



# Heritage Buildings Report

**Site ID**

**Building/Site Name**

Kibby's Cottage

**Address**

15 Clemow Road, Fitzroy, New Plymouth



## Statement of Significance

This building has heritage significance for its association with the early history of the suburb of Fitzroy. It is also significant for its direct relationship with prominent early Fitzroy settlers James and John Kibby, and for its longstanding association with the Kibby family. The cottage is representative of the first dwellings constructed in Fitzroy Township during the 1870s and 1880s, is the only surviving building of its type in Fitzroy, and an uncommon example of a Georgian Box Cottage in New Plymouth City. The building contributes positively to the surrounding streetscape, and its aesthetically pleasing and well-maintained exterior ensures it stands out amongst its more modern neighbours.



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## Legal Information and Heritage Status

**Legal Description** Lot 17 DEED 1

**District Plan Item/ Map No.**

**Heritage New Zealand List** Not listed

## Construction Information

**Date of Construction** 1881-82

**Principal Materials** Wooden framing, weatherboard, corrugated steel

**Construction Professionals** Unknown

## History

This small cottage, located in the eastern New Plymouth suburb of Fitzroy, was constructed by or for James Kibby in late 1881 or early 1882. James Kibby was born in Middlesex, England in 1864, and emigrated to New Plymouth in 1875 with his parents Levi Kibby and Mary Bridle, and his two brothers John and Robert.<sup>1</sup> James married Ellen Northcott in 1891, and upon her death, married Mary Roberts in 1917.<sup>2</sup> James was an expressman, and for many years was also the chairman of the Fitzroy Town Board, where he was a strong proponent of the greater New Plymouth scheme, which saw Fitzroy and other outlying suburbs incorporated into the New Plymouth Borough in 1912.<sup>3</sup> He served as a New Plymouth Borough Councillor for ten years, before later shifting to Queens Road, where he was responsible for the Glen Avon Extension subdivision in 1925.<sup>4</sup> He died at his home 'GlenAvon', on Queens Road, in February 1948, and is buried in New Plymouth's historic Te Henui Cemetery.<sup>5</sup>

Kibby's Cottage is located on Section 17 of Fitzroy West Township, surveyed for New Plymouth developer and auctioneer William Courtney in 1879.<sup>6</sup> Following the first auction of Fitzroy West sections in September 1879, H. Richardson is reported as the successful purchaser of Sections 16 and 17, with section 18 unsold.<sup>7</sup> However, it seems this initial sale was not completed, with James Kibby purchasing sections 16, 17 & 18 of Fitzroy West Township in June 1881.<sup>8</sup> The present cottage was likely constructed in the months following this purchase, with James Kibby first appearing in the Te Henui Road Board Rating Rolls for 1882-83, where he is listed as owning a "house [and] 3 sections 16, 17, 18"; he paid his first annual rates bill of £12 on 30 January 1883.<sup>9</sup> In November 1881, J. R. Kibby reported losing "one rip saw and one panel saw" between Fitzroy and New Plymouth; it is tempting to speculate that this equipment may be related to the construction of the present cottage.<sup>10</sup>

It seems that for a time both James and his brother John (and possibly also their spouses), shared this cottage, as Wises Street Directories for the early 1890s list both James and John as living at the same Fitzroy address.<sup>11</sup> It is unclear how long James remained living in the cottage, but in 1910 he gifted the western-most Section 16 to G. C. Kibby, retaining ownership of the cottage and sections

<sup>1</sup> Passenger Lists, 1839-1973, Archives New Zealand

<sup>2</sup> New Zealand, Civil Records Indexes, 1800-1966, Archives New Zealand

<sup>3</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 27 February 1948, p.2

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Deeds Plan 1, Fitzroy West Township, Land Information New Zealand

<sup>7</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 18 September 1879, p.2

<sup>8</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand

<sup>9</sup> Te Henui Road Board Rating Book 1876-83, Puke Ariki (ARC2002-604)

<sup>10</sup> *Taranaki Herald*, 26 November 1881, p.3

<sup>11</sup> Wises Street Directories, 1893-97



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17 and 18 until at least 1927, when the property title was issued under the Land Transfer Act.<sup>12</sup> It seems likely Kibby removed to a larger house nearby during the late 1890s or early 1900s, before later shifting to Queens Road; the cottage was probably rented throughout this period.

## Reference Sources

See footnotes.

## Description

Kibby's Cottage is located at the western end of Clemow Road, in the eastern New Plymouth suburb of Fitzroy. Despite being settled early in New Plymouth's history, this area remained sparsely populated until the 1920s, when rapid population growth occurred. Until the 1980s, Fitzroy was largely dominated by 1920s-30s bungalows, interspersed by a few nineteenth-century farm cottages and early 1900s-villas. However, the demolition and removal of older dwellings during recent decades has resulted in eclectic mix of architectural styles, with semi-detached townhouses of little architectural merit now a particular feature in the streets near Fitzroy's commercial hub.

The main form of this building is a single storey, timber framed cottage constructed in the Georgian box style popular in New Zealand from the 1850s to the 1880s. The main structure consists of a simple east-west orientated gable with a rear lean-to, and is roofed in corrugated steel. The front elevation is clad in rusticated weatherboard, and features two four-light double-hung sash windows, either side of a replacement multi-paned front door. A full-length post and beam veranda with a sloping roof runs the full length of the frontage; although this is not thought to be original.

The lower portion of the side walls are clad in horizontal bevel-back weatherboard that likely replaced the original plain, rough-sawn weatherboards; the upper part of the walls are clad in ridged cement sheet. Each side elevation has two circa 1960s wooden casement windows of differing dimensions. The building has at some point in time received new concrete piles.

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<sup>12</sup> Taranaki Land Deed Indexes (23516), c.1858 - c.1928, Archives New Zealand



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## Assessment:

<b>Historical</b>	This building has historical significance for its association with the early period of planned settlement in the suburb of Fitzroy. It also has a direct relationship with prominent early Fitzroy settlers James and John Kibby, and a longstanding association with the Kibby family.	✓
<b>Importance to Community</b>	-	
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	Kibby's Cottage is a good, locally uncommon, and representative example of the Georgian box cottage style.	✓
<b>Setting and Context</b>	Located in an unobstructed position near the front its section, this building has an aesthetically pleasing and well-maintained exterior that contributes positively to the surrounding streetscape.	✓
<b>Archaeology</b>	As the cottage was constructed in 1881-82, 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.	✓
<b>Representativeness, rarity and integrity</b>	This cottage is representative of the first dwellings constructed in Fitzroy Township during the 1870s and 1880s, is the only surviving building of its type in Fitzroy, and an uncommon example of a Georgian Box Cottage in New Plymouth city.	✓
<b>Meets threshold for listing</b> (three or more ticks, or two ticks in one criterion)		✓