

10 Archaeology

10.1 Historic Background

At the time of European settlement in the Wellington district in 1840, the area now known as the Basin Reserve was largely swamp, covered with flax and raupo. At the time of European contact significant Maori villages were reported in the district - at Te Aro, Pipitea, Kaiwharawhara and Nga Uranga. Associated with these villages there would have been extensive areas of gardens and fishing grounds. The harbour area appears to have changed hands a number of times, and from the 1830's Te Ati Awa achieved dominance over the area, and have been the paramount iwi in the region since then.

Of relevance to this study is the location of Te Aro pa - reported in the mid 1800's as being near what is now the intersection to Courtenay Place and Manners Street.

Adkin (1959) records other sites in the vicinity of the Basin Reserve:

- Puke Ahu - thought to be a defended site located on the ridge of Mount Cook, where the old National Museum building sits;
- Te Akatarewa Pa - exact location unknown, but thought to have been on the slopes of Mount Victoria, above Wellington College;
- Hauwai cultivation area - located adjacent to the swamp that has become the Basin Reserve (probably associated with the pa above); and
- Waitangi Lagoon - located near the mouth of the Waitangi Stream (that flowed from swamp at Basin Reserve), somewhere in the vicinity of Courtenay Place and Cambridge Terrace.

10.1.1 Early European Wellington

The settlement of Wellington was first planned by the representatives of the New Zealand Company, set up to organise and assist emigration. The first plan of the settlement, compiled in London, identified 1100 one acre lots, which were sold by ballot in July 1839. However, many of the purchasers were speculators who did not make the journey to New Zealand.

Included on the plan are details of a lagoon to be created in the swampy area that is now the Basin Reserve, with a canal leading between Cambridge and Kent Terraces (Figure 10.1). The intention was for this basin to provide safe anchorage for ships. This proposal however changed following a large earthquake in 1855 which raised the ground level considerably. The intention of the plan and the route of the canal remains visible in the vegetation corridor between Kent and Cambridge Terraces today.

Louis Ward (1928:191-206) identifies the purchasers of the original 1100 town acres, with some investors purchasing a number of properties. Plans from the period also identify street layout and names, with many of the streets in the area named after directors of the NZ Company (Buckle and Ellice), associates of the Wakefield's or the NZ Company (Kent and Cambridge Terrace, Sussex Square) or the early emigrant ships (Adelaide, Tory). One tenth of the land included in the "purchase" was set aside as reserve for Maori. Wakefield's original plan for Wellington was for a division of areas - Thorndon political, Te Aro - merchants and workers.

