

DISTRICT PLAN – LISTED HERITAGE PLACE
HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
HERITAGE ITEM NUMBER 1366
***FORMER GIRLS' TRAINING HOSTEL AND SETTING - 30
SULLIVAN AVENUE, LINWOOD, CHRISTCHURCH***



PHOTOGRAPH: JENNY MAY, 9.4.2015

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Historical and social values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular person, group, organisation, institution, event, phase or activity; the continuity and/or change of a phase or activity; social, historical, traditional, economic, political or other patterns.

The former Girls' Training Hostel has high historical and social significance for its association with the formal education of young women in Domestic Science, and its association with prime mover and first principal Mrs Elizabeth Gard'ner. It also has significance for its use as a nurses' home, as a Maori trade training hostel, and as a football clubrooms.

In the late nineteenth century the teaching of the skills of housekeeping was systematised in the discipline of Domestic Science. The aim of this formalisation was the better management of the domestic environment by housewives.

In Christchurch formal Domestic Science instruction was the initiative of Elizabeth Gard'ner, who established an independent academy - The Christchurch School of Domestic Instruction - in 1893. Mrs Gardner was also the author of the New Zealand Domestic Cookery Book which greatly influenced kitchen practise in the early part of the twentieth century. After establishing a Home Science Department at the city's new technical college in 1908, Gard'ner began campaigning for a model home where her pupils could put their theory into practise. With the support of a number of high-profile individuals (including the Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton), a purpose-built 'Girls' Training Hostel' was opened in Ensor's Road in 1913. Elizabeth Gard'ner ran the school for three years before relinquishing her role due to ill health. She died in 1926 and was commemorated with a plaque in the foyer.

As its original name suggests, the Girls' Training Hostel began as a residential school, where young women from (usually) more privileged backgrounds learned how to run a home and manage domestic servants. The ground floor incorporated a large teaching kitchen, a smaller model domestic kitchen, and a sitting room. The first floor had a number of small bedrooms and a model flat which pupils were given individual charge of to demonstrate their skills. An addition in the late 1920s provided additional teaching space. The extensive grounds featured a tennis court and a croquet lawn. It was originally intended that similar institutions would be opened in each of the main centres, but high establishment and running costs confined the model to Christchurch alone. The Christchurch hostel operated for forty years - latterly training home science teachers - before social and educational change brought about its closure in 1954.

After the Girls' Training Hostel closed, its building served first as a nurses' home and then from 1968-1977 as Te Aranga, a Maori trade training hostel run by the Catholic Maori Mission. In the 1980s and 1990s, the building was used as the clubrooms for the Technical Football Club.

In the mid-2000s, CPIT undertook a major refurbishment of the former hostel to again actively use it for educational purposes. The building however sustained substantial damage in the 2010-2011 Canterbury Earthquakes.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural and spiritual values that demonstrate or are associated with the distinctive characteristics of a way of life, philosophy, tradition, religion, or other belief, including: the symbolic or commemorative value of the place; significance to Tangata Whenua; and/or associations with an identifiable group and esteemed by this group for its cultural values.

The former Girls' Training Hostel has high cultural significance for the manner in which it illuminates early twentieth century attitudes to women and women's education, where the domestic sphere and the role of women within it was held in particularly high regard, and it was considered important to prepare young women to manage their households effectively. At this time those households might also still include servants, but this was becoming less common. The hostel also has significance for the insights it provides into the systemisation of all fields of knowledge and formalisation of both male and female education that began in the late nineteenth century.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural and aesthetic values that demonstrate or are associated with: a particular style, period or designer, design values, form, scale, colour, texture and material of the place.

The former Girls' Training Hostel has architectural and aesthetic significance as a large masonry Domestic Revival building.

The Hostel was designed by Christchurch Technical College's head of building trades and building supervisor T. B. Bowring, and constructed with the assistance of Bowring's pupils in 1912-1913. In line with the conception of the hostel as a model home, Bowring designed a building that resembles a large English Domestic Revival residence. Inspired by the philosophies of the Arts and Crafts movement, the Domestic Revival movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sought to revive the traditional vernacular forms of British domestic architecture. Homes of this style were considered the epitome of good taste and comfort, and leading Christchurch architects at the turn of the century all produced examples. The Hostel displays typical Domestic Revival features such as an asymmetrical form, leaded casement windows, a tiled roof and tile-hung oriel windows, half-timbered gables and substantial chimney stacks. The interior is also typical, with the extensive use of wood panelling and parquet. A single storey extension in a similar style was made at the rear in 1927.

