

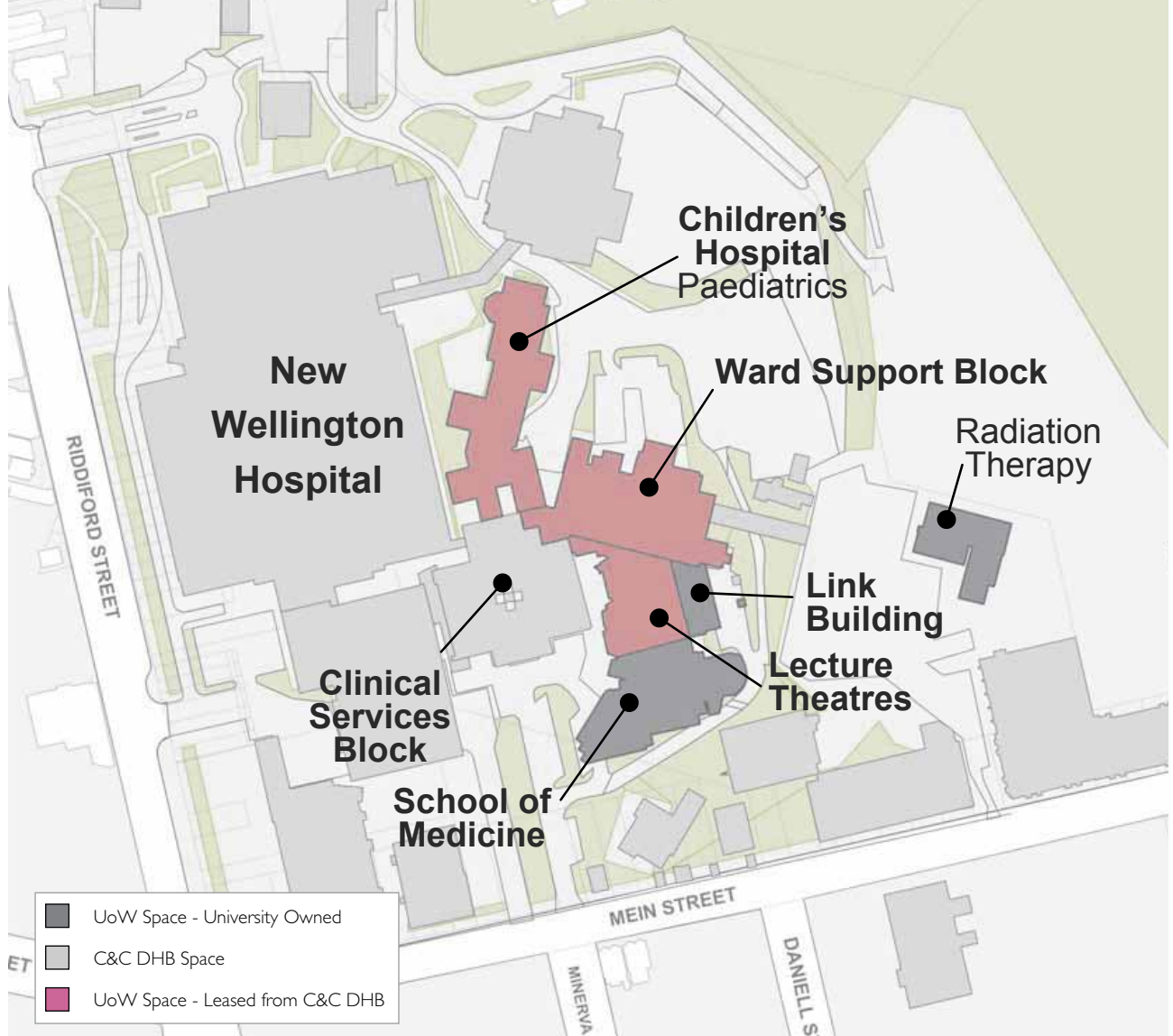
chapter nine
wellington campus



9.1 Introduction

The University of Otago Wellington (UOW) comprises departments and specialist groups from the Health Sciences Division, accommodated within the grounds of the Wellington Hospital with satellite facilities at the Hutt Hospital in Hutt Valley. In addition, the University has representative offices in the Wellington CBD and has recently subleased space it owns at the Westpac Stadium. It also has students on regional placements in Hawkes Bay, Palmerston North, Kenepuru, Tairāwhiti and Wanganui.

