

NAME: -

ADDRESS: 64-68 Napier Street

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 64 - pre 1858?; extended/
rebuilt 1873?; 68- 1869

ALTERATNS./ADDITNS: -

ARCHITECT: 68 - A.F. Kursteiner

BUILDER: UNKNOWN

FIRST OWNER: H. Raphael/Estate Agent
owned both properties
from 1869 onwards/rented
properties out.

FIRST OCC./USE: Residence

PRESENT OWNER: G.S. Clark, 19 Redmont St.
Kew.

PRESENT OCC./USE: Private dwelling

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS: Rendered masonry

INTACTNESS/
CONDITION: Intact

AREA/STREETScape: Part of recommended area A3



IMPORTANCE:

These two houses were constructed in various stages: number 68 was built in 1869 for Henry Raphael, a real estate agent to the design of architect A.F. Kursteiner; number 64 was probably constructed in 1874, also for Raphael but may have incorporated an earlier building. Alfred Kursteiner was an active architect in Fitzroy and designed numerous residences. This is his grandest residential scheme, and despite differences in construction dates and subtle changes in detailing, the facade presents itself as an imposing and unified composition of three levels.

The restrained modelling and use of consistent architectural elements produces a building of architectural significance. Internally, there is little of architectural importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that this building be added to the Historic Buildings Register, the Register of the National Estate and be specified under Clause 8 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule)

BUILDING ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE:

This pair of imposing houses was apparently constructed in various stages. Number 68 was constructed in 1869 for Henry Raphael¹ a real estate agent to the design of architect A.F. Kursteiner.² Number 64 was probably constructed in 1874 for Raphael,³ although an earlier building may have been extended and refaced to compliment the existing building.⁴ It appears more likely that a new building was built by Raphael, possibly again to the design of Kursteiner.

Kursteiner did work elsewhere for Raphael, constructing two shops and dwellings in Little Lonsdale Street in 1871.⁵

64-68 Napier Street (Cont.)

Inspection of the facade shows a neat junctioning of two buildings constructed at different times, with different details applied to each building. A change of stringcourse at first floor level is echoed by the fine upward sweep of the cornice. The masks on the keystones at ground floor level all differ. The ancones supporting the first floor window sills are uniform, but the sill height to number 64 is increased by the insertion of an impost block. The window heads and stringcourses above return to a uniform height. The attic windows of number 64 rise higher than those of number 68 with small decorative relief panels.

The central arch has two different springing points again indicating a break in construction. The impost moulding to the ground floor is different from number 68 and incorporates an astragal (bead and reel) and foliated cyma recta moulding.

Despite different construction dates and subtle changes in detailing, the facade presents itself as an imposing and unified composition of three levels. Internally there is an elliptical arch between the two front rooms of number 64, with otherwise crude joinery, and splayed window reveals at ground floor level to number 68. There is little else of note.

Kursteiner was an active architect in Fitzroy at this time. In 1866 he undertook alterations to the Belvidere Hotel,⁶ now the Eastern Hill hotel, Brunswick Street, and was probably responsible for the upper floor facades which remain intact today.

In 1870 he designed 14 cottages and 2 two storey houses in Mary Street Fitzroy⁷ and in 1871 designed 16 cottages and 4 stone houses, Mary Street Fitzroy.⁸ These are the well known and unique group of houses in Greeves Street. In 1871 he designed two houses in Victoria Parade, and there are other Fitzroy residences also designed by him.

This pair of houses is the grandest residential design by Alfred Kursteiner a well known Fitzroy architect. The composition and detailing result in an imposing and significant building. This building provides an important streetscape element to this important precinct.

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1. Fitzroy Ratebooks 1869. Hy Raphael (owner), S.G. Pope, Carpenter (Occupier), Brick house, 10 rooms £75.
 2. Argus 18.2.1869 A.F. Kursteiner calls tenders for the erection of 2 storey brick residence, Napier Street Fitzroy for Henry Raphael.
 3. Fitzroy Ratebook 1874 Hy Raphael owner/occupier, Brick house, 12 rooms £75.
 4. Fitzroy Ratebook earliest entry for 64 Napier Street: George Davis (owner) No description, £80. In 1865 Henry Raphael purchased No. 64 which was described as a brick shop and bakehouse.
 5. Argus 27.5.1871 p.3 Kursteiner calls tenders for 2 shops and dwellings, Little Lonsdale Street for Henry Raphael.
 6. Argus 12.3.1866 p.3 Kursteiner calls tenders for alterations to the Belvidere Hotel, cnr. Victoria Parade and Brunswick Street for W. Steinbel.
 7. Argus 20.6.1870 p.3 Alfred Kursteiner calls tenders for 14 cottages and 2 storey houses, Mary Street Fitzroy.
 8. Argus 15.8.1871 p.3 Alfred Kursteiner calls tenders for 16 cottages and 4 stone houses, Mary Street Fitzroy.