Ewart Hospital Nurses' Home (Former)

2 Coromandel Street, Newtown

Photo: *Charles Collins, 2015*

Summary of heritage significance

- The former Nurses' Home is a good representative example of an Arts and Crafts 'house' that was purpose-designed as the administration block and nurses' home for Wellington Hospital's fever ward. The building has retained many of its original internal and external features and these include joinery, stained glass windows and fire-surrounds.
- This building has historic value through its association with the history of abortion services and the medical profession in New Zealand.
- This building is associated with architectural firm Crichton and McKay, a well known architectural practice in Wellington that designed many of the buildings for the Wellington Hospital Board.

District Plan:	Map 6, Symbol 59
Legal Description:	LOT 2 DP 316127
Heritage Area:	None
HPT Listed:	Category II reference 5375
Archaeological Site:	Risk unknown
Other Names:	Pt Ewart Hospital Administration Building, Parkview Clinic
Key physical dates:	1910
Architect / Builder:	Crichton and McKay/Hunt and McDonald
Former uses:	Nurses Home, Hospital
Current uses:	Medical Clinic
Earthquake Prone Status:	SR 200344 (124 Served)

Extent: City View 2012

1.0   Outline History

1.1 History

The building that is now known as the Parkview Clinic has had a long history with the Wellington hospital since its construction in 1909. Originally this building was used as a home for the nurses who worked in the nearby Ewart Fever Hospital, and later became Wellington's abortion clinic.

As a part of Wellington Hospital's response to the threat of infectious diseases, a new fever hospital was commissioned in 1909. Architects Crichton and McKay designed the building and builders Hunt and McDonald constructed it. Sited away from the main hospital at the end of Coromandel Street, the Nurses' Home was completed in 1910 along with the Fever Hospital at opposite ends of the same site. The Nurses' Home was built in the same Arts and Crafts style as the Fever hospital.[1]

The 1910 Ewart Hospital was converted to a tuberculosis ward in c.1920, when the fever ward moved to a new building on Alexandra road. The 1910 Ewart Hospital was later demolished to make way for the Ewart Geriatric Hospital, and the c.1920 former fever ward (WCC ref 06/09) is currently undergoing works to convert the building into an SPCA animal shelter.

Although the nurses' home at the fever hospital was much smaller than the home for the Wellington Public Hospital Nurses, it possessed comfortable conditions for the nurses, with ample daylight and ventilation, and their own dining room. The Nurses' Home had separate men's quarters with its own entrance. It also possessed its own facilities for disinfecting staff, "they [nurses] pass through three rooms, the centre one a bathroom, and change their clothing before entering their home after being on duty. They can then go out without risk of carrying infection."[2] The building was altered in c.1930 and works included the addition of a large single storey 'L' shaped wing to the north to accommodate a further 14 bedrooms.