The major component of the UOW is the School of Medicine whose students are senior undergraduate (4th, 5th and 6th year) or postgraduate. There are also small undergraduate groups of Physiotherapy and Human Nutrition students. The UOW also houses the Department of Medical Radiation Therapy, whose students are first, and later year undergraduates, the only such University of Otago students located outside Dunedin for the whole of their course. This Department is unique to UOW and has no presence in either Christchurch or Dunedin.



9.2 The current campus

The plan above indicates the space occupied by UOW in and around Wellington Hospital. The bulk of the University's accommodation is provided in four interconnected buildings: the School of Medicine Building (owned by the University), the Link Building (partly owned by the University and partly by the Capital Coast District Health Board (CCDHB)), two large lecture theatres that sit adjacent to the School of Medicine and Link Buildings at ground floor level (owned by the University), and the Ward Support Block (owned by the CCDHB). Despite the ownership by the University of some of these buildings, the land on which they sit is owned by the CCDHB.

The recent opening of the new Wellington Hospital within the existing hospital grounds has generated redundant space in the Clinical Services and Ward Support Blocks. The University has taken up some of the space in the Ward Support Block, but certain CCDHB functions remain there as well. It is understood that the CCDHB intends the creation of a "Health Education and Research Centre" in the Clinical Services Building and that both Victoria and Massey Universities are contemplating locating some facilities there. It is not known whether there will be any space available within it for UOW.

There are two other UOW facilities within the Hospital grounds. The Department of Paediatrics is located within the clinical department of Paediatrics in the main Hospital and the Department of Medical Radiation Therapy is accommodated in a series of linked temporary buildings adjacent to the Hospital car park.

The nature of the University's accommodation is as follows:

- Academic staff offices – which, with the exception of Paediatrics (and unlike the University of Otago, Christchurch), are physically separated from the clinical departments located in the main Hospital;
- Administrative/general staff offices, including the Dean's office and the Medical Education Office;
- Seminar rooms and lecture theatres, located on the ground and first floors of the Theatres and Link Building (Levels C and D);
- Library on the ground and first floors of the School of Medicine Building;
- Research laboratories (including animal facilities on Level B);
- Staff and student amenities, including a café, on the first two floors of the Link and School of Medicine Buildings.



9.3 User issues

A significant issue for UOW with its current space is that space allocation in the Ward Support Block is haphazardly organized relative to equivalent functions in the Link and School of Medicine buildings, due to the piecemeal nature of its acquisition.

Furthermore, while the lower levels of the School of Medicine and Link buildings are well-connected, the upper levels are not, with the University's operations spread out laterally and vertically across and within three buildings. This tends to keep activities apart at a time when the University wants to encourage interaction and collaboration. An important driver for the Master Plan in addition to accommodating future growth, therefore, will be to achieve better physical connections between departments and research functions.

The lower levels of the School of Medicine building – library, lecture theatres and seminar rooms, administration offices and café – have recently been refurbished. This accommodation is exemplary in terms of both design and functionality and sets a high standard not only for UOW, but also for the University of Otago generally. The upper levels of the three buildings, however, are of a significantly lesser standard, with inconsistencies in space allocation and a strong sense of internal disconnection.

Consultation with students identified a number of issues held in common with those at Christchurch – a sense of disconnection from Dunedin, the lack of appropriate facilities at, and connection from, regional placement locations, and a particular issue with student services and accommodation in Wellington compared to those in Dunedin. The issue of appropriate student residential accommodation was also referenced as a keenly-felt need.

