

Houses

40-42 Aro Street



40 Aro Street – Image: *Charles Collins* – 2015



42 Aro Street – Image: *Charles Collins* – 2015

Summary of heritage significance

- The houses at No. 40 and 42 Aro Street are simple, but stylish, two storey workers villas that have been influenced by Carpenter Gothic, as seen on the front facades by the addition of Gothic brackets as a simple decorative feature, the gable end ornament, the bracketed hood above the second storey window, and the row of dentils (only on No. 40) below.
- These buildings are a part of the largest collection of intact working class buildings in Wellington, giving them an important local significance. These houses should be recognised for their outstanding group heritage value.
- These two houses are part of a close knit group of cottages on Aro Street that together have a high visual and townscape value. Their placement makes them a prominent feature of the street.

No. 40

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 11/5
Legal Description:	Lot 4 DP 6491
Heritage Area:	Aro Valley Cottages Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 4113
Archaeological Site:	
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: 1900
Architect / Builder:	Builder: John Jacobsen
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269265

No. 42

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 11/6
Legal Description:	Lot 3 DP 6491
Heritage Area:	Aro Valley Cottages Heritage Area
HPT Listed:	Category II, reference 4115
Archaeological Site:	
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: 1900
Architect / Builder:	Builder: John Jacobsen
Former uses:	Residential
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	EQ Not Necessary, Outside EQ Policy – SR 269267

Extent: Cityview GIS 2013



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

The section of land in the Aro Valley that No. 40 and 42 are situated upon was purchased by John Jacobsen in 1899 from John Nichol. What was then Section 1 of the largely unoccupied Town Acre 40 by 1900 had two houses upon it. The permit was granted in April 1899 although it is difficult to discover who designed the buildings. Jacobsen was himself the builder of the houses, and it is possible that he designed the identical six room houses himself, or bought a pattern book design. Jacobsen was listed as living in the immediate vicinity in 1897.

Initially the houses were tenanted, but in 1902 Jacobsen sold the, to Harriet and David Brooks, and the immediately sold them to Roxane Dibley. In 1907 the houses were purchased by Patrick Dwyer, but a 1922 mortgagee sale saw the houses sold separately.

