

chapter eight  
christchurch campus

## 8.1 Introduction

The University of Otago Christchurch (UOC) is primarily comprised of departments and specialist groups from the Health Sciences Division, accommodated in a variety of locations:

- the University of Otago School of Medicine Building, which is embedded in the Christchurch Hospital;
- other space that is part of the Christchurch Hospital; and
- a variety of owned and leased “satellite” properties in the vicinity of the Christchurch Hospital.

The UOC has students in years 4-6 of the Otago MB ChB course, BBiomedSc (Hons) course, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students. Numerically, the number of postgraduate taught and research students now exceeds the number of medical students.

Also located in Christchurch, but not part of the UOC student numbers, are students in Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Pharmacy.

The nature of the University’s accommodation falls into distinct categories:

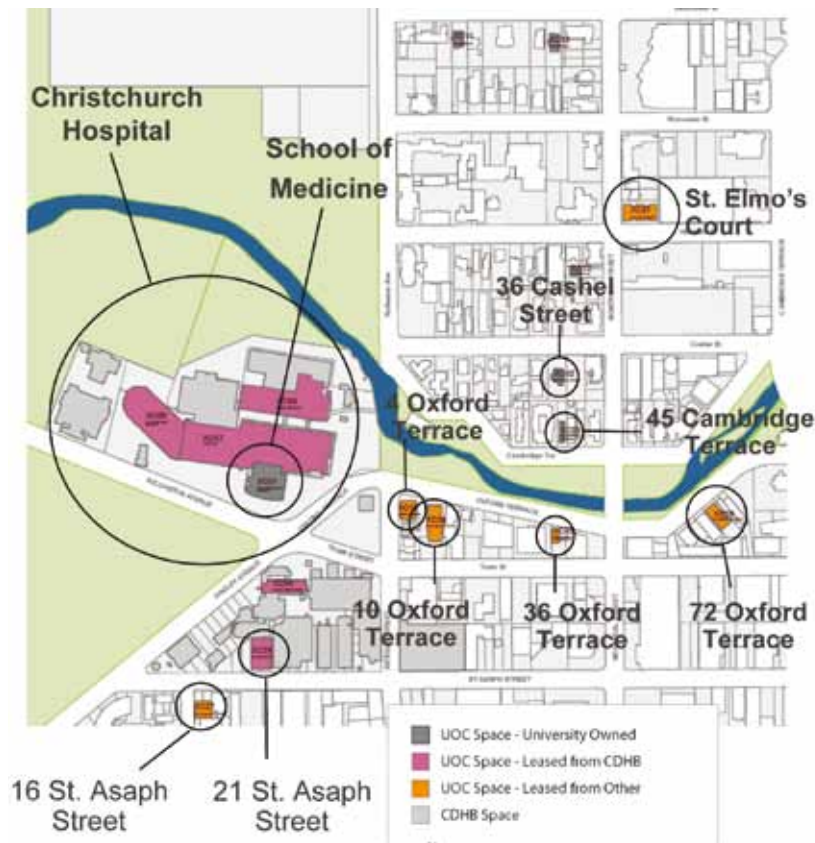
- Academic staff offices;

- Administrative/general staff offices, including the Dean’s office and the Medical Education office;
- Seminar rooms, located both on the top floor of the School of Medicine Building and within academic departments embedded in the Christchurch Hospital;
- Library;
- Research laboratories (including animal house);
- Staff amenities (notably Café Medici); and
- Undergraduate student amenities in the form of the Students’ Common Room.

The key issues for the Master Plan to address with respect to this accommodation are as follows:

1. Current space shortages, notably in the research laboratories;
2. Forecast growth in undergraduate student numbers;
3. Planned growth in postgraduate student and research staff/numbers; and
4. The need to resolve a strategy to acquire land or lease space for new facilities.

This Master Plan identifies four potential options for providing the additional space, with the principal variables between them being the impact on the University in terms of extent of work, order of cost and outcome benefits.





## 8.2 Current Campus

The plan indicates the space occupied by UOC in and around Christchurch Hospital. It should be noted that in addition to this, UOC has operations elsewhere in Christchurch (e.g. Burwood Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, and Hillmorton Hospital) and students on regional placements. The University owns the School of Medicine building but not the land on which it sits, which is owned by the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB). It also owns a number of small buildings elsewhere in the Precinct, but most of its satellite accommodation is leased.