The nurses' home remained in use for many decades, but with the closure of the Alexandra Road fever ward, and the demolition of the Ewart hospital, the nurses' home became little used.
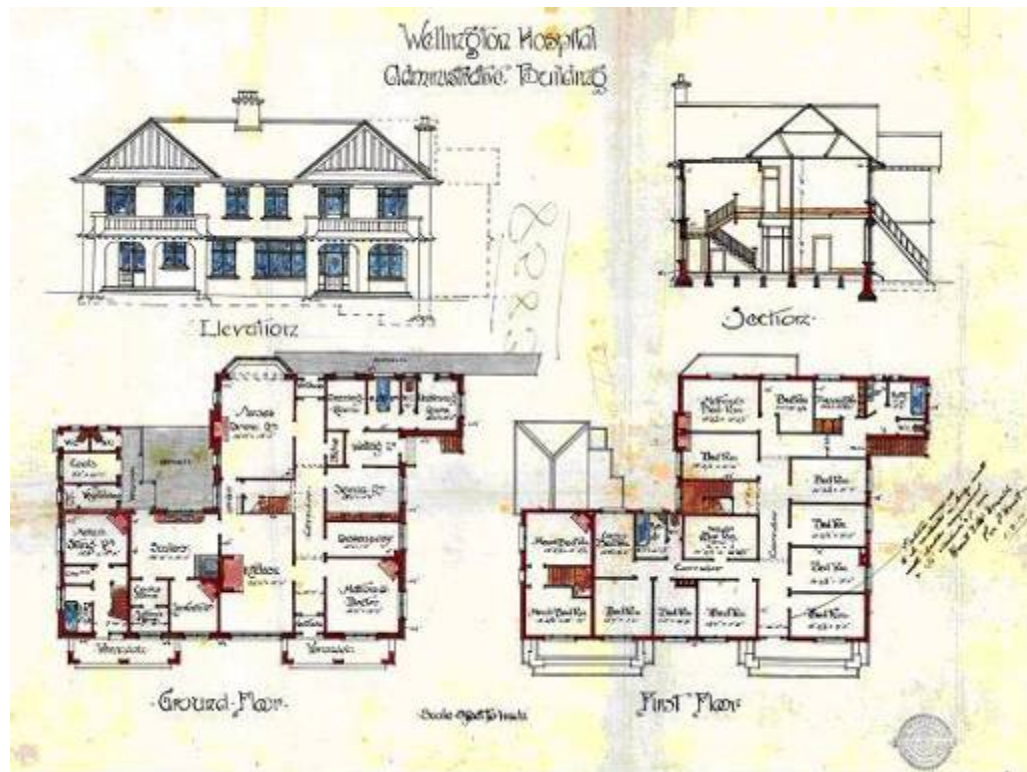
In the following period, the nurses' home was not used until 1980 when the building was occupied by Wellington's abortion clinic and was renamed the Parkview Clinic. The passing of the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act in 1977 made access to abortions for New Zealand women more available and the Wellington Hospital dedicated a stand alone facility to provide the services. This was a contentious issue for New Zealanders to deal with. Abortion was outlawed under English Law from the 1840s but by the 1960s attitudes were shifting, particularly as birth rates were high, birth control was easily accessible, and beliefs about sex and mothering were changing. The Act was also a response to the setting up of the Auckland Medical Aid Centre in 1974, which provided abortions in the first trimester. Opposition was fierce and repeated attempts were made to restrict abortion, including the Hospitals Amendment Act of 1975 limiting abortions to licensed hospitals, and Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act which made getting an abortion more difficult but more widely available.[3]

---

[1] Sarah Bulleid, '*Parkview Clinic-Coromandel Street Newtown',* Unpublished Conservation Plan, 1999,
[2] Wellington City Council, "Coromandel Street," *Wellington Heritage Building Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings.* (Wellington City Council, 2001), CORO 1
[3] Megan Cook. 'Abortion - Controversy: 1974 to 1980s', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 10-Jul-12, accessed 18 October 2012,

The Parkview Clinic in Wellington was one of the sites of continued conflict over abortion; the road outside the Clinic was a site of regular protest. In the picture below, seven anti abortion protestors remain outside of Parkview after those for and against had a conflict in which 16 people were arrested.[4] The clinic remained a site for protests through the 1980s and 1990s, including a bomb threat in 1998. Despite the constant pressure of protesters, the clinic retained this use until the unit was transferred to the new Wellington Regional Hospital. The building is now vacant.
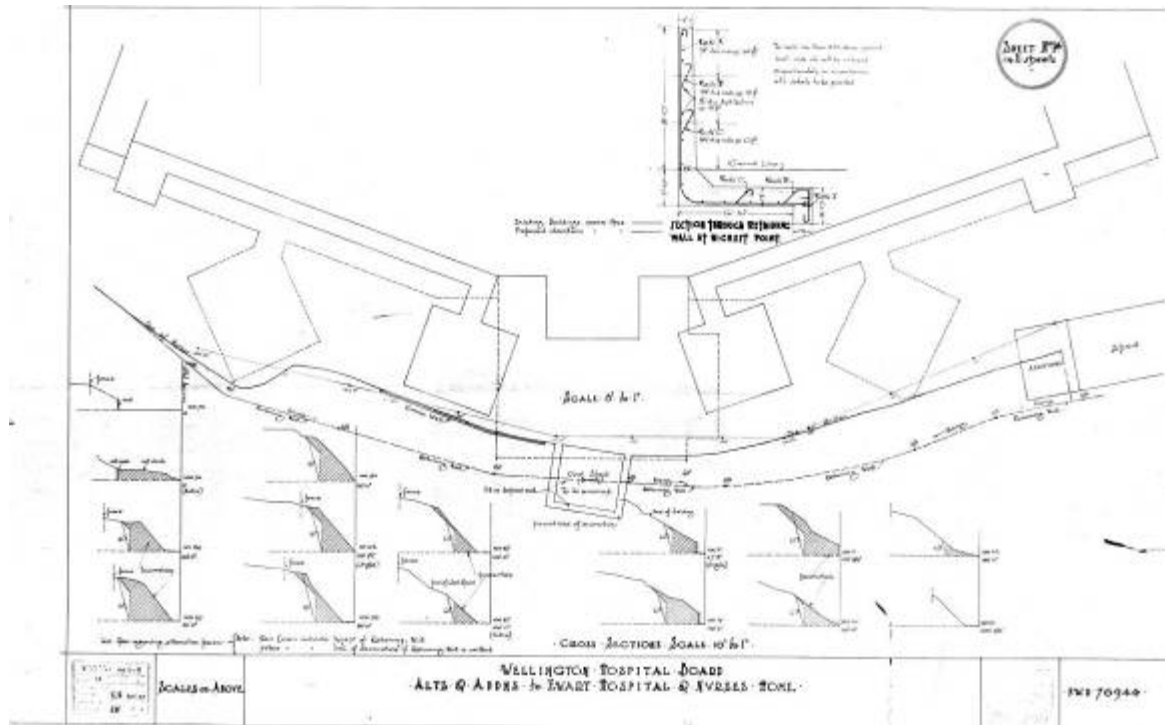