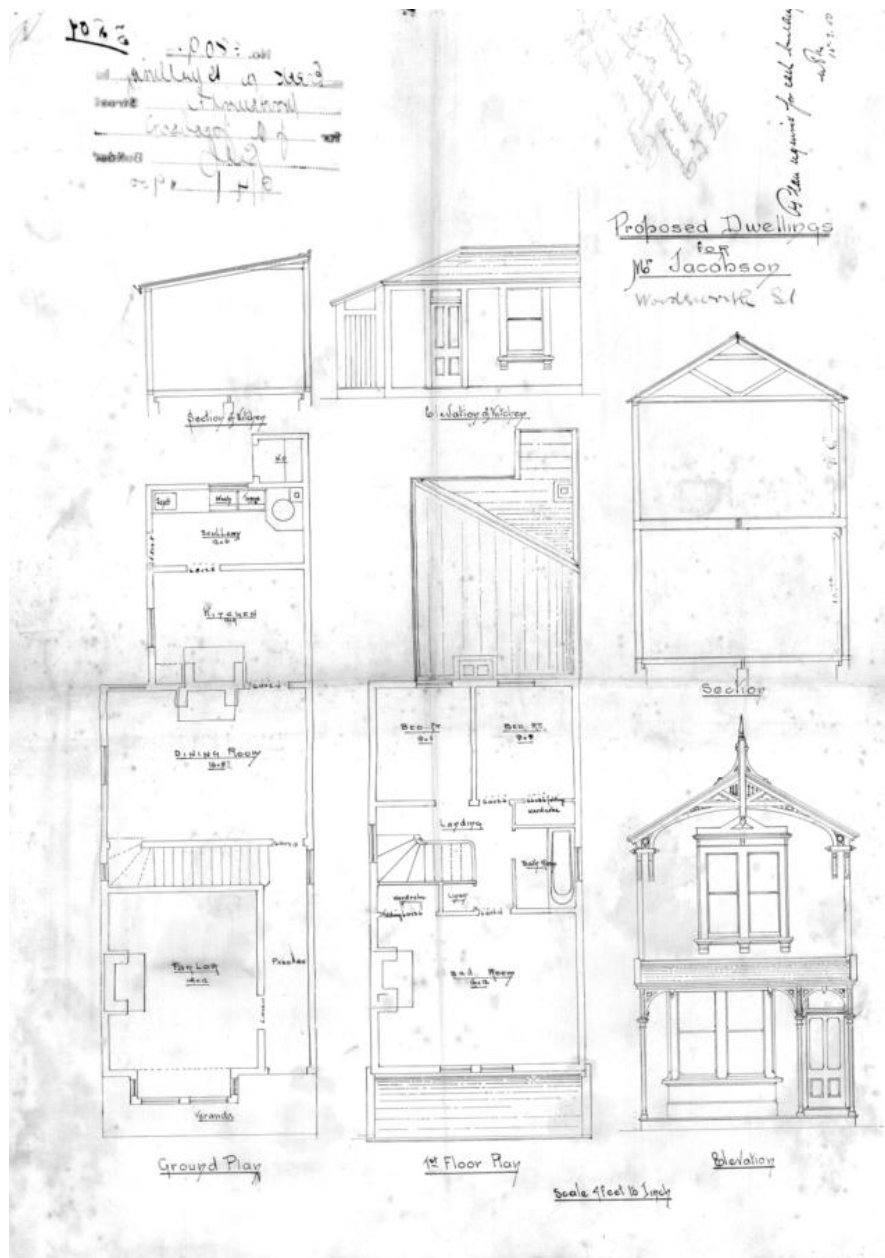
No. 40 was sold to Mary Keene, whose husband was Harry Keene, a labourer. The Keenes were the first owners/occupiers. The earliest listed occupant was Ernest Obee, a carpenter. By 1914 Martin Wood, a cook, was living at the address. In 1929 the Keenes sold the house to Olive Haylitt and during her tenure the house was occupied by James O'Neill, a traveller. Frederick Davis, a saddler, purchased the house in 1933. In 1943 Eileen Broadbent and Delia Silke bought the house and the former, a widow, was the long term occupant and also bought Silke out in 1948. The house was not again sold until 1987 when it was purchased by Lawrence Keenan, a hotel manager, who sold the house to his son Richard in 1996, who remains its owner and occupant.

¹ History adapted from Michael Kelly, 'Aro Valley Cottages Heritage Area – Aro Pt 2 doc', unpublished report prepared for Wellington City Council, 2002, 40-42 Aro Street.

No. 42 had had a number of occupants prior to its sale in 1922. One of the earliest listed occupants was Annie Contessa. It is possible that the house was then converted into some kind of boarding house as by 1914 three people were listed as living there. By 1920 only one name is listed, James O'Brien, an asphaltter. The house was sold in 1922 to Agnes Cholerton who sold the house two years later to Solomon Treister, described as a "gentleman". He lived at the address but then sold the house to Samuel Treister (a manufacturer, and presumably a relative) in 1927. Treister continued to live at the property, but by early 1940s Lucy Ranston was listed as the occupant, soon followed by Mrs Mary Hill. In 1948 Treister sold the house to Leon Saltzman. In 1958, Saltzman converted the house into two flats, at a cost of £630. In 1961 the flats were occupied by three men – John Jansen, a bookbinder, Brian Peck, a reporter, and Stan Evans, a watersider. By 1967 the house was listed simply as 'apartments' in street directories. In 1970 the house was bought by Stanley Noble, who then sold it to Olga and Freda Walker in 1974 and after being passed between various solicitors, the house was purchased by Kate Jefferey and Gary Martin in 1985. In 1986 the flats were converted back into a single dwelling, at a cost of \$11, 000. In 1988 Robert Paul bought the house and in 1992 it was purchased by Leonie King and Darryl Carpenter. It was then owned by Michael O'Brien and Lynette Dobson. The owners as of 2013 are Brent Gibson and Kylie Patterson.

