks family association in upper Cuba Street. This set of cottages, houses and business premises form a coherent precinct and have high group value.

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

The cottage at 282 Cuba Street is one of the oldest surviving building within the Cuba Street Heritage Area. There is little known about its early history, but it is apparent from the additions and alterations that have been made that it has been used to serve a variety of functions since the time of its construction.

Although there are no surviving early records it is likely that the cottage was one of many built in this area by the Tonks family. The Tonks were early settlers of Wellington, who arrived in 1842, and established a brickyard on the Te Aro flat around 1847. William Tonks purchased Town Section 99, on which this cottage is sited, in 1853, although the land was not registered to him until 1862. The Tonks family home was built on the front section of Town acres 97 and 99. In 1876, upon the death of William Tonks, ownership of the land and buildings passed to his wife Jane; and upon her death the following year, to their children William, Edward, George, and Enoch. William, Edward, and George inherited an interest in Town Sections 97 and 99, while Enoch received land elsewhere in Wellington.¹ The estate was further subdivided as the family sold their Te Aro properties.

The cottage, in its original state, was a two-storey Carpenter Gothic Victorian cottage. There are later additions of a lean-to at the rear of the property and a square shop, of no particular style or aesthetic value, to the front. Although the building has been much-altered, the only known building permit dates from 2012 for the installation of a toilet.

The cottage appears to have had a number of different owners and occupants; by the 1920s the cottage was in the ownership of the public trustee and tenanted by Alexander Glass.² It was during this time (in 1923) that the house was damaged in a fire, and it is possible that the shop was added at about this date. In 1927 the house was tenanted by Richard Coxon, a bootmaker, who was charged by the magistrate's court for running a 'common gaming house'.³

Since this time the cottage has been used by a number of groups. During the 1980s the Prostitutes Collective used it as a health centre, and in the 1990s it was used by the Jewish community as a youth centre. More recently it has been used as business premises. This building is an interesting essay on functional change and adaptation, and is a simple element in the streetscape that contributes to the urban fabric of Cuba Street.

¹ Kayla Wilson with NZHPT, '*Workers Cottage - 5 Tonks Grove*', (Historic Places Trust, unpublished registration report), 8 October 2011, accessed 12 September 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=3664>; and '*Workers Cottage - 7 Tonks Grove*', (Historic Places Trust, unpublished registration report), 8 October 2011, accessed 12 September 2013,

<http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=3665>

² 'Outbreaks in the City', Evening Post, 12 November 1923, Page 8, accessed 30 October 2013, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19231112.2.80.2&srpos=10&e=-----10--1---0282+Cuba+Street-->

³ 'Magistrates Court', Evening Post, 25 October 1927, Page 14, accessed 30 October 2013, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19271025.2.137&srpos=14&e=-----10--11---0282+Cuba+Street-->

1.2 Timeline of modifications

c.1870s	Original construction of cottage
c.1920s	Addition of shop front and lean to at rear (possible 1923, renovation following fire)
2012	282 Cuba Street, Quick Consent - Construction of a new toilet in an existing building (00078:4352:272389)

1.3 Ownership history

Not assessed

1.4 Occupation history

Not assessed

1.5 Architect

Unknown

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

282 Cuba Street is a c.1870 cottage with a later, c.1920s, shop addition to the street elevation.

The cottage, in its original state, was a two-storey Carpenter Gothic Victorian cottage, clad in shiplap weatherboards, ornate fretted bargeboards, and a very sharply pitched roof. The original front door carries the Italianate influence through in the arched windows and well proportioned size. The original cottage appears to have been planned as a 'two up and two down' dwelling. There is a lean-to to the rear.

The front of the cottage is somewhat obscured by the addition of a small shop. The addition has no aesthetic pretensions and has an emphasis on functionality rather than style. This pragmatic addition is typical of upper Cuba Street - for example the neighbouring 1880s cottage at 280 Cuba Street with its much altered 1924 shop-front (WCC ref 92.4).

2.2 Materials

Original Cottage

- Shiplap weatherboards
- Timber detailing
- Iron roofing

1920s addition

- Concrete Structure
- Cement render
- Brick infill

2.3 Setting

Block 7 Cuba Street Conservation Area.

The block is comprised of mostly two storied buildings with the exception of a three storied property on the Webb Street corner. The new motorway extension cuts through Cuba Street at Karo Drive. Block 7 comprises a mix of buildings in residential and commercial use that include: -

- 280 Cuba Street
- Masonry buildings with elaborate decorative elements
- Thistle Hall (1907)
- 1935 'Moderne' Lampard Flats
- Two storied timber buildings with original or early shop fronts

3.0 Sources

Wilson, Kayla with NZHPT. '*Workers Cottage - 5 Tonks Grove.*' Historic Places Trust, unpublished registration report. 8 October 2011. Accessed 12 September 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=3664>

'*Workers Cottage - 7 Tonks Grove.*' Historic Places Trust, unpublished registration report. 8 October 2011. Accessed 12 September 2013, <http://www.historic.org.nz/TheRegister/RegisterSearch/RegisterResults.aspx?RID=3665>

Papers Past

'Outbreaks in the City', Evening Post, 12 November 1923, Page 8, accessed 30 October 2013, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgibin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19231112.2.80.2&srpos=10&e=-----10--1----0282+Cuba+Street-->

'Magistrates Court', Evening Post, 25 October 1927, Page 14, accessed 30 October 2013, <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgibin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=EP19271025.2.137&srpos=14&e=-----10--11----0282+Cuba+Street-->

Wellington City Archive

2012 282 Cuba Street, Quick Consent - Construction of a new toilet in an existing building (00078:4352:272389)

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?*

The cottage at 282 Cuba Street is one of the oldest buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area and is typical of the Carpenter Gothic style. Any aesthetic / architectural value is somewhat diminished by the addition of a c.1920s shop-front, that was designed in a functional style, and which obscures the older building.

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 modest townscape due to the functional c.1920s shop addition that obscures the attractive Carpenter Gothic Cottage behind.

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 cottage is one of many buildings with a Tonks family association in upper Cuba Street. This set of cottages, houses and business premises form a coherent precinct and have high group value.

Historic Value:

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

As this cottage occupies part of Section 99, it is likely that it is associated with the Tonks family. It has an uneventful history that is typical of many similar buildings the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

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

The original cottage is one the oldest remaining buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area, and is associated with the earliest period of sustained European settlement in Wellington.

Scientific Value:

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

This is a pre 1900 building, is included in the NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270, and is in an area known to be associated with pre 1900 human activity (European and Maori).

Educational: *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

Although the original cottage is obscured by the 1920s addition, this building does possess some educational value as one of the oldest remaining buildings in the Cuba Street Heritage Area.

Technological: *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

There is technical value in the construction materials of the original cottage.

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?*

This building is an important part of the local community and contributes to the sense of place and continuity 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?*

As one of the oldest remaining building in the Cuba Street Heritage Area, the original elements of this cottage have some rarity value due to their age.

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

This house is a good representative of a simple early dwelling built in materials and using techniques common to the period. It has had a modest and representative history for a residential/commercial building.

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 house has had few listed modifications made but it is apparent that there have been alterations and additions made. The 1920s shop front impacts negatively upon the authenticity of the original cottage, but the retention of significant amounts of the original cottage's material make up for this. It has 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?

This house is locally significant for its architectural, townscape, and group values, its historic associations, its archaeological, educational, and technical values, and its authenticity.

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*