

Presentation by Character Coalition Inc.

JOINT HPA ICOMOS CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2022



Who we are

- ▶ Coalition of over 65 members
- ▶ Includes Residents Assns., heritage & historical societies and special interest groups
- ▶ Formed in 2012
- ▶ Took an active part in UP process
- ▶ Actively supporting the protection of Special Character Areas (SCAs) 11



Why the Character Coalition Formed

- ▶ Aucklanders were concerned about the destruction of individual iconic landmarks and demolitions and inappropriate developments in character suburbs
- ▶ The loss of the connection between the past and the present – sense of place.



The New Zealand Herald

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Bulldozers busy since Brown took over council

By Bernard Orsman

5:30 AM Wednesday Apr 18, 2012



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A higher percentage of applications to bulldoze homes in Auckland City's character suburbs are being approved under Mayor Len Brown than under his predecessor John Banks, a *Herald* survey has found.

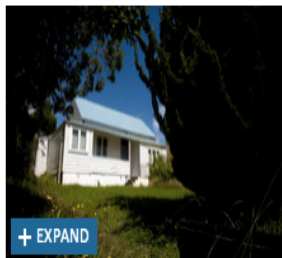
Since 2007, 73 resource consents have been granted to demolish pre-1940 homes in the Residential 1 and 2 character suburbs. Six were for partial demolition.

Under Mr Brown's watch, 24 homes have been lost compared with 49 under Mr Banks. But on a percentage basis, Mr Brown's council is approving 20 per cent more consents.

However, council planning officers are resisting plans by the council's heritage advisory panel for urgent action to tighten up the rules meant to protect the inner city and established character suburbs.

The 16-member heritage panel is worried that the community is having no say on applications to demolish homes. The *Herald* survey shows only two of the 73 applications were publicly notified and five had limited notification.

The council approval which allowed demolition of a 130-year-old cottage in



+ EXPAND

The 130-year-old cottage in Paget St, Freemans Bay. Photo / Dean Purcell

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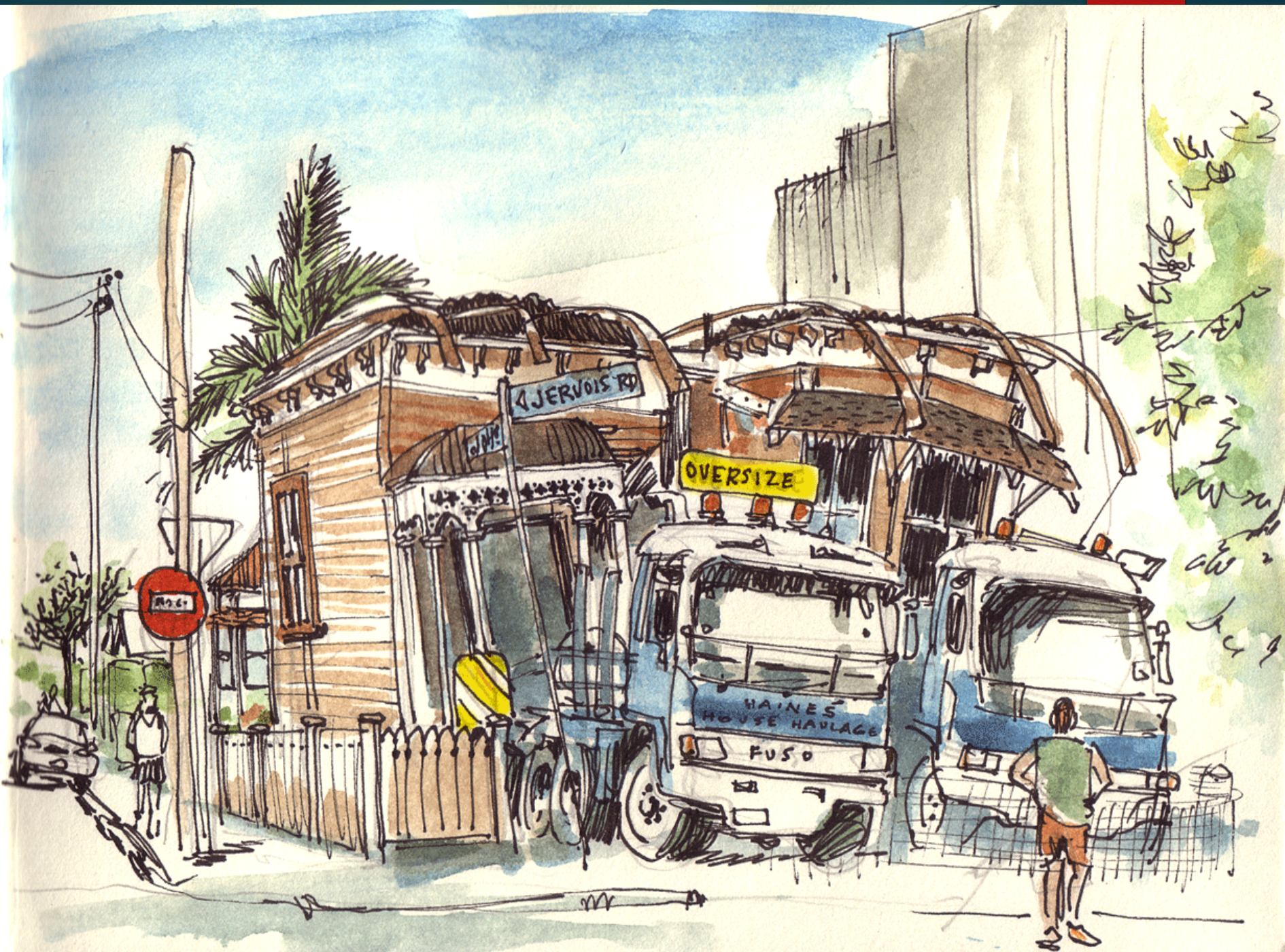
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Turua Street 2011



