

7 May 2018

Pere Hawes
Marlborough District Council
Email: Pere.Hawes@marlborough.govt.nz

Dear Pere

RESPONSE BY NELSON MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD TO THE PROPOSED MARLBOROUGH ENVIRONMENT PLAN IN RELATION TO THE OLD NURSES' HOME BUILDING AT WAIRAU HOSPITAL

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some comment to the potential heritage classification of the old Nurses' home within the proposed Marlborough Environment Plan ("MEP"). Nelson Marlborough District Health Board ("NMDHB") opposes any heritage classification being imposed on the building.

The business case, approved by the Government, noted that the old Nurses' home was to be demolished following the construction of the new Wairau Hospital. As advised to Marlborough District Council, in a letter dated 7 July 2010, NMDHB was considering whether to proceed with the demolition or whether the building could be either sold or repurposed for other uses. NMDHB has now determined that there is no future use of the building and is proposing that the building will be demolished. Key elements to this decision are:

- a. The building has a significant amount of asbestos and is considered a seismic risk. To this end NMDHB has maintained a security fence around the building for the last three years to prevent any unauthorised access.

We are currently obtaining quotes for the costs of removing the asbestos and initial indications are that the costs will be significant. We also understand that the strengthening work required to bring the facility to code level compliance will also be significant.

NMDHB is very conscious of the health and safety obligations that we currently bear regarding the building and this is one of the key reasons we maintain the security fence.

Some opinion was provided to your Hearing Committee that the NMDHB maintains a building fund that could be used to adapt and integrate the heritage resource into the campus, though this is not correct. NMDHB has a significant call on its fiscal resources, like all district health boards, and we are charged with good stewardship of taxpayers funds for to improve the health of our community.

Currently NMDHB is incurring expenditure to maintain the security perimeter, and we are likely to need to increase those resources to meet appropriate health and safety standards, that could be better used in the provision of health services to our community.

Given this NMDHB does not believe there is a viable economic perspective in incurring costs to remediate these issues and that the most cost effective option is to progress to demolition so that resources are appropriately applied to the delivery of health services.

- b. The location of the old Nurses' home is within the identified expansion zone for Wairau hospital. We note that Heritage NZ, in one of its submissions on the proposed MEP, indicates that there is other vacant land on the Wairau hospital campus that could be used for expansion. However that submission does not recognise where that additional land is located.

The critical element for any hospital is where the vacant land is for expansion as that expansion must be in a manner that is configurable for hospital services to operate in an effective and efficient manner and the other locations that are vacant would not allow expansion of hospital facilities to occur.

NMDHB has also recognised that the provision of public car parking has become more prominent, both in complaints made to NMDHB, and in the media over the last 3-4 months. To this end we are investigating the option to convert some of the current vacant land into additional public car parks (we will also consider the number of disabled car parks available on the site as part of this investigation).

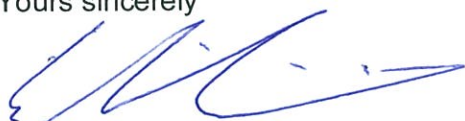
- c. NMDHB has had a conversation in March with Heritage NZ who we note are keen to preserve the building. The Heritage NZ representative spoken to promised to provide an alternative for the land to be subdivided and the building sold, but noted that Heritage NZ would not be a potential purchaser.

Firstly the sale to a non-Crown owned entity would need to go through the statutory process for the disposal of any Crown land and no guarantees can be made to any potential purchaser.

Secondly no proposal has been provided by Heritage NZ that enables NMDHB the opportunity to reconsider the current plan to demolish the old Nurses' home.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to provide the NMDHB perspective and I reiterate that NMDHB opposes any heritage listing for the old Nurses' home on the Wairau Hospital campus. I am available to discuss this letter further if you or the Hearing Committee would like further explanation.

Yours sincerely



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