These two houses form part of a group of late Victorian two-storey villas which add a considerable amount of character to lower Aro Street. They are an obvious contrast with the modest single storey cottages to the immediate south and are amongst the most obviously decorative of the houses in the Aro Valley cottages historic area. 40 and 42 have particular aesthetic interest for the finely detailed decoration employed on their principal facades. The houses have no great historical pretensions and do not appear to have been associated with anyone of consequence. Their primary heritage significance is associated with their role in the heritage area, and with the history of the Aro Valley.

1.2 Timeline of modifications



- 1900 Wordsworth Street [42 Aro Street], two dwellings (00053:61:3809)
- 1958 42 Aro Street, conversion of dwelling to two flats (00058:61:C3045)
- 1986 42 Aro Street, repile (00059:49:D4936)
- 1986 42 Aro Street, conversion of two flats to dwelling (00059:52:D5024)
- 1987 42 Aro Street, installation of fireplace (00059:136:D7588)
- 1989 40 Aro Street, repile (00059:261:D11742)
- 2009 42 Aro Street, internal alterations which includes a new bathroom and bedroom (00078:3176:195742)

1.3 Occupation history

Not Assessed

1.4 Architect

John Jacobsen – Builder: Thought to have designed the houses himself

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The houses at No. 40 and 42 Aro Street are simple, but stylish, two storey workers villas. In form they are very similar, with side passages and stairways, each with a simple front verandah and a bay window. A touch of finesse has been added to the front facades by the addition of Gothic brackets as a simple decorative feature, the gable end ornament, the bracketed hood above the second storey window, and the row of dentils (only on No. 40) below. These houses have been designed very economically and are well proportioned in style.

2.2 Materials

- Rusticated weatherboards
- Timber joinery
- Corrugated iron roofing

2.3 Setting

The houses at 40-42 Aro Street are part of a group of houses that make up the Aro Street cottages Historic Area. These houses have a simplicity that is indicative of their age and purpose as workers' housing.

The area is confined to the older, visually compatible structures that flank Aro Street, an area that has coherence as all the buildings were constructed between 1875 and 1910 and share similarities in history – predominantly that of working class people of the area – and in design and the use of construction materials. The area shares a homogeneity of design, appearance, and construction, and most of the buildings are typical of their times.

3.0 Sources

Kelly, Michael. 'Aro Valley Cottages Heritage Area – Aro Pt 2 doc.' Unpublished report prepared for Wellington City Council, 2002.

Wellington City Archive

1900 Wordsworth Street [42 Aro Street], two dwellings (00053:61:3809)
1958 42 Aro Street, conversion of dwelling to two flats (00058:61:C3045)
1986 42 Aro Street, repile (00059:49:D4936)
1986 42 Aro Street, conversion of two flats to dwelling (00059:52:D5024)
1987 42 Aro Street, installation of fireplace (00059:136:D7588)
1989 40 Aro Street, repile (00059:261:D11742)
2009 42 Aro Street, internal alterations which includes a new bathroom and
bedroom (00078:3176:195742)

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?*

The houses at No. 40 and 42 Aro Street are simple, but stylish, two storey workers villas that have been influenced by Carpenter Gothic, as seen on the front facades by the addition of Gothic brackets as a simple decorative feature, the gable end ornament, the bracketed hood above the second storey window, and the row of dentils (only on No. 40) below.

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 two houses are part of a close knit group of cottages on Aro Street that together have a high visual and townscape value. Their placement makes them a prominent feature of the street.

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 buildings are a part of the largest collection of intact working class buildings in Wellington, giving them an important local significance. These houses should be recognised for their outstanding group heritage value.

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?*

While the historical associations may appear slight, as few of the buildings have been associated with any events of great importance, their historical significance is associated with the fact that the area has an almost unbroken history of working class life, and the houses consistently reflect this history.

Scientific Value:

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

These houses are in an area known to have pre 1900 human activity associated with it. Risk of accidental discovery is high.

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 houses contribute to the sense of place and continuity on Aro Street due to the retention of their original features and their long standing place on the street.

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 the types of workers dwellings from the turn of the century. They are constructed in materials, and using techniques, that were common to the period.

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 retain a significant amount of authenticity having had few exterior modifications.

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 a part of the largest collection of intact working class buildings in Wellington, giving them an important local significance and should be recognised for their outstanding group heritage value.

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*