The Christchurch campus has been the subject of significant building works over recent years, including construction of the highly popular “Café Medici”, bookshop, UOC reception and related administrative space. In addition, the seminar rooms on the top floor of the School of Medicine building have recently been refurbished.

There are a number of issues that need to be considered in the context of the Master Plan.

- The only Department that is actually housed in the School of Medicine building is Pathology. All other academic departments (with the exception of Nursing, Psychological Medicine, Public Health and General Practice, which are located in satellite buildings) are embedded in and, with the exception of the Department of Medicine, integrated with the Hospital clinical staff accommodation. While this co-location is considered highly desirable by many of the academic and clinical staff, there are concerns about the impact this fragmentation has on the School.
- While the research spaces within the School of Medicine building are functional, they have been created within a building that is sub-optimal for research in terms of the size and configuration of its floor plates, and the services infrastructure.
- There is a general shortage of both office and research space. In some cases this was reported as restricting the ability to take on additional research projects and students, despite the availability of funding for their places.

## 8.3 User Issues

The Master Plan research process involved consultation with stakeholders of the Christchurch campus through interviews, workshops and a survey. Stakeholders included the Dean of UOC, staff representatives, undergraduate and postgraduate students, the General Manager of the CDHB, and planners from the Christchurch City Council.

The main themes that emerged through the consultation are summarised as follows.

### **Departmental locations**

The current co-location of UOC and CDHB staff is highly valued by those involved, although it was noted that it does affect the cohesion of the School. It was deemed preferable that these co-locations be preserved in Master Planning options. Opinions were divided on the remoteness of the departments located in the satellite buildings. However it is clear that a more centralised facility would provide better operational efficiency, convenience and collaboration.

### **Work and research space**

It was considered that there is an across-the-board shortage of office and write-up space in which to accommodate staff and research students. The increased energy, heating and cooling demands of new equipment have been a challenge to accommodate within the existing building infrastructure and the location of research equipment in building corridors is testament to the need for additional laboratory space.

### **Teaching and learning spaces**

The seminar rooms in the School of Medicine building have recently been refurbished and are well used, although their location on the top floor of the building places heavy demand on the building's lifts. However, the seminar rooms located within departments within the Hospital, which are particularly popular with clinical staff for reasons of convenience, are universally considered by students to be too small for current class sizes. It was also noted that postgraduate programmes are creating a demand for larger seminar spaces, such as Nursing where class sizes of 50 need to be accommodated. There was also a need expressed to update the library to make it relevant to contemporary learning, research and study styles, including self-directed, small group learning.

### **Amenities**

While the student common room is popular for medical students, there are no communal facilities for postgraduate students, who now form the larger student cohort. Across both groups there is a desire for a proper social hub as a focus for student interaction and life on campus. Students also expressed a desire for better access to sport and recreation facilities such as those found on the Dunedin campus.

### **Accessibility**

Car parking is a problem around the Hospital. This is especially the case for students and staff required to split their day between UOC and satellite hospitals or clinics. The main UOC building has good access for people with disabilities. However, there are several leased properties where disabled access needs to be improved.

## 8.4 Growth

There has been continual growth over recent years in both UOC and CDHB staff numbers. There has also been substantial growth in both undergraduate medical students, and coursework and research postgraduate students, the latter cohort growing by 50 students in 2010.

The current Christchurch campus is stretched to capacity and there is very limited ability to accommodate adequately any further staff or student growth. In addition, the satellite facilities, which include a number of old houses, provide limited flexibility for accommodating fluctuations in student and staff numbers.

### **Growth in undergraduate student numbers**

The number of undergraduate medical students is heavily influenced by Government policy in terms of the number of places it will fund, but not exclusively so. Forecasting demand over the period of the Master Plan is therefore difficult. For the purpose of Master Plan scenarios, the University has forecast a potential increase of 99 EFTS by 2030.

### **Growth in postgraduate student numbers**

Growth in postgraduate and research personnel is much more within the University's control and, although entirely dependent on both internal and external funding, somewhat more predictable. For the purpose of Master Plan scenarios, the University has forecast a potential increase of 212 postgraduate EFTS (coursework) and 140 postgraduate EFTS (research) by 2030.

### **Growth in staff numbers**

Growth in staff numbers will be generated in three ways. Additional academic staff will be generated through the growth in student numbers. Research staff will be required to undertake increased research, and general staff will be required through the overall growth in the student and staff populations. For the purpose of Master Plan scenarios, the University forecast staff growth by 2030 to total an additional 36 academic staff, 27 research-only staff and 39 general staff.