1909 – Plans and elevations as proposed[5]

http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/abortion/4
[4] Megan Cook. 'Abortion', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 10-Jul-12, accessed 18 October 2012,
http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/abortion/5/1/1

[5] WCC Archives ref 00056_98_B9075

1929 Plans for Additions and alterations to the Ewart Hospital and Nurses Home (00056: 98: B9075)

Fever Hospital with Nurses home in the foreground. Photograph courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library,
http://www.ccdhb.org.nz/history/pictorial%20index/Longer%20Term%20Plans/Longer_term_planning5.html

Protesters outside the Parkview Clinic, 1989. Ray Pigney. Dominion Post Collection (PAColl-7327) Ref: EP/1989/3984. Alexander Turnbull Library

1.2 Timeline of modifications

1910   Building Construction (00053:155:8583)
1930   Additions (00056:98:B9075) 'L' shaped bedroom wing to the north of the building
2009   Structural Strengthening to nurses home (00078:3344:197892)

1.3 Occupation history

1910   Wellington Hospital Board
2001   Capital and Coast District Health Board

1.4 Architect

Crichton and McKay

William Crichton (1862 – 1928) was born in Cornwall and was trained as an architect in the office of James Hicks of Redruth. He arrived in New Zealand in 1879 and joined the Colonial Architects Office where he "designed several of the largest public buildings in the Colony." In 1891 he won the competition for the design of the Wellington Municipal Library and in 1901 he won second prize for the Wellington Town Hall. Crichton established a private practice in 1891 when he was "retrenched" due to a reduction in size of the public service. He went into partnership with James Hector McKay in 1901 to form Crichton and McKay. [6]

---

[6] Cyclopedia Co. Ltd. "Crichton, William." In *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Wellington Provincial District.* Wellington: The Cyclopedia Company Limited, 1897. Accessed September 27 2012
http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d33-
d3.html?__utma=1.1848487997.1348705218.1348705218.1348705218.1&__utmb=1.2.10.1348705218&
__utmc=1&__utmx=-
&__utmz=1.1348705218.1.1.utmcsr=google|utmccn=(organic)|utmcmd=organic|utmctr=cyclopedia%2
0of%20new%20zealand&__utmv=-&__utmk=83836054

James Hector McKay (d. 1944) was originally from Scotland and arrived in New Zealand from Australia in 1890.[7] He established an architectural partnership with Robert Roy MacGregor which lasted from 1898-1901, before he formed Crichton and McKay with William Crichton. McKay was sponsored to join the Royal Institute of British architects by well known members Frederick de jersey Clere, Alfred Atkins, and John Campbell.[8]

Many successful buildings were designed and erected under the supervision of this firm, among them being the Bank of New South Wales, Bank of Australasia in Hunter Street and Customhouse Quay (that became the ANZ Bank), and the bulk of the later buildings at Wellington hospital, the Dominion Building, Dalgety and Co, the Union Steam Ship Co. Building and many others. They set a high standard in good design and planning and the use of good materials.