A particular issue in Wellington is the accommodation provided for the Department of Medical Radiation Therapy. While the Department values highly its self-contained accommodation in terms of identity, self-sufficiency and culture, there is a concern within the wider faculty about its physical isolation, the temporary nature of its buildings and the uncertain tenure of the site they sit on. It would seem inevitable that the Department will need to be relocated into the main UOW complex sooner or later.

9.4 Growth

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

1. Current space shortages, notably office space;
2. Likely growth in student numbers; and
3. Likely growth in staff numbers.

Current space shortages

The UOW Executive has developed in-principle strategies to deal with current space shortages. These include the rationalisation and/or reallocation of existing laboratories and the opportunity to reclaim space currently occupied in the School of Medicine Building by Trinity Bioactives, an external entity, which is moving out in mid-2010.

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 112 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 168 postgraduate EFTS (coursework) and 85 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 32 academic staff, 25 research-only staff and 36 general staff.

As with the Christchurch campus, this population growth will generate an additional space requirement of nearly 8,000 sq m on a nett lettable basis, which represents an increase of over 50% of existing facilities.

Long-term space demand

The foregoing space demand assumptions are based on current operations. However, it may be entirely possible that the University's profile in Wellington could evolve in additional areas.

As has been noted by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Health Sciences), it is not inconceivable that over the next 20-30 years other parts of the Division of Health Sciences could be involved in the UOW campus. Professor Robertson notes that "Physiotherapy already has a presence, and it could expand further. The Division is also keen to expand its other health professional programmes more widely in future, particularly in terms of placements for more senior health professional students on clinical (including community) placements. Therefore it is possible that, for example, there will be some need for Dentistry, Oral Health, Pharmacy, and possibly Medical Laboratory Science students and programmes to have some space, and academic and administrative support, between now and 2025. Furthermore, it is not impossible... that some areas of postgraduate nursing could expand to UOW at some time."

Similarly an expanded University presence on Mein Street, as is proposed in some of the options presented in this report, would provide a location for the University that could be more comprehensive in nature. These could include the existing external relations offices located in the CBD and a base for other Divisions with placement-based courses that are unrelated to Health Sciences.

These propositions are hypothetical and have not therefore been factored into space demand projections, but they do encourage a wider view of the evolution of the University's operations in Wellington than would otherwise be generated by "straight line" projections of current operations.

9.5 Master Plan strategic options

A fundamental issue for the UOW is its location within the grounds of the Wellington Hospital, with no opportunities for expansion on its current site other than on land or in buildings owned and controlled by the CCDHB. Hence all of the options for accommodating future growth rely on the CCDHB making space or land available. The only alternative to this would be for the University to relocate part or all of its operations to another site. No such sites appear to exist within realistic proximity to the Hospital which would mean that the University would need to significantly change the way it operates, which is beyond the scope of the Master Plan and has therefore not been examined further.

Options for expansion on the existing Hospital site are considered to be as follows:

Option 1: Ward Support Block

UOW could seek to negotiate with CCDHB to take additional (all) space in the Ward Support Block. UOW already part-occupies this building, with the remainder of it housing Wellington Hospital functions, including the main Hospital cafeteria and kitchens. This option would be viable in the long term only if the University could take over the whole building and secure long-term tenure for this. Both preconditions are considered unlikely. Furthermore, the quantum of space gained would be unlikely to satisfy medium to long-term needs. For these reasons, this option is not recommended, although it is noted that it is not proposed to vacate the space currently occupied by UOW.

Option 2: Clinical Services Block

The Clinical Services Building is partly empty as a consequence of the opening of the new Hospital. However it is understood the CCDHB intends to use this space for education and research independently of UOW, potentially with both Victoria University and Massey University. In any event, this option is not recommended for long term UOW expansion because:

- (a) The building is connected to the Ward Support Block on each floor but the spaces within these buildings are not contiguous;
- (b) It is unlikely the University could obtain long term tenure; and
- (c) Access to the space from the School of Medicine is considered to be too remote.

