

Former architect's house may get historic rating

By JENNI O'CONNOR

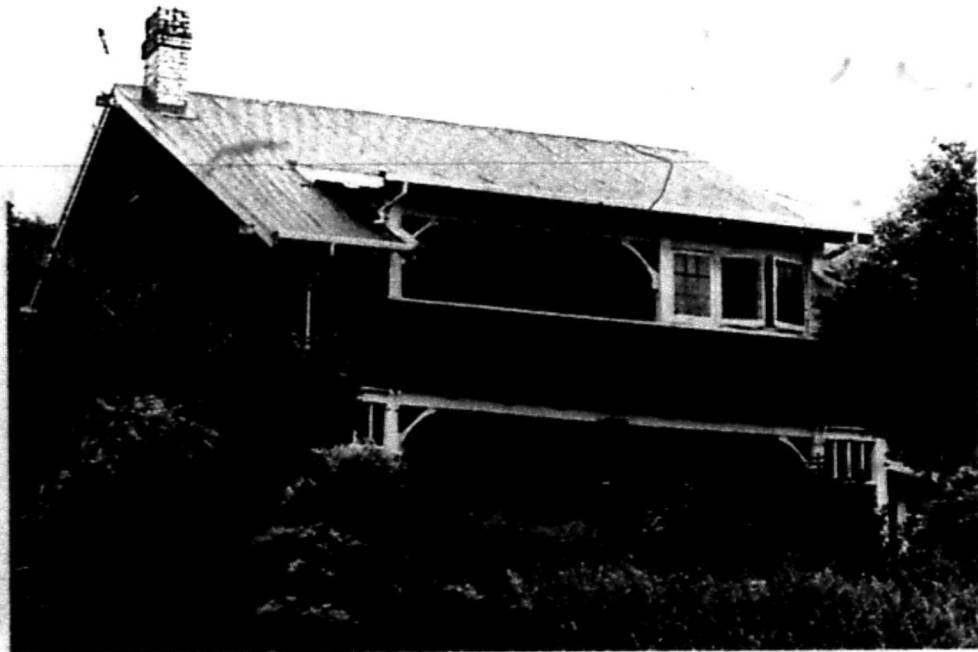
THE former home of the late Thomas Bates, a prominent New Plymouth architect, has been nominated for registration as an historic place.

The Bates House, as it has now been dubbed, in east Pendarves St has remained in its present style since Bates rebuilt it in 1921.

Bates was born in Australia in 1873 and moved to New Zealand with his family in 1908. He moved on to the Pendarves St site in 1916, into a small cottage not unlike Hurworth House.

He then designed extensions for the house, transforming it into a two-storey Californian style bungalow, typical of his domestic work around New Plymouth.

Taranaki Museum Director Ron Lambert said Bates had a significant architectural history in New Plymouth. He designed such buildings as the NP Opera House, the Taranaki Club, the YWCA, Robuck House, the Public Trust Offices in both NP and Stratford and the Memorial Gates outside NPBHS. He also designed various Taranaki banks and was renowned for his domestic work, of which his own home is an example. He was killed in an aircraft crash in Singapore in



BATES HOUSE: The former home of Thomas Bates in Pendarves St, New Plymouth, may get a rating from the Historic Places Trust.

Photo: MAARTEN HOLL

1954. Bates' house has been nominated as an historic place as a monument to its designer and his contribution to architecture in New Plymouth, a spokesperson from the Historic Places Trust said yesterday.

The current owner, Cliff Broad, said there was more history to the site than the trust realised, dating back to before Mr Bates moved in. The Broads have not yet made a decision as to whether

they will protest the registration. They still wish to do some maintenance work, although they do not plan to alter the style of the building.

"We've respected the architecture of the place," Mr Broad said. "... the trouble with owning an old place like this is that there's always something to do to it."

The Broads have lived in the house for more than 25 years — longer than Bates himself.