What we did next

- ▶ Planning rules were the key
- ▶ Auckland Plan under development
- ▶ Imperative to have protections for character and heritage included in new planning rules
- ▶ A coordinated approach would have more impact
- ▶ Developed a plan of what was needed and wrote to relevant groups



The Auckland Character Plan

- ▶ Brisbane mechanisms
 - ▶ Local Plans
 - ▶ Demolition Control Precincts
 - ▶ Commercial Character Building Code
 - ▶ Heritage Code
- ▶ Stepped process
- ▶ Coalition assists with assessment
- ▶ Staged intensification



Auckland Plan Committee

3 July 2012 - 17 member groups



Strategies to build momentum

- ▶ Media releases and availability
- ▶ Website
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ E newsletter to members
- ▶ Continued canvassing for new members
- ▶ Meetings with Council



Our achievements

- ▶ Kept Heritage and Character on the agenda
- ▶ Retained the special character overlays
- ▶ A Council Heritage Advisory Panel was established
- ▶ The public were more aware of the issues
- ▶ Established a group that could speak with one voice



The current situation

- ▶ Government legislation is overriding the Unitary Plan
- ▶ Council has responded with Plan Change 78
- ▶ Coalition has been fully involved in process
- ▶ Make submissions which we share with members
- ▶ Appear before select committees
- ▶ Speak at public meetings
- ▶ Continue to have a large media presence



Coalition actions

- ▶ Submission on RMA Amendment Bill and presented to Select Committee in late 2021
- ▶ Presented to relevant Local Board meetings seeking their support
- ▶ Worked with member groups and Council to restore SCA sections Council proposed to delete
- ▶ Engaged Jeremy Salmond (heritage architect) and Alex Findlay (planner) to help member groups to re-evaluate properties & areas
- ▶ Advised members how Councillors voted on proposal to retain more SCA's
- ▶ Plan Change 78 notified in August 2022
- ▶ Lodged submission on PC78 and Provided members with template



Future actions

- ▶ Independent Panel will hold hearings next year
- ▶ The Coalition will:
 - ▶ mobilise members
 - ▶ appear before panel with expert witnesses
 - ▶ create media attention
 - ▶ support Council to retain SCAs
 - ▶ Continue to be a coordinated voice for character and heritage



Collective strength

- ▶ Unites and amplifies the position that heritage and character are to be valued
- ▶ Gives a voice to an Auckland wide collective of otherwise individual groups that would gain little traction on their own
- ▶ Provides a credible presence and profile that has to be included in the process
- ▶ Provides members with support and a channel for their concerns
- ▶ Attained a respected public identity
- ▶ Became a force to be reckoned with



World famous Seven Sisters In San Francisco



Six Sisters in Ponsonby



Character
Coalition
Character Counts



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Thank you

