

## Cottages

5 and 7 Tonks Grove



Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

### Summary of heritage significance

- These buildings have architectural value as representatives of a specific type of building, they are good examples of a workers dwelling from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Although the original context of these buildings has been lost due to their relocation, they make a positive contribution to the streetscape of the area and help to reconnect Footscray Avenue to Cuba Street.
- These buildings are associated with the Tonks family and the early development of Wellington.

## No. 5 Tonks Grove

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 312/1
Legal Description:	Lot 3 DP 414239
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 3665 (Note: NZHPT covenant/encumbrance for former NZTA property)
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270 (Pre 1900 building, relocated)
Other Names:	Tonks Workers cottage, City Bed and Breakfast
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1889
Architect / Builder:	
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Commercial – Bed and Breakfast
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269324

## No. 7 Tonks Grove

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 312/2
Legal Description:	Lot 2 DP 414239
Heritage Area:	Cuba Street Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 3664
Archaeological Site:	NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270 (Pre 1900 building, relocated)
Other Names:	Tonks Workers cottage, City Bed and Breakfast
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1889
Architect / Builder:	
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Commercial – Bed and Breakfast
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269325

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



## 1.0 Outline History

### 1.1 History<sup>1</sup>

The worker's cottages at 5 Tonks Grove (relocated from 1 Tonks Avenue) and 7 Tonks Grove (relocated from 3 Tonks Avenue) are a pair of relatively unmodified 1880s cottages found in Te Aro, Wellington. The cottages were originally located on Town Acre 99 on 'Tonks Avenue', a private right of way off Cuba Street named for the Tonks family. The Tonks were early settlers of Wellington, arriving in 1842, and establishing a brickyard on the Te Aro flat around 1847. Town acre 99 was purchased by William Tonks in 1853, although it was not registered to him until 1862. The Tonks developed the land, building a family home 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 received pieces of Town Acre 97 and 99, while Enoch received land elsewhere in Wellington.

William used his share of Town Acre 99 as collateral for a loan with the Bank of Australasia in 1878, but soon defaulted on his payments, and the land was sold to Frederick Krull in 1880. Krull then sold the land in 1881 to Andrew Wylie, who in 1885 sold it to George Glover. In 1888 the land was subdivided and a separate Certificate of Title for the rear section of the land, where the cottages were originally situated, was issued naming Andrew Moran the owner.

It appears that the cottages were built c.1889, as they are not included on plans of the area dating to the late 1870s, but are present on the 1891 Thomas Ward map of the city. The rates that were collected on the property are for undeveloped land in 1888-89, but rates collected in 1889-90 were for two structures. It is likely that the cottages were built as workers accommodation.

The site of the cottages was on a narrow allotment, most of which was taken up by the cottage. The cottages were situated very close together, with the front doors facing onto each other. The cottages have had a quiet history, serving as accommodation, but by the 2000s had become dilapidated and were under threat of demolition by Transit New Zealand, which was working on the construction of a new bypass through the city. It was clear that the cottages were in the path of the bypass, and following major public protest and debate, it was decided to relocate the cottages as well as several other Tonks family buildings, to new sites to the north of the bypass.

Archaeological investigations provided a great amount of insight into the ways in which the cottages were constructed, who was living in the cottages, and the way that people lived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Investigation of the structures prior to the relocation included photography of the exteriors and interiors, wood, nail, and wallpaper samples, and recording of the well preserved areas. The overall condition of the cottages was similar, although the interior of 5 Tonks Grove was remarkably well preserved where the exterior was less well preserved and less accessible than the cottage at 7 Tonks Grove, where the exterior was in good condition but the interior poorly preserved. Some limited recording was undertaken after elements were

<sup>1</sup> History adapted from: 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>

removed as preparation for relocation. On 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005 the cottages were relocated a short distance north and parallel to their original sites. The exteriors of each cottage were restored by Transit New Zealand and remained empty until they were sold and fully renovated in 2010. The cottages are now used as bed and breakfast accommodation.

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

c.1889 Original construction

1987 1 Tonks Avenue, business additions and alterations (00059:130:D7380)

1987 3 Tonks Avenue, free standing fireplace - no wetback (00059:74:D5675)

2005 Relocation and restoration of exteriors

2010 5 Tonks Grove, interior alterations to create one new bedroom, new kitchen and bathroom (00078:3693:212689)

2010 7 Tonks Grove, interior alterations to create one new bedroom, new kitchen and bathroom (00078:3693:212690)

## **1.3 Occupation history**

Not assessed

## **1.4 Architect**

# **2.0 Physical description**

## **2.1 Architecture**

These cottages are small, single storey buildings that have minimal details on the façade. There is some ornamentation provided by the classically styled windows. It is a timber framed construction with a rusticated weatherboard façade, corrugated iron clad walls and rear, and a simple gabled roof. The interiors originally featured three rooms, and included a lean to at the rear. The structure of the cottages is typical and influenced by the Italianate style that was popular at the time. Little change has been made to these buildings during their lifetimes.

## **2.2 Materials**

- Timber framing
- Corrugated iron
- Rusticated weatherboard

## **2.3 Setting**

These cottages are an important reminder of a typical working class dwelling. The buildings are an important element of the history of Tonks Ave and upper Cuba Street and are 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. These two cottages are a matching pair that contributes significantly to the precinct, particularly in relation to the three matching cottages along Footscray Avenue.

### 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>

#### Wellington City Archive

- 1987 1 Tonks Avenue, business additions and alterations (00059:130:D7380)
- 1987 3 Tonks Avenue, free standing fireplace - no wetback (00059:74:D5675)
- 2010 5 Tonks Grove, interior alterations to create one new bedroom, new kitchen and bathroom (00078:3693:212689)
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## 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 buildings have architectural value as representatives of a specific type of building, they are good examples of a workers dwelling from the late 19<sup>th</sup> 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 cottages have townscape value due to the contribution that they make as a part of the Tonks 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?*

These cottages, as well as being a matching pair, are 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.

#### **Historic Value:**

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

These buildings are 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?*

These buildings are included in the NZAA Central City Archaeological site R27/270. As the buildings were relocated excavations were carried out prior to this, showing that there were archaeological remains in the area.

**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?*

There is some technical value associated with these buildings. They were built using materials and construction techniques common to the time and can provide insight into 19<sup>th</sup> century building.

**Social Value:**

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

These buildings are diverse but are cohesive in style, age, and material, with others in the area creating an attractive historic precinct that is held in high esteem by Wellingtonians. When they came under threat, public protest ensured their safety and relocation.

**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?*

Although the original context of these buildings has been lost due to their relocation, they make a positive contribution to the streetscape of the area and help to reconnect Footscray Avenue to Cuba Street.

**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 buildings are good representatives of a 1880s/90s workers dwelling and are one of few pairs of these types of dwellings surviving 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?*

These buildings retain authenticity although they have been relocated and restored. They are good representatives of the period in which they were built and are 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?*

These buildings are important at a local level due to their association with the Tonks family, the early settlement of Wellington, and as representatives 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*