

Old School

1 Inverlochy Place



Image: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Summary of heritage significance

- This building is an excellent example of a simple colonial schoolhouse design, and is of value for its materials, craftsmanship, and design.
- This building is associated with the development of high school education for girls in Wellington city. The school that was established is still present in Wellington today.

District Plan:	Map 16, reference 6
Legal Description:	Lot 1 DP 16277
Heritage Area:	-
HPT Listed:	-
Archaeological Site:	Pre 1900 Building, NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270
Other Names:	
Key physical dates:	Built: c.1883
Architect / Builder:	-
Former uses:	Education – School
Current uses:	Residential
Earthquake Prone Status:	Not EQP – SR 262236

Extent: City Cityview GIS 2014



1.0 Outline History

1.1 History¹

This building was the original home for the Wellington Girls College. During the 1870s, the master's of Wellington College had tried out the idea of higher education for girls. The idea was a success, and the founding fathers of the school decided to lease this building in order to open the Wellington Girls' High School. In October 1882 a 'Lady Principal', Miss Martha Hamilton from Christchurch, was appointed and the school opened on the 2nd February 1883, with 40 girls.

The girls were taught a broad range of subjects including: French, algebra, sciences, history, maths, English, and geography, and those who had the intention of going to university studied Latin. The school was private, so parents paid full fees and had some control over what was taught, and this is how drawing, needlework, and vocal music all came to be included in the curriculum.

By the end of 1883 there were nearly 100 students at the school and the classes were overflowing and in 1884 a visit to the school by the Premier, the Right Honourable Robert Stout, saw crowded classrooms, girls sitting three to a seat, and when the bell rang, a 130 girls, 5 staff, and 4 visitors poured through the tiny corridors to change classrooms. Sir Robert declared that he had not known that things were so bad, to which Miss Hamilton replied, 'we cope as best we can. I have written to the Government asking for a tent'. As a result of the visit, it was decided that a larger school was needed, and a site was found on Pipitea Street.

Following the school's departure from the building, it appears to have been converted to residential use.

By 1962 the house was in the ownership of Dr Hope Gibbons, who had the dwelling converted into four separate flats. The building has been residential since this time and appears to have had few external changes.

The house is clad in shiplap weatherboards, and the end gable is decorated with a finial, while the gable and roof line are decorated with double eaves and ornate brackets. There are label mounds over the windows. The verandah posts at the front door are modelled on Corinthian columns. The building is a simple colonial design and is an excellent example of early Victorian architecture.

¹ Wellington Girl's College, 'Wellington Girls' College History', accessed 20 May 2014, <http://www.wellington-girls.school.nz/our-community/wellington-girls-college-history>

1.2 Timeline of modifications (original plans cannot be accessed)

1880s Original construction (likely)
1962 Conversion to apartments

1.3 Occupation history

Not assessed

1.4 Architect

Unknown

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture²

This building is an excellent example of a simple colonial house design from the Victorian period. The schoolhouse is clad in timber shiplap weatherboards. The end gable is decorated with a finial and the roof line is decorated with double eaves and ornate brackets. There are label moulds over the windows these are a feature that was used as an aesthetic measure on a number of buildings of this age, but with a real purpose of redirecting water running down the building face away from windows and other openings. The verandah posts at the front door are modelled on Corinthian columns.

2.2 Materials

- Timber shiplap weatherboards
- Corrugated steel roofing

2.3 Setting

Inverloch Place is a small, dead end, street that runs off Abel Smith Street beyond Karo Drive. The building is set towards the back of a large section and is sheltered by large deciduous trees. It is somewhat obscured by a large garage that is set onto the street frontage. It is visible in context with the Inverloch Place Art School.

² Wellington City Council, 'Old School – 1 Inverloch Place', Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995 (Wellington City Council, 1995), I.

Sources

Wellington Girl's College. 'Wellington Girls' College History'. Accessed 20 May 2014, <http://www.wellington-girls.school.nz/our-community/wellington-girls-college-history>

Wellington City Council. 'Old School – 1 Inverlochy Place', Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 1995. Wellington City Council, 1995. I.

3.0 Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:

Architectural: *Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?*

This building is an excellent example of a simple colonial schoolhouse design, and is of value for its materials, craftsmanship, and design.

Townscape: *Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?*

The schoolhouse is obscured from the street by a large new garage and a number of mature trees. It does provide some visual interest on Inverlochy Place, in particular when viewed in conjunction with its neighbour the Inverlochy Art School.

Group: *Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?*

Historic Value:

Association: *Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?*

This building is associated with the development of high school education for girls in Wellington city. The school that was established is still present in Wellington today.

Association: *Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?*

Scientific Value:

Archaeological: *Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?*

The building is included in the NZAA Central City Archaeological Area R27/270 and is a pre 1900 building.

Educational: *Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate about aspects of the past?*

Technological: *Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?*

This building is of some technical value for the early construction, the materials used, and its craftsmanship.

Social Value:

Public esteem: *Is the item held in high public esteem?*

Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual: *Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?*

Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:

Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity?

Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

Sentiment/Connection: *Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?*

Level of cultural heritage significance

Rare: *Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?*

Representative: *Is the item a good example of the class it represents?*

This building is a good representative of an early colonial schoolhouse. It is a good example of a simple colonial design.

Authentic: *Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?*

Although the interior of this building has been altered to form individual dwellings, the exterior appears to maintain a high level of authenticity of materials, design, craftsmanship, and setting.

Local/Regional/National/International

Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?

This building is of local heritage significance due to its aesthetic values, its historic relationship with education and the Wellington Girls' High School, its technical values, and as a representative example of colonial architecture.

4.0 Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

Source	Y/N	Comments
1995 Heritage Inventory		
2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
WCC Records – building file		
WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)		
Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory		
Plan change?		
Heritage Area Report		
Heritage Area Spreadsheet		
Heritage items folder (electronic)		
HPT website		
HPT files		
Conservation Plan		
Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)		

Background research

Insert any relevant background information into this section. This may include:

- *Additional plans, such as those for alterations*
- *Chunks of text from other sources such as Cyclopedia of NZ, Papers Past*
- *Additional images*