

Heritage gates, wall could be restored

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Public gets to have a say

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If the gates and wall at the former Barrett St Hospital are saved from demolition they could be in for a complete restoration.

Councillors on the New Plymouth District Council regulatory committee have spoken out in favour of saving the heritage items from a full-site clearance and the public will now have the chance to speak up, too.

Councillor Richard Handley



Richard Handley



John McLeod

took great joy in pointing out his mother and his sister both trained and worked at the old Barrett St Hospital. "My sister is older than me and is a formidable force and she has instructed that I support this."



Fightback:
Carla MacKinnon recently raised the plight of the Barrett St Hospital site's iconic gates.

The gates and the brick wall along New Plymouth's Dawson St were built in 1908 and designed by

prominent New Plymouth architect Frank Messenger.

In September last year the

Office of Treaty Settlements, caretakers of the landbanked property, announced a full-site clearance was planned for the complex.

After public disapproval the council stepped in to try to save the gates and the wall.

An independent historian was called in and has since rated them Category A heritage items.

If accepted into the District Plan it means they cannot be moved or demolished without a resource consent from the NPDC.

Councillor Colin Johnston, who is the council representative on the heritage Taranaki committee, said the items must be saved.

"I would implore my fellow councillors, we must preserve this

heritage item and this fence," he said.

"I have been instructed by our chairman that they are very adamant that they want this fence and this gate to go into Category A. It is very, very important."

Councillor John McLeod, a bricklayer by trade, said the wall was one of a kind in the district and could be restored to its former glory.

"If it was brought up to full standard, it's not going to happen overnight. It is in a bad state of disrepair and it's a massive job and it would certainly cost a bomb," he said.

He said if the items did make it into the District Plan with a Category A heritage rating, the re-

pair work afterwards could be a community project, not the responsibility of land owners of the Barrett St site.

The community must be prepared to consider that, he said, because if the items were saved they could not continue to waste away.

Councillor Marie Pearce said the NPDC had access to a heritage fund which could be used for the restorations.

"I think this is a very good example of how we can preserve some of our heritage and use some of this fund money," she said.

Before the items can be accepted into the District Plan the public must have their say on the issue. The public notification period begins on Wednesday.