Option 3: Link Building East Extension

There is a large void between the eastern side of the Link Building and the escarpment and retaining wall of the upper car park. The Hospital loading dock is at the bottom of this space, but there is considerable airspace above it that could be infilled. Any such building would connect to the Link Building, but would need to be separated from it by a light well to preserve daylight penetration to the new and existing buildings and natural ventilation to the loading dock. The new building could be big enough to provide sufficient space for long term expansion. However this proposal carries significant structural and construction challenges, given the need for it to span the loading dock, and would be an expensive option.

Option 4: Link Building West Extension

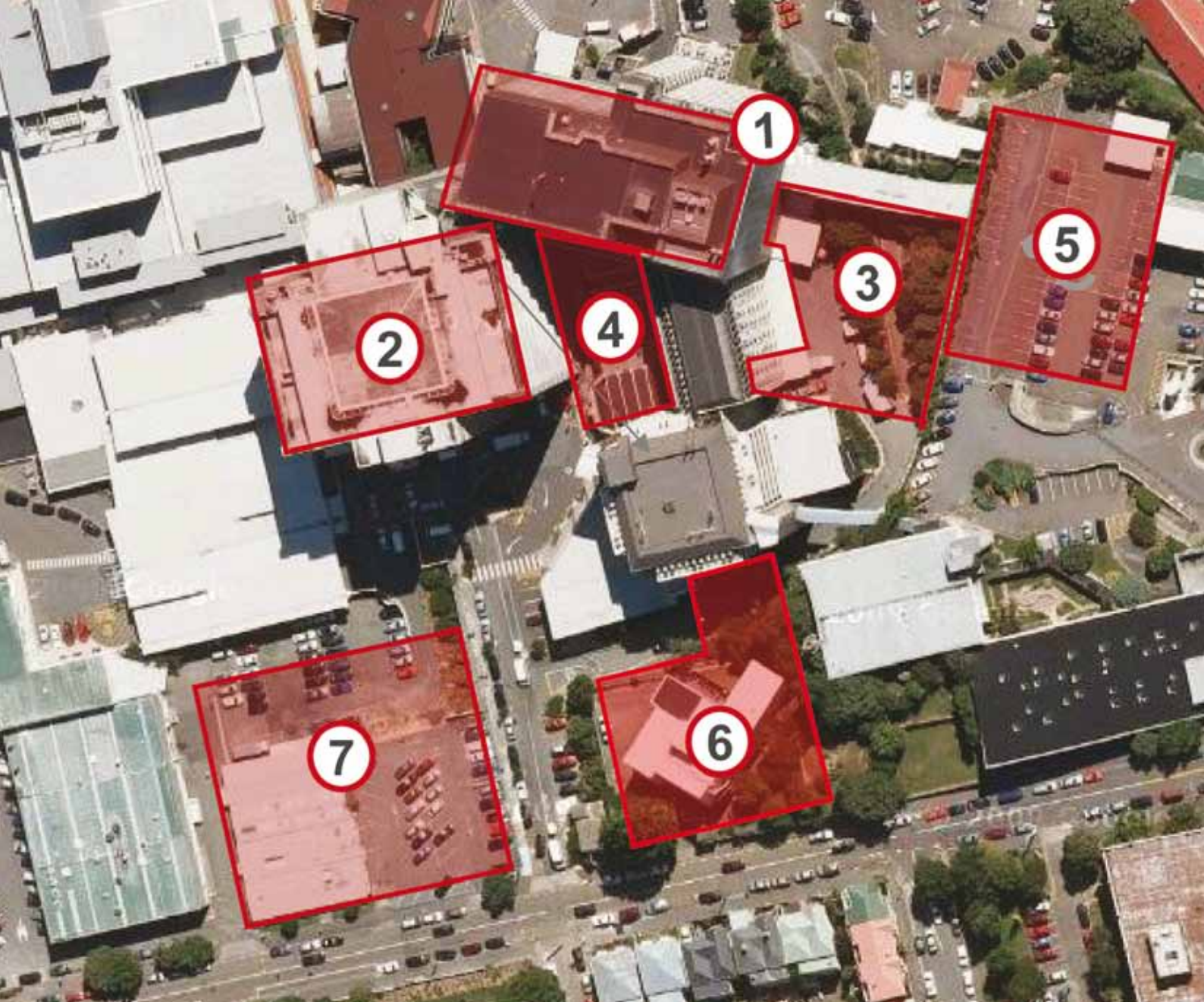
Another option for expanding the Link Building would be to extend it westwards over the University lecture theatres. This would have the advantage of linking all three of the School of Medicine, Link and Ward Support blocks.

