

UNDER

THE COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY ACT 1908

IN THE MATTER OF

**ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO
BUILDING FAILURE CAUSED BY CANTERBURY
EARTHQUAKES
KOMIHANA A TE KARAUNA HEI TIROTIRO I
NGA WHARE I HORO I NGA RUWHENUA O
WAITAHA**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF PHILLIPPA ROBYN LEE
IN RELATION TO THE CTV BUILDING**

DATE OF HEARING: COMMENCING 25 JUNE 2012

STATEMENT OF PHILLIPPA ROBYN LEE IN RELATION TO THE CTV BUILDING

1. My full name is Phillippa Robyn Lee. I am a receptionist and I live in Christchurch.
2. I have lived in Christchurch since 1995. I began work as a receptionist at The Clinic in May 2010.

CTV Building

3. The Clinic was a medical centre situated on Level 5 of the CTV Building (the Building).
4. Although The Clinic's location was referred to as being on the 4th floor of the Building, when including the ground floor as Level 1, it was in fact Level 5. I refer to The Clinic floor as Level 5 in this Statement.
5. I have drawn a Floor Plan of Level 5 (Plan). Annexed hereto and marked with the reference WIT.LEE.0001.6 is a copy of that Plan. The reception area is situated on the northeast corner, about 5 metres from The Clinic entrance.

The Clinic Relocation

4. The Clinic relocated to Level 5 of the Building around 5 or 6 January 2011 after its earlier premises at 192 Gloucester Street had been red-stickered. This was due to the risk of falling masonry from the neighbouring building after the Boxing Day 2010 earthquake.
5. The Clinic re-opened to the public around 10 January 2011. The general feeling of the staff was the Building was an unusual location for a medical centre. There was also a lot of comments made by staff and patients that the Building was not suited to a medical centre. For example, The Clinic did not have any sinks in consulting rooms or in the nurses' station. A make-do wash station was set up with a water cooler style tap on it. I understand The Clinic was waiting for consent approval before sinks and plumbing could be installed permanently.

Before 22 February 2011

6. I had only been in the Building a couple of times prior to the September 2010 earthquake. This was back in approximately 2007 or 2008 when I went to the gym that was then on the top floor, Level 6. I did not notice anything unusual about the Building at that time. My first visit after that was around 28 December 2010, when The Clinic staff were invited to look through Level 5 of the Building before moving. At that time, everyone commented and giggled about the green sticker on the Building entrance because of the red sticker at the Gloucester Street premises. I do not recall much comment about the condition of the Building at that time.
7. I remember representatives from Pegasus Trust Limited (Pegasus) coming in to view The Clinic shortly after our move. I also understood from an article I had read in a newspaper that a representative from Pegasus had gone through and inspected Level 5 of the Building. I do not know if this was for structural safety or for a medical audit. However, when discussing the accounts for The Clinic with Faye Kennedy (Faye), The Clinic Manager, Pegasus had billed The Clinic for an engineers inspection.
8. The Building exterior was mostly glass. I did not see any cracking in the exterior concrete.
9. There was internal cracking along the west wall on Level 5. Some of these cracks were quite large, approximately 1 metre in length. The cracks started from the bottom and went up diagonally. These were visible from at least 3 metres away. I did not relate the expansion of the cracking to a particular aftershock. Faye had put white tape on some of the cracks, but the cracks had grown past the tape by about 2 inches.
10. I did not notice that the floor moved when people walked past. Initially, the reception desk was not fixed to the floor so it used to wobble when it was touched or leaned on. Many patients thought it was from the earthquakes but it was later secured and did not move after that.
12. The Building really shook during an aftershock. A lot of the staff did not like being in the Building because of this.

Building Demolition

13. The neighbouring building to the west was being demolished and the banging would really make the Building shake. Staff noticed this and mentioned it felt like an earthquake. As our old premises at Gloucester Street also moved with large trucks and buses passing it was not unusual for us to feel movement. However, the demolition felt quite violent and we were surprised at how much the Building moved. The shaking could be heard and felt all day. The Clinic staff were also surprised with how much it could be felt on the opposite side of the Building and that high up.

22 February 2011

11. The reception desks were on a 3-weekly rotation. On the week beginning 21 February 2011, my desk was on the right hand side directly behind the reception counter and is marked with the number "1" on the Plan. Dian Falconer (Dian) was in the northeast corner and her desk is marked with the number "2" on the Plan. Marion Hilbers (Marion) desk was against the north wall to the right of the reception desk. It is marked with the number "3" on the Plan. The wall to the south of the reception area is the wall between reception and the consulting room of Dr Maysoon Abaas (Maysoon). This wall is marked with the number "4" on the Plan.
12. Photographs of the reception area is annexed hereto and marked with the reference WIT.LEE.0001.7. The bottom photograph is taken from the Level 5 entrance doors and shows the reception area in the north-east corner. The top photograph is of Dian sitting at what was Marion's desk on 22 February 2011. My desk is the desk and empty chair in the foreground. The grey coloured desk in the top right corner of the photo is where Dian was sitting that week.
14. I was sitting at my desk when the 22 February 2011 earthquake struck. Dian was sitting at her desk behind me. Marion was not at her desk, she had gone to lunch in the staffroom. The shaking was very violent. The computers fell off the desks onto the floor. I remember a pause in shaking. I had time to stand up and had started to walk towards Dian. Dian also stood up and began to walk towards me. When I was looking towards Dian I could see that all of the windows were still intact.

