



Heritage Buildings Report

Site ID

Building/Site Name

Kerr Residence (Former)

Address

84 Brougham Street, New Plymouth



Statement of Significance

This building is a good example of a late-nineteenth century inner-city cottage designed by capable local architect James Sanderson. Whilst it has slight historical associations as the residence of William Kerr, a local lawyer of some standing, its value is principally associated with its relatively unaltered form, and the positive contribution it makes to the local streetscape and the adjacent St Mary's/Marsland Hill precinct. As an architect designed cottage, this building incorporates architectural features such as Dutch gables and French casements with divided transoms which are absent from pattern book cottages constructed in New Plymouth around the same time.



Heritage Buildings Report

Legal Information and Heritage Status

Legal Description Lot 1 DP 10375

District Plan Item/ Map No.

Heritage New Zealand List Not listed

Construction Information

Date of Construction 1896-97

Principal Materials Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

Construction Professionals James Sanderson (architect)

History

In 1884, James Paul purchased a number of town sections in upper Brougham Street as part of a bankrupt estate.¹ Included amongst this purchase were town sections 762 and 776, on which the present cottage is constructed.² Located on the steep eastern slopes of Marsland Hill, these sections were inaccessible until 1894, when Paul applied to the Borough Council for permission to remove a large quantity of earth on the Brougham Street frontage.³ This work was soon undertaken, and with the property now accessible, Paul sold both sections to New Plymouth solicitor William Kerr in November 1896.⁴ Soon after purchasing the sections, Kerr entrusted well-known New Plymouth architect James Sanderson to design a house for the property, and tenders for this were called for in December 1896.⁵ Architect James Sanderson had practiced independently since the 1880s and was one of the New Plymouth's foremost late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century architects. He joined in practice with Horace Victor Griffiths in 1907, and this partnership continued until 1915 when Sanderson moved to Auckland.⁶

In July 1897, the New Plymouth Borough Council increased the rates valuations of sections 762 and 776 from £10 to £30, presumably to reflect construction of the house.⁷ William Kerr was a local solicitor of some note, and for a number of years a partner in the firm of Standish and Kerr. In 1908, he was appointed Stipendiary Magistrate at Whanganui, and William and his wife Isabella relocated to the city.⁸ The Kerr's retained the Brougham Street property, with ownership transferred to Isabella in 1909, and the house presumably rented.⁹ William died at Napier in 1918, and Isabella subsequently returned to New Plymouth.¹⁰ She moved back to their house in Brougham Street, and remained there until 1925, when upon selling the house to land agent E. J. Carthew, relocated to nearby 16 Bulteel Street, designed for Mrs Kerr by Thomas Herbert Bates that year.¹¹ The property title was issued under the Land Transfer Act in 1928.