Minor alterations were made to the building to fit it for its various new roles in the second half of the twentieth century. In the mid-2000s the former hostel underwent a refurbishment as

part of a major rebuild of the Sullivan Avenue campus by CPIT. The 1927 addition was demolished, and new buildings built to the rear at this time. The building sustained substantial damage in the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-2011, and is cordoned off and unoccupied whilst its future is considered.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

Technological and craftsmanship values that demonstrate or are associated with: the nature and use of materials, finishes and/or technological or constructional methods which were innovative, or of notable quality for the period.

The former Girls' Training Hostel has technological and craftsmanship significance for the manner in which it illustrates construction methods and the use of materials in the early twentieth century. Quality materials and a high level of craftsmanship were employed in the building's construction. Particularly notable is the brick construction, terracotta tile work, leaded windows and interior timberwork. Buildings of this construction are now less common post the 2010-2011 earthquakes. A carved stone hostel monogram is set into the front elevation.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Contextual values that demonstrate or are associated with: a relationship to the environment (constructed and natural), a landscape, setting, group, precinct or streetscape; a degree of consistency in terms of type, scale, form, materials, texture, colour, style and/or detail; recognised landmarks and landscape which are recognised and contribute to the unique identity of the environment.

The former Girls' Training Hostel has contextual significance on the CPIT Sullivan Avenue Campus, and as a large 'residence' on the margins of Opawa - a suburb of Christchurch formerly distinguished by its larger homes with extensive gardens. Historically the hostel building had extensive grounds, but these have been reduced by road widening and new construction. Modern structures adjoin the building at its rear and are close on the north elevation. The setting of the building is its immediate surroundings, an area of (primarily) hard surface with some mature vegetation and lawn. An oak on the front lawn was planted by Sir Ernest Shackleton on a visit to the hostel in 1917.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Archaeological or scientific values that demonstrate or are associated with: the potential to provide information through physical or scientific evidence an understanding about social historical, cultural, spiritual, technological or other values of past events, activities, structures or people.

The former Girls' Training Hostel and its setting are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. The site had previously been farmland.

ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

The former Girls' Training Hostel and its setting are of overall heritage significance to the Christchurch District including Banks Peninsula. The Hostel has high historical and social significance for its association with the formal education of young women in Domestic Science, and its association with prime mover and first principal Mrs Elizabeth Gard'ner. It also has significance for its use as a nurses' home, as a Maori trade training hostel, and as a football clubrooms. The Hostel has high cultural significance for the manner in which it illuminates early twentieth century attitudes to women and women's education, where the domestic sphere and the role of women within it was held in particularly high regard, and it was considered important to prepare young women to manage their households effectively. The Hostel has architectural and aesthetic significance as a large masonry Domestic Revival building. The Hostel has technological and craftsmanship significance for the manner in which it illustrates construction methods and the use of materials in the early twentieth

century. Quality materials and a good standard of craftsmanship were employed in the building's construction. The Hostel has contextual significance on the CPIT Sullivan Avenue Campus, and as a large 'residence' on the margins of Opawa - a suburb of Christchurch formerly distinguished by its larger homes with extensive gardens. The Hostel and its setting are of archaeological significance because they have the potential to provide archaeological evidence relating to past building construction methods and materials, and human activity on the site, including that which occurred prior to 1900. The site had previously been farmland.

REFERENCES:

CCC Heritage File: *Former Girls' Training Hostel, Christchurch Technical College* 40 Sullivan Avenue.

Heritage New Zealand List Entry *Girls' Training Hostel (Former)* 90 Ensors Road, Opawa, Christchurch

REPORT DATED: 30/03/2015

PLEASE NOTE THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF WRITING. DUE TO THE ONGOING NATURE OF HERITAGE RESEARCH, FUTURE REASSESSMENT OF THIS HERITAGE ITEM MAY BE NECESSARY TO REFLECT ANY CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ITS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE.

PLEASE USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CCC HERITAGE FILES.