Using the University's current space standards, this growth in student and staff numbers would generate an additional space requirement of some 6,000 sq m assignable floor space, equivalent to nearly 8,000 sq m of nett lettable area.

## 8.5 Master Plan Objectives

As a summary of the consultation process, the objectives for the UOC Master Plan are:

- The consolidation of currently fragmented operations, spread across multiple sites, to improve communication and collaboration, sense of UOC identity and space utilisation and efficiency through shared facilities;
- The provision of better/appropriate accommodation for clinically-based research;
- The provision of additional space for laboratory-based research to meet current demand, and to enable code compliance, with respect to write-up space that is physically separated from laboratory space;
- The provision of additional laboratory-based research space to meet projected future demand;
- The ability to accommodate future growth in student numbers, notably of postgraduates over the next 25 years,;
- Recognition that academic and clinical personnel that are currently co-located should remain co-located. Hence, if it is determined that a department relocate, it should do so in its entirety, not split the academic and clinical staff into different locations;
- Recognition that it is important that academic personnel remain in close proximity to each other, to the University administration, and, where relevant, the clinical operations of the hospital;
- Recognition that the School of Medicine Building is to continue to be a focus for UOC operations; and
- The provision of reconciling the foregoing with Master Planning for the Christchurch Hospital currently being undertaken by CDHB.



## 8.6 Master Plan strategies

There are four options for achieving these objectives:

### Status quo

Preserve current functions in their current locations and provide space for additional research and future growth through the acquisition of additional properties in the vicinity of the hospital, on either a freehold or leasehold basis.

### Low impact

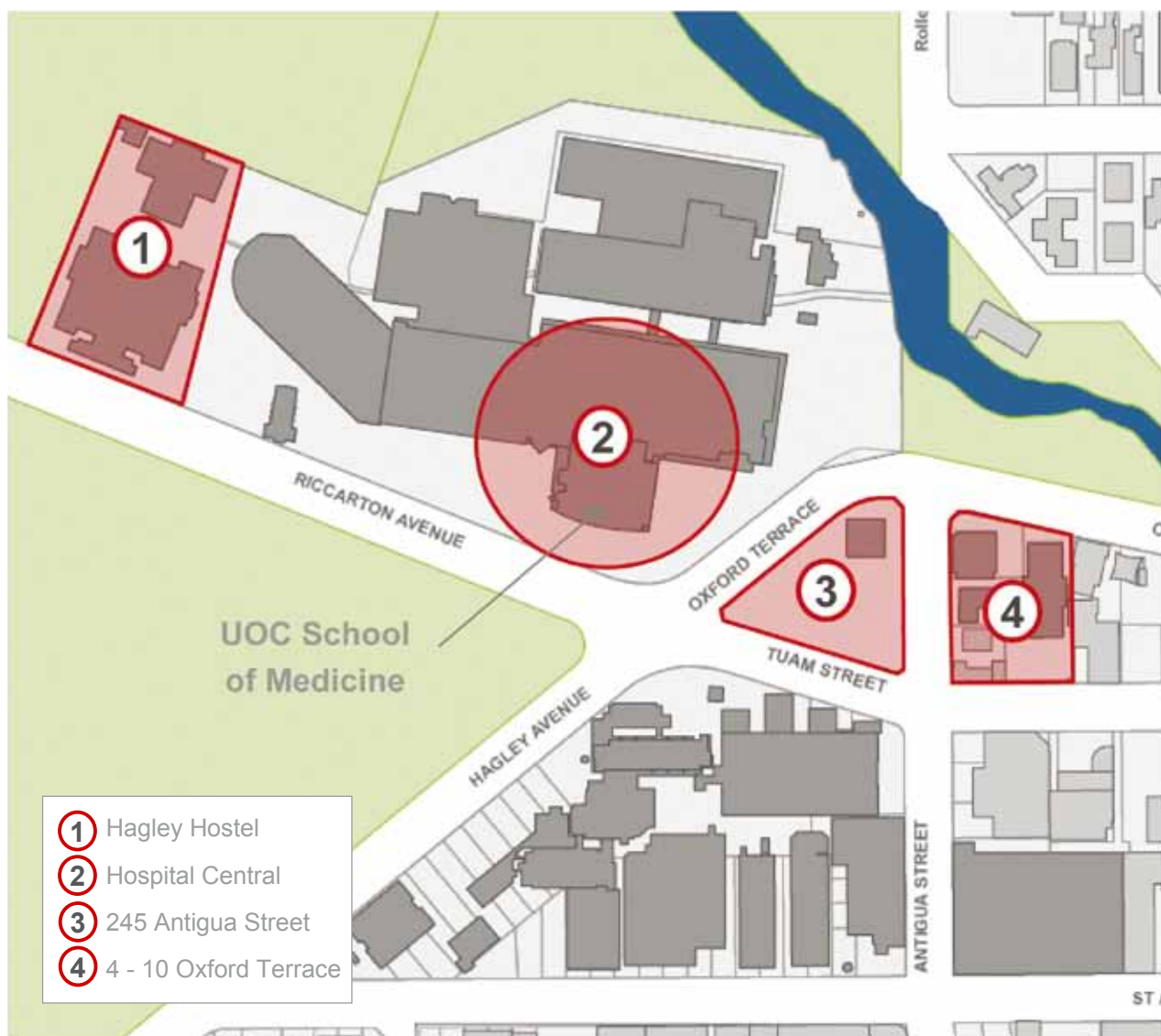
Request CDHB to relocate their laboratories from Levels 1 and 4 of the School of Medicine building and use the freed-up space from this to provide additional laboratory capacity for UOC.