2.0   Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The former Nurses' home is an Arts and Crafts style, two-storey building with two prominent gables facing east and onto the street. The gables correspond with two open loggias at ground floor level, each with an entrance door, while the casement windows are arranged in groups of two and three to give a slightly asymmetrical composition. The original room disposition was matron and doctor's rooms on the ground floor, with dispensary, kitchen, and nurses dining room; the first floor had 15 bedrooms, two of the with separate access for men. It was extended in c.1930 with the addition of a large, 'L' shaped wing to the north that housed a further 15 bedrooms and additional sanitary facilities. The construction is cavity brickwork finished with a heavily textured stucco plaster and resting on concrete foundations, with breeze concrete partition walls, timber floors, and timber framed roof. The roof sheathing is now Decramastic tiles.

2.2 Materials

- Brick
- Concrete
- Timber
- Tile
- Plaster

2.3 Setting

The former Nurses' home is situated across from the Ewart hospital buildings at the far northern end of Coromandel Street and against the open space of the Town Belt. It has an imposing presence as it is on rising ground. It is partially obscured by trees and hedges so cannot be easily seen from most viewpoints.

---

[7] Dictionary of Scottish Architects "James Hector McKay".
http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=205246
[8] Antonia Brodie (Ed). "McKay, James Hector", in Directory of British Architects, 1834-1914 (L-Z), 2001. 103.

3.0 References

Fever Hospital with Nurses home in the foreground. Photograph courtesy of
    Alexander Turnbull Library,
    http://www.ccdhb.org.nz/history/pictorial%20index/Longer%20Term%20Pl
    ans/Longer_term_planning5.htm

Brodie, Antonia (Ed). "McKay, James Hector". Directory of British Architects, 1834-
    1914 (L-Z), 2001.

Bulleid, Sarah. '*Parkview Clinic-Coromandel Street Newtown'.* Unpublished
    Conservation Plan, 1999.

 Cook, Megan. 'Abortion'. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Updated 10-Jul-
    12, accessed 18 October 2012.
    http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/abortion/5/1/1

Cook, Megan. 'Abortion - Controversy: 1974 to 1980s'. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of
    New Zealand. Updated 10-Jul-12, accessed 18 October 2012.
http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/abortion/4

Cyclopedia Co. Ltd. "Crichton, William." In *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand:
    Wellington Provincial District.* Wellington: The Cyclopedia Company
    Limited, 1897. Accessed September 27 2012
http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Cyc01Cycl-t1-body-d4-d33-
    d3.html?__utma=1.1848487997.1348705218.1348705218.1348705218.1&__
    utmb=1.2.10.1348705218&__utmc=1&__utmx=-
    &__utmz=1.1348705218.1.1.utmcsr=google|utmccn=(organic)|utmcmd=orga
    nic|utmctr=cyclopedia%20of%20new%20zealand&__utmv=-
    &__utmk=83836054

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. "James Hector McKay".
    http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=205246

Pigney, Ray. Dominion Post Collection (PAColl-7327). Ref: EP/1989/3984.
    Alexander Turnbull Library

Wellington City Council. "Coromandel Street". *Wellington Heritage Building
    Inventory 2001: Non-Residential Buildings.* (Wellington City Council, 2001),
    CORO 1

Wellington City Archive

00053-155-8583

00056-98-B9075

Land Information New Zealand

WCC-DM-PRD-#2168348-v1-WN 45c 357 121019

WCC-DM-PRD-#2168363-v1-WN-190-99-121019

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?*

The former Nurses' Home is a good representative example of an Arts and Crafts 'house' that was purpose-designed as the administration block and nurses' home for Wellington Hospital's fever ward. The building has retained many of its original internal and external features and these include joinery, stained glass windows and fire-surrounds.

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?*

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?*

The building is one of a group of Arts and Crafts style buildings located within the grounds of Wellington Hospital and designed for use as isolation wards for 'fever' and tuberculosis patients. This building and the nearby fever hospital (now the SPCA) are the last Crichton and McKay designed hospital buildings remaining in Wellington.

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

This building is associated with architectural firm Crichton and McKay, a well known architectural practice in Wellington that designed many of the buildings for the Wellington Hospital Board.

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

This building has historic value through its association with the history of abortion services in New Zealand.

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

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 has technical value in its construction, particularly in the cavity brick that is its main structural material.

Social Value:

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

This building is well known to the public for its history as an abortion clinic. It was the site of many protests, demonstrations, and conflicts between those who were for and against abortion.

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 representative of the Arts and Crafts style.

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?*

This building has authenticity due to the retention of original materials and consistency of usage associated with the medical profession.

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 important at a local level due to its association with the history of abortion services in New Zealand.

4.0   Appendix

Research checklist (desktop)

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

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*