

21 February 2018

Andrew Mitchell
Ryman Group development manager
Ryman Healthcare
P.O. Box 771
Christchurch 8140

Dear Andrew

re: Former Wellington Teachers College, Karori

Firstly, we would like to congratulate you on your purchase of the Former Wellington Teachers College in Karori. This is indeed an iconic site, as you have stated in the press, and we hope you are a proud owner of this important heritage site.

We are sure that you are aware of the significance of the campus (buildings and landscaping):

- (a) as an award-winning design by reknown and nationally-significant architect Bill Toomath
- (b) as an historically important site in the New Zealand history of teacher training, with its association with well-known educators, including Dame Doreen Blumhardt (1914-2009), who was also a significant ceramicist, and potter.
- (c) because of the high quality of the integrated design of the campus, including the design of Lopdell Gardens
- (d) its rarity as a suburban campus comprehensively designed by a single architect
- (e) due to its importance as an example of New Zealand Brutalism, most recently acknowledge by the site's selection for inclusion in the Frankfurt exhibition "SOS Brutalism" at the German Architecture Museum (November 2017-April 2018) and the Adam Art Gallery exhibition "What Remains" (October-December 2017).

We note the technically-astute acoustics in a number of spaces on the campus, including the Allen Ward VC Hall and the music studio, which have the potential to provide important community gatherings and opportunities to hire to external groups, as well as the cafeteria with its commercial kitchen.

We strongly support the adaptive re-use of the site to provide the residential accommodation which you will be intending to supply for retired people of Wellington, and protection of the site (landscape and buildings). In this regard:

- (a) we point to the benefit of retaining the existing scale and mass of the buildings, which were carefully designed to minimise the impact on neighbouring properties.
- (b) we note that the height of the multi-storey blocks are higher than the District Plan would currently allow and we hope that you make use of this, and the beautifully designed landscape, rather than propose demolition of the buildings.
- (c) we support any community access to facilities such as the courts, lecture theatres, dance studio, and Allen Ward VC Hall to support intergenerational



the architectural centre inc.
PO Box 24178 Wellington

engagement and create a uniquely integrated community supported retirement village. We consider that the site has significant potential as a mixed use residential development, perhaps modelled on the successful Barbican in London, where residential functions are integrated with arts and cultural facilities (e.g. restaurant, art gallery, performance space, library). It is good to hear that sports clubs will be able to use campus courts and cricket nets for this year.

- (d) the buildings are not earthquake-prone and are very well built, and adaptive re-use will provide the best outcomes in terms of sustainability.
- (e) the skilled design of the landscape, both the siting of the buildings, and the specific design of Lopdell Gardens
- (f) we acknowledge that any resource consent application for a change of use will trigger off code compliance requirements, but we urge the council to minimise the financial impact of these due to the significant heritage value of the site

Congratulations again for your success in owning this important New Zealand heritage site. If there is anyway in which we can help ensure that this important modernist heritage site is retained please let us know.

Ka nui ngā mihi



Christine McCarthy and Daryl Cockburn
co-presidents, Architectural Centre

- cc. Hon. Grant Robertson, Wellington Central MP
- cc. Justin Lester, Mayor, WCC Arts and Culture Portfolio Leader
- cc. Andy Foster, WCC Karori Framework Portfolio Leader, Onslow-Western Ward Councillor
- cc. Dianne Calvert, WCC Community Planning and Engagement Portfolio Leader, Onslow-Western Ward Councillor
- cc. Simon Woolf, Onslow-Western Ward Councillor;
- cc. Richard Bentley, Save Karori Campus