¹ *Taranaki Herald*, 2 August 1884, page 3

² Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

³ *Taranaki Herald*, 14 August 1894, page 2

⁴ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

⁵ *Taranaki Herald*, 4 December 1896, page 3

⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 20 June 1907, page 2

⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 13 July 1897, p.2

⁸ *Taranaki Daily News*, 19 December 1908, page 2

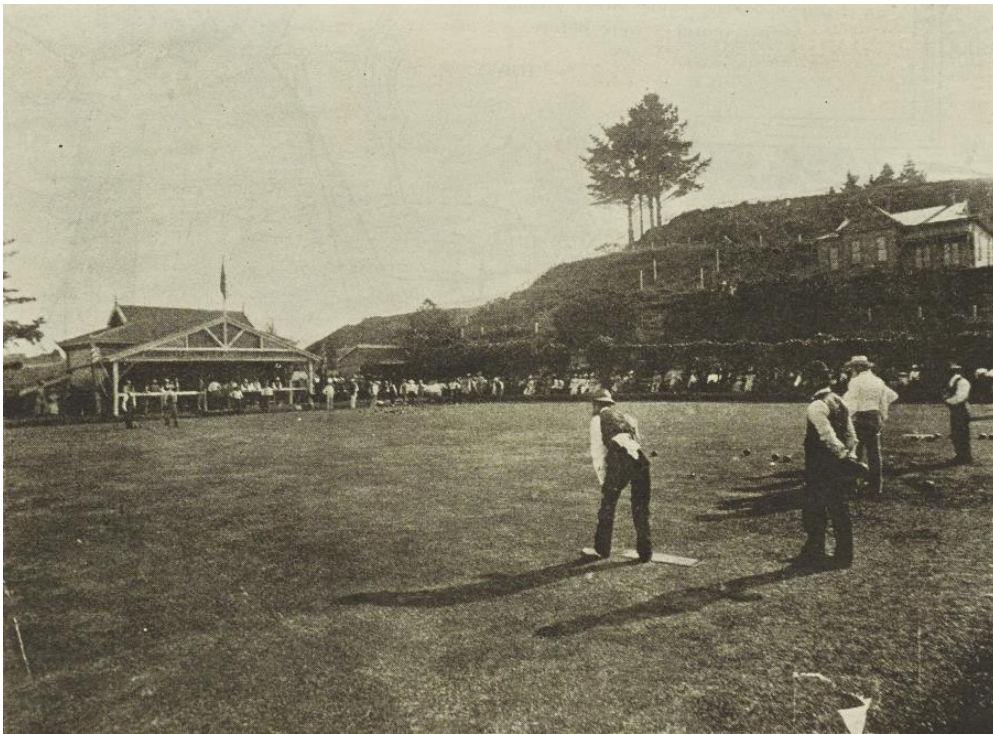
⁹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

¹⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 4 August 1930, page 12

¹¹ Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand



Heritage Buildings Report



The New Plymouth Bowling Club's Green, New Plymouth, Taranaki [looking south-west from approximate site of present 7 Hempton Street with Kerr residence at top-right], W. A. Collis, New Zealand Graphic, 25 December 1897, page 838, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections NZG-18971225-838-2

Reference Sources

See footnotes.

Description

This cottage is located on the eastern slopes of historic Marsland Hill/Pukaka pā. It is located a short distance from New Plymouth's CBD, in an area with a number of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century buildings in a variety of styles. Despite its position above street-level, it is still highly visible from nearby Brougham and Hempton Streets and an interesting element in the local streetscape.

The main form of this building is a rectangular single-story Dutch gable cottage with veranda and projecting front gable. An addition of unknown age, but in a similar style to the original cottage, is located at the southern end of the original building. The cottage is clad in rusticated weatherboard with wooden joinery, a corrugated steel roof, and gable ends clad in board and batten. A brick chimney finished with decorative dentil courses rises from the northern ridge of the main gable.

The front elevation faces north-east and includes an off-centre projecting Dutch gable with two slender double-hung sashes. A further two sash windows are located on the southern side of the projecting gable, and two pairs of French casements with divided transom windows are located at the northern end of the north-eastern elevation. A simple post and beam veranda with sloping roof partially encloses the northern side of the front wall and continues along the entire length of the northern elevation. Two pairs of French casements with divided transom windows are also located on the northern wall.



Heritage Buildings Report

Assessment:

Historical	This cottage has slight historical associations for its association with William Kerr, a local solicitor of some standing, who would go on to become Stipendiary Magistrate at Whanganui and Napier. It was designed by well-known New Plymouth architect James Sanderson, who was at the height of his career during the 1880s and 1890s.	✓
Importance to Community	-	
Architecture & Construction	This building is a good example of a small architect-designed cottage from the mid-1890s incorporating architectural features largely absent from simpler pattern book cottages.	✓
Setting and Context	-	
Archaeology	As the cottage was constructed in 1896-97, the property likely has archaeological evidence relating to pre-1900 human activity and has the potential to reveal information about the past through archaeological investigation.	✓
Representativeness, rarity and integrity	This building retains a high degree of integrity, and aside from a small addition, the exterior of the home remains much as it was when first constructed.	✓
Meets threshold for listing (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