### New academic building(s)

Acquire additional space in or near the Hospital for expanded academic operations.

### New laboratory building(s)

Acquire additional space in or near the Hospital for existing/expanded laboratory functions and backfill the space vacated in the School of Medicine with expanded academic functions. This could include a restack of the building to relocate teaching spaces to the lower levels, to reduce demand on the building's lifts.



## 8.7 Master Plan options

The location of the School of Medicine Building within the grounds of the Christchurch Hospital, its physical connection to the Hospital buildings and the co-located nature of UOC academic staff with their clinical counterparts, makes it very difficult to make decisions about the future of UOC operations and Master Plan strategies to support them, in isolation from plans for the Christchurch Hospital itself. At the time of writing this report, the CDHB was considering recommendations for its own Master Plan. Hence the options available to UOC are contingent on the outcome of CDHB deliberations. Those options are as follows.

### Option 1: Hagley Hostel

The Hagley Hostel building, formerly used for nurses' accommodation but now largely empty, is an obvious option for expansion. However it is physically remote from the existing School of Medicine and not a preferred option for this reason. It is also understood that this site could be a key component of the CDHB Master Plan for the expansion of Hospital operations, which further discounts its potential for UOC use.

### Option 2: Expansion within the existing Hospital buildings

It is understood that space could become available within the existing Hospital buildings as a result of the CDHB Master Plan. Depending upon the location, physical condition and contractual arrangements of this space, expansion within the Hospital could be a highly attractive option for UOC.



### Option 3: 245 Antigua Street

If Option 2 is not achievable, the triangular car park site opposite the School of Medicine on the block bounded by Antigua Street, Oxford Terrace and Tuam Street would be attractive given its proximity and the underground tunnel from the Hospital to the Hospital Car Park running underneath it. The site is owned by the Presbyterian Church and it is understood there may be difficulties with an outright purchase, but a ground lease may be possible.

### Option 4: 4 - 10 Oxford Terrace

UOC already leases space within 10 Oxford Terrace and this property and those adjacent to it may be acquirable (one of which is owned by CDHB). While separated from the School of Medicine Building and the Hospital by Oxford Terrace, these sites have a number of benefits. Acquiring the sites would give UOC long term premises-certainty. They could also accommodate growth over time, including potential acquisition of neighbouring sites. They also include some existing buildings that can be utilised in the short to medium term, an advantage of the 245 Antigua Street option.

It should be noted that all four options involve land and, in some cases buildings, that are not owned by UOC.

### Site 4 Opposite

This "site" is actually four separate sites:

- A** Terrace House (4 Oxford Terrace) is a contemporary office building that is privately owned and is leased by UOC. CDHB is understood to have first right of refusal on its purchase.
- B** Avon House (10 Oxford Terrace) is also a privately-owned contemporary office building that is part-leased by UOC.
- C** 278 Antigua Street is owned by the CDHB and houses a two-storey timber building. It is a prime redevelopment site.
- D** 272 – 276 Antigua Street is another prime redevelopment site, but is privately owned.

Terrace and Avon Houses are ideal for a consolidation of UOC's existing satellite functions, whilst the provision of laboratory and additional growth space would be most appropriately made through new buildings on 272-276 and 278 Antigua Street.

Whilst physically separated from the School of Medicine building, these sites have merit for UOC expansion.





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