However, it is not recommended for the following reasons:

- (a) The need to span over the lecture theatres and connect to three buildings makes this option even more difficult and expensive than Option 3;
- (b) It would block daylight to the Ward Support Block; and
- (c) It would not offer as much expansion space as Option 3.

Option 5: New building on upper Hospital car park

This option would undoubtedly provide a large area and would be relatively easy to construct, although the Hospital would require that the parking places that are displaced be replaced under the building and may request additional spaces as well. It would also have direct public access, albeit not as easy to find as that of sites on Mein Street. Public access is a significant consideration as it would enable the provision of publicly-accessible clinical spaces which would be of benefit for research and teaching for community-based disciplines such as Public Health. However, the connection back to the existing buildings would require a long bridge link and significant (expensive) structure.



The options for expansion of UOW facilities are as follows:

- ① Ward Support Block
- ② Clinical Services Building
- ③ Link Building Extension (east)
- ④ Link Building Extension (west)
- ⑤ Upper carpark site
- ⑥ Administration Building site
- ⑦ Lower carpark site

Option 6: New building south of the School of Medicine building

This site houses a former junior doctors' hostel which is currently being used by CCDHB for administration. The building is in very poor repair, at least externally. This would be an ideal expansion site for UOW as it offers direct street frontage to Mein Street and can be connected to the existing School of Medicine building. As for Option 5, the provision of direct street access would be of significant benefit for the provision of clinical spaces for community-based medicine and public health research. However it is considered that it is unlikely that the CCDHB would consent to its use by the University, as it is a potential expansion site for the Hospital's Psychiatric Building immediately to its east, although a joint venture building might be a possibility.

Option 7: New building on the Mein Street car park site.

While not directly connected to the existing University buildings this is a preferred site. Its frontage to Mein Street provides good public access and the size of the site would ensure that future space needs would be more than adequately met. As with the upper car park site, the displaced car park spaces would need to be replaced within the new building, and additional spaces would most likely be required as well to make this proposition attractive to the CCDHB. It is also noted that the main ambulance egress point for the Hospital passes through this site and would need to be accommodated.

9.6 Conclusion

Of all the options studied, those with direct public access are preferred. UOW has a very strong research profile in public health and the ability to provide publicly-accessible clinical spaces to support public health research programmes would be of considerable benefit.

Another advantage of direct access to Mein Street (Options 6 and 7) would be the ability to attract external tenants, as quality space for lease in this Precinct and, in proximity to the Hospital in particular, is reportedly scarce.

At issue here is the University's ability to accommodate growth in a managed way. While the University can manage its short-term space demands by rationalising existing allocations, there will come a time when this is no longer possible and additional space will be required. The Master Plan space demand projection of 6,000 sq.m. (assignable) by 2025 will develop over time, so a critical issue will be at what point does the University commit to a significant investment in new space. Locating such space with strong public access provides an ideal solution in that the University would be able to build for the long-term but gain back revenue by leasing out space that is surplus to current requirements in the short to medium term.

It should also be reiterated that all of the proposed options are entirely dependent on the cooperation of the Capital and Coast District Health Board, as all are located on its land.

