9 Rentone Street, Stepneyville, Nelson

B ranked heritage item in the operative NRMP
Part Section 95 City of Nelson


[23 April 2024]

The cottage was likely built in c.1882-83 for Samuel Heath a few years after his marriage to Eliza Robinson in June 1879. *Deeds Index records show that the property was conveyed by Arthur Batchelor, a Nelson accountant, to Samuel Heath in January 1883. This would support a date of c.1883 for the construction of the dwelling.* Samuel and Eliza Heath had 12 children, most of whom were born in this cottage. Eliza's parents lived at 8 Rentone Street and Samuel worked at the port as a mariner and, later, a labourer. Upon Samuel's death in 1921 Eliza went to live with one of their daughters in Whangarei. Eventually, in 1928, the cottage was transferred to Percy Delaney, labourer. Since its sale by Delaney in 1940 the cottage has passed through numerous hands. Between 1956 and 1994 it was owned by Stanley Lynch and an IGA grocery store was operated in the room created by combining the two twentieth-century additions on the north side of the cottage into a single space.

The following alterations and/or additions have been made to the original colonial vernacular cottage: gabled extension on north side (between 1906 & 1927); flat roofed addition made to gabled extension, shop conversion, stuccoed plasterwork applied, veranda partially enclosed (latter in 1950s). Firewood shed converted to bedroom and, later, laundry (dates unknown). Repiled and concrete floors laid (1996). Shop window replaced with a double hung sash and gable end reclad in rusticated weatherboards (after 2003). *External reconstruction, including removal of stucco cladding and reinstatement of veranda with decorative balustrade (2021-22).*

Assessment: The dwelling has been highly modified and now has insufficient authenticity to merit scheduling on the district plan.

Recommendation: Delete from heritage schedule.

Dr Ann McEwan
Heritage Consultancy Services

7 August 2020 [*italicised sentences inserted 8 April 2024*]

Assessment according to the heritage criteria:

Historic And Social Significance
The former Heath cottage is not associated with a notable person or event and has modest historic and social value as the former home of a port worker and his family. The use of the building as a combined shop/residence in the mid-twentieth century demonstrates an aspect of the social pattern of the neighbourhood at this time.

Cultural And Spiritual Significance
The former Heath cottage has modest cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of a Nelson port worker and his family.

Architectural And Aesthetic Significance
The former Heath cottage has limited architectural value as a modified late Victorian cottage that has had a long history of additions and alterations. The building is not a significant or authentic example of its style. The designer is unknown.

Technological And Craftsmanship Significance
The former Heath cottage has limited value under this criteria given its modified state and diminished authenticity. The builder is unknown.

Archaeological Significance
The site of the former Heath cottage has potential archaeological significance given the colonial development of the property.

Scientific Significance
The former Heath cottage may have minor scientific value for its potential to provide further information about the original design and construction of the building and its long history of modification.

Group, Landmark And Contextual Significance
The former Heath cottage has some contextual value as a building that contributes to the historic character of Stepneyville and the Washington Valley.

Summary Statement
The former Heath cottage dates to the later 19th century and has recently been thoughtfully reconstructed by its owners. It does not meet the criteria for scheduling and lacks sufficient authenticity to embody heritage significance. The veranda was reconstructed in c.2019-20 but it is not clear what historical evidence, if any, determined the form of the veranda, its brackets and balustrading. The fitting of the balustrading across the length of the veranda means that the veranda now reads as a private, fenced porch rather than as the transitional public-private space that is characteristic of cottages and villas of the period. The building was assessed but not recommended for scheduling by Ian Bowman in 2009-10. Information provided in submission # 323 has not changed the August 2020 recommendation to delete this item from Appendix 1.

Recommendation
Delete this item from Appendix 1 as it does not meet the heritage assessment criteria.

References:
M Clark, I Bowman 'Heritage Building Inventory' report for 9 Rentone Street 2009
Photograph of William Heath [?], World War I:
http://collection.nelsonmuseum.co.nz/search.do?db=object&view=detail&id=34616
http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C45667 Archives NZ, Land Information NZ, Street Directories and Electoral Rolls.

Review date: 27 April 2024