15. Before Dian and I reached each other there was a loud-sounding crack. I thought it was the start of an aftershock but I now know it was the Building starting to collapse. I have marked my approximate location on the Plan with the number "5". I started falling to the south towards Maysoon's consulting room. My desk was also falling south towards me. I remember everything coming towards me and that my desk and chairs were falling down with the Building.
16. While I was stuck in the rubble I could only move my left arm. I felt around me to find out what I was trapped in. I was in a very tight space and could only feel what was in my bubble. I remember feeling the threads of the carpet flooring in front of me and I could also feel that the concrete floor slab had broken. There was a crack in the concrete that was large enough for me to fit my hand through. My left foot was caught in my desk drawer and I could feel all of my stationery around me. When I was rescued my foot was forced out by the Fire Service. My right hand was also pinned between the desktop and what I believe was the wall marked "4" on the Plan. I still have the marking of the desk 'wood' on the palm of my hand. I can remember this wall coming away as I was being rescued.
17. I was rescued from the Building rubble at 4.45pm that afternoon.

Signed: _____

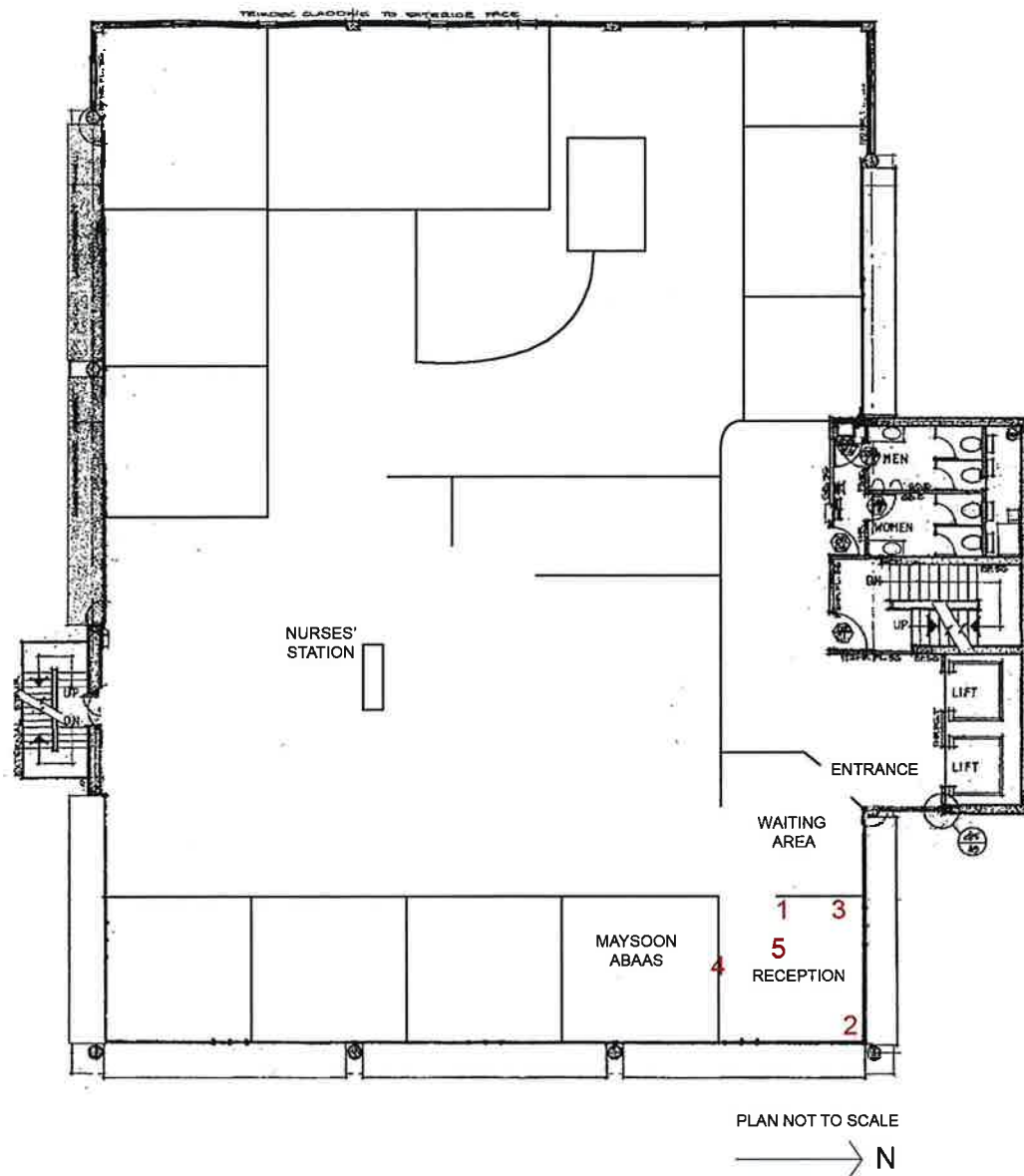

Philippa Robyn Lee

Date:

17

May 2012

CTV BUILDING LEVEL 5



249 MADRAS STREET

KEY

1. My desk at reception
2. Dian's desk
3. Marion's desk
4. Wall between reception and Maysoon's consulting room
5. Location where I was standing when building started to collapse

