

I'm Peter Were. I live on Queens Avenue, known in the past as Frankton Hill, and once considered to be the 'dress circle' of Frankton.

When I moved to Hamilton 10 years ago I was struck by what would have been once-cohesive and charming streetscapes of period houses, scarred and compromised by arbitrary and piecemeal infill housing.

Heritage consultants engaged by Hamilton Council had this to say about the city's state of heritage preservation:

"...It's clear that the proposed HHAs are vulnerable to change and loss of heritage value, by inappropriate modern development.

If the opportunity is not taken now to protect them there is the risk of the heritage values of Hamilton City being irretrievably damaged within the foreseeable future – possibly within a period as short as the next 10 years."

Now I know we can't turn back the clock but I hope that the tide of intrusive and visually-confronting developments can at least be held at bay by promoting what little is left of Hamilton's history-rich older houses, and protecting them as tangible examples that helped shape and which now reflect the progress of urbanisation in this city's early twentieth century.

In particular, I propose that the remaining period houses on Queens Ave be classified as part of a new Historic Heritage Area, to acknowledge the street's important role in the creation of Frankton.

Much of Frankton once belonged to local farmers the Jollys - the suburb takes its name from Frank, Thomas and Mary's son; and he and his siblings inherited or were gifted farmland on Frankton Hill, which they progressively subdivided.

Frank's heritage-listed homestead at 39 Queens Ave still stands today overlooking Lake Rotoroa; and a farmyard fenceline dividing two paddocks and radiating from the lake now takes the form of diagonal boundarylines between several properties including ours at the Killarney Road end of the street.

There's a number of bungalows in the street which share similar period detailing, highly likely to be examples of the work of one or other of several of housebuilding companies which were prolific in the Waikato in the early 1900s;

There's a striking example of Edwardian architecture at #7 which along with its neighbour at #9 might soon be listed as heritage buildings.

and there's a couple of Arts & Crafts style cottages including our place at the Killarney Road end of the street;

and our end of the street is notable too as a rare example of being part of a Government-sponsored "soldier's settlement" area, normally reserved for rural areas.

A second Council-engaged consultant cited lack of streetscape cohesiveness as damaging Queens Ave's chances of an HHA status, as the street has indeed been blighted by the demolition of some of its original houses, and by their replacement with medium-density developments of aesthetic banality.

But as you've read and have heard, we've provided detailed heritage and historical research reports, analyses and assessments that prove even in its current state, large sections of Queens Ave help tell the story of early Hamilton and are worthy contenders to be classified as an HHA.

As Hamilton's importance grows regionally and nationally, housing intensification is unavoidable

However, sanctioning the destruction of still more of the city's period homes will lead to entire neighbourhoods suffering architectural amnesia, and like the fate of Eleanor Rigby, left with no signposts to point to their histories and lives lived.

If continued unabated, the sacrifice and decimation of older inner-city neighbourhoods which now provide life-enhancing physical, emotional and cultural links to the city's layered past is tantamount to taking an icepick to the collective consciousness of Hamilton's wider community and lobotomising its history.

I therefore urge Council to seriously consider zoning sections of Queens Avenue as an Historic Heritage Area before it's too late.

Queens Avenue



92 Lake Road ("1 Queens Ave")



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Queens Avenue



5



7

Queens Avenue

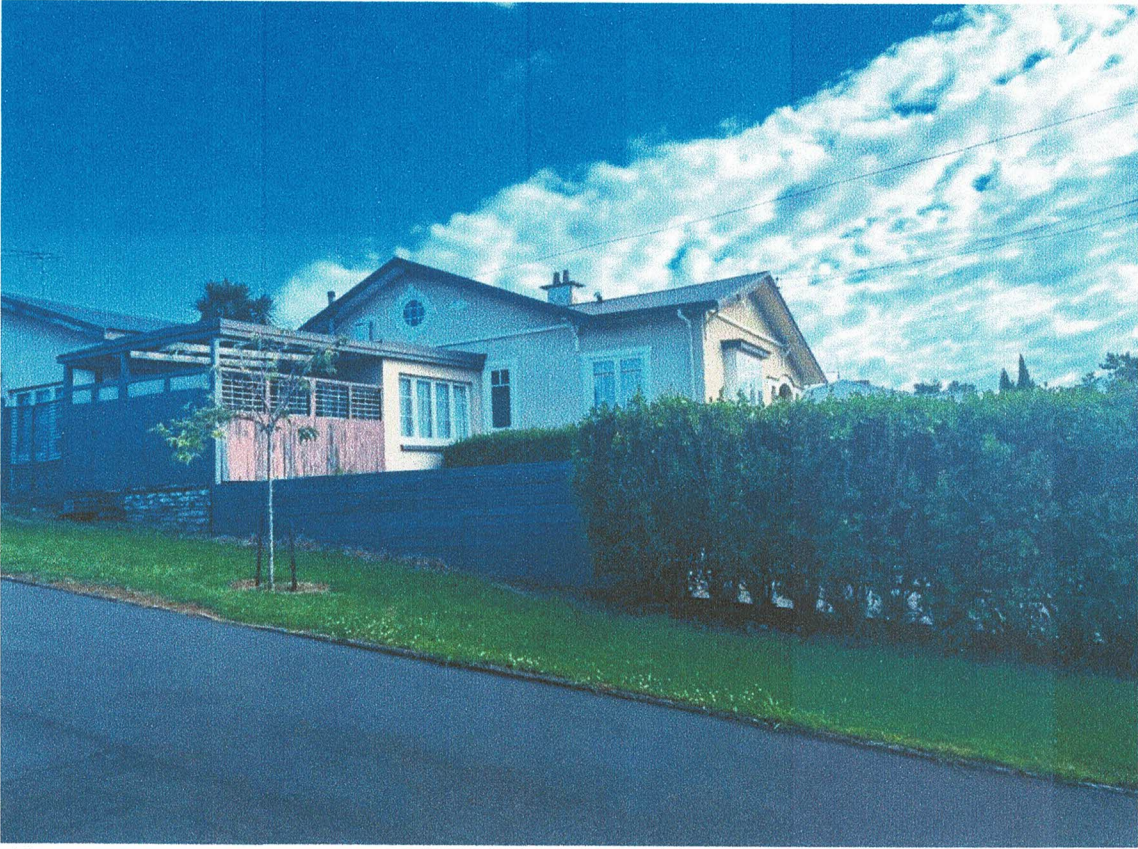


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Queens Avenue



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Queens Avenue



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Queens Avenue



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73

Queens Avenue



91



93

Queens Avenue



95



20 Joffre Street ("97 Queens Ave")

Queens Avenue



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103

Queens Avenue



94 Lake Road ("2 Queens Ave")





12A



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Queens Avenue



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Queens Avenue



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