

Karori Campus

Following the sale of the former Karori Teachers' College by Victoria University to Ryman Healthcare, Historic Places Wellington urges that as much of the existing fabric of the Modernist campus be retained as possible. The complex was designed by the celebrated Wellington architect, William Toomath, between 1963 and 1977 and it is best ensemble of Brutalist architecture in New Zealand. Its wholesale demolition would be a huge cultural loss for this city and the country.

Modernist architecture is presently not a universally loved style. This mindset will almost inevitably shift as it has for earlier architectural styles. We are sure that future generations will value Modernist buildings both for their architecture and for what they reveal about twentieth century New Zealand life.

We therefore exhort the new owners to seek the adaptive re-use of the existing buildings on the site. We're sure that conservation and other architects could come up with new plans that could imaginatively meld the old and the new. This could be a huge win both for Ryman and the residents who will make the place their home.

Ben Schrader for Historic Places Wellington