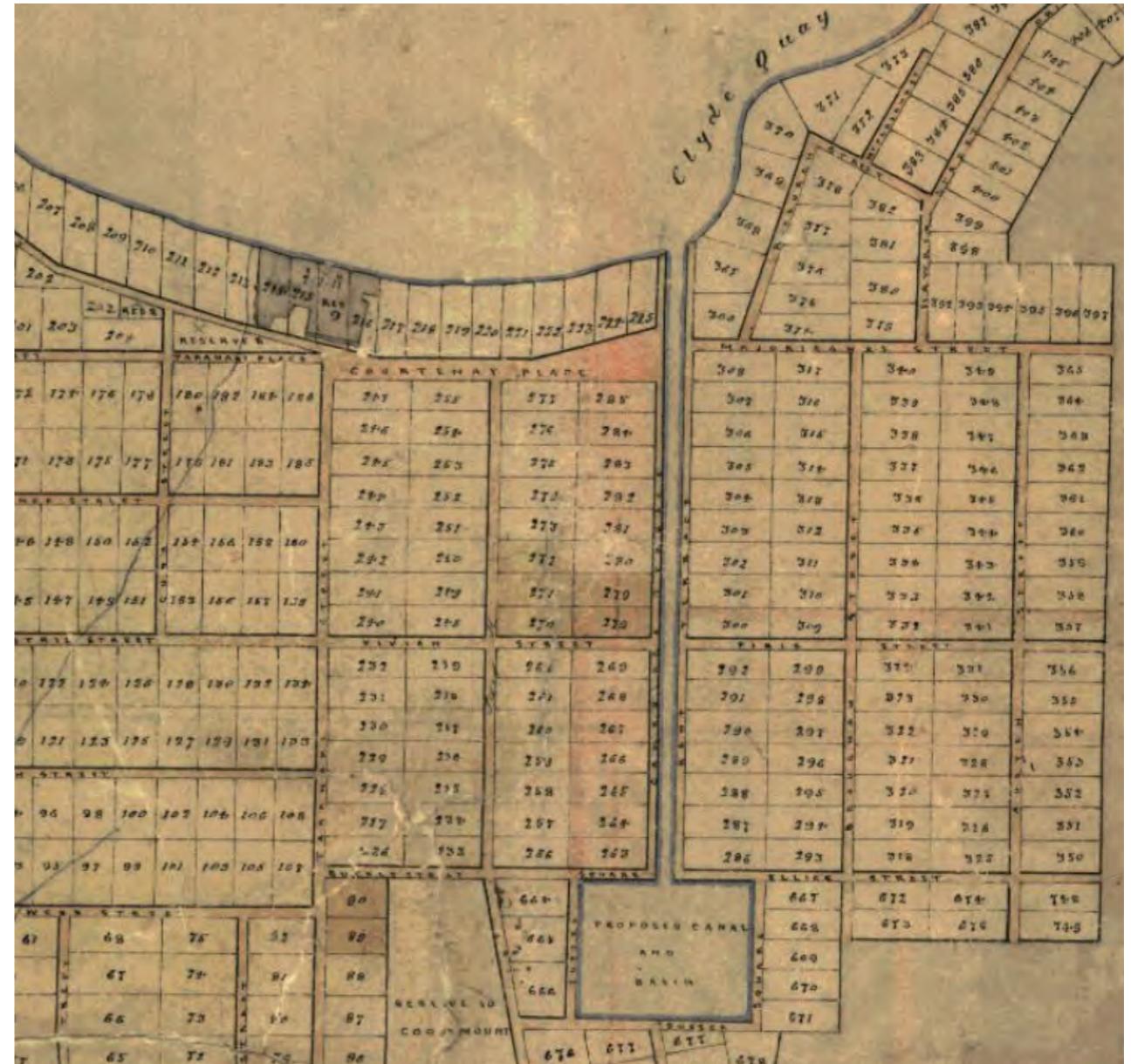


Figure 10.1: Part SO 10408 (1840) showing proposed Basin and Canal, street layout around and identification one acre town sections (Mein Smith's map)

In the late 1850's a group of prominent settlers petitioned the Provincial Council to have the proposed canal site and basin reserved as a public park. In 1863 work began, using prison labour, to drain and fill the swampy basin and by January 1868 it was suitable enough to allow the first game of cricket to be played in the reserve.



Figure 10.2: Part of SO 11001, 1872. Note route of stream from ponds in asylum grounds flowing through sections on Adelaide Road into Cricket Ground

Through the 1870's and 1880s the land surrounding the Basin Reserve became more built up, with houses, schools, churches and businesses established on the surrounding properties. The early buildings and their development is illustrated in a series of photographs from the period (refer Figure 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5).



Figure 10.3: 1875 photograph of the Basin Reserve, Wellington. View is towards the Mount Cook Barracks and the powder magazine on Mount Cook. Artillery stables are on the hill to the left. The canal that flowed to the sea via Cambridge Terrace, also known as the Kent Terrace stream, is in the foreground. Bragge, James 1833-1908: Reference number: PA7-30-19 <http://timeframes.natlib.govt.nz>



Figure 10.4: 1884 photo taken from Mount Victoria. Note area along Ellice / Buckle Street built up with houses. Trees along Kent / Cambridge Terraces visible in bottom right of photo. Photo from Burton Brothers Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

A key document in identifying the location and nature of pre-1900 buildings in Wellington is a plan completed by Thomas Ward in 1891 (Figure 10.6). The plan provides information on the location, size and construction nature of all structures in the city. Ward updated the plan in 1900. For the sake of this project the base 1891 plan was annotated with the 1900 changes, and this was then compared with a survey plan of buildings in Wellington carried out by Wellington City Council in 1937. This final plan provides information not only on buildings and structures within the project area prior to 1900 (the date used to assist in defining an archaeological site under the Historic Places Act 1993) and changes on properties over time.



Figure 10.5: One example of Thomas Ward Plan (1900) showing South Eastern corner of Basin Reserve, the location of St Marks Church (Section 671) and a number of houses on the surrounding properties.



Figure 10.6: 1934 aerial view of Basin Reserve and surrounding streets. Note Dominion Museum on Mount Cook under construction. Evening Post: Photographic negatives and prints of the Evening Post newspaper (PA-Group-00287) <http://timeframes.natlib.govt.nz> Reference No. 1/2-122291-F

10.1.2 Archaeological Information

A search of the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) Site Recording Scheme was carried out as part of this project. This database identifies all known or recorded archaeological sites within an area, providing information on grid reference location, conditions at the time of recording and a description of the site.

There are a number of recorded archaeological sites within the wider project area, as tabulated in *Table 10.1*. *Figure 10.7* shows the location of recorded archaeological sites within the Mount Cook area.

The location of the Hauwai cultivation area, identified on the Wellington City Council Plan 16 as site M69, is located adjacent to the south east Basin Reserve. This site has not been recorded as an archaeological site in the NZAA database.

Table 10.1: List of recorded archaeological sites on ArchSite database within Wellington City area

NZAA Site Number	Site Type
R27/270	Historic Wellington City as at 1900
R27/266	Harbour reclamation, Wakefield Street
R27/154	Te Aro Pa, intersection of Taranaki and Manners St
R27/279	Dwellings - 140 Vivian Street
R27/267	Historic Building 288 Cuba Street
R27/265	Military post / prison - Mount Cook and both sides Buckle Street - includes Mount Cook Police station site
R27/176	Colonial Cottage Nairn Street
R27/160	Mount Victoria Anti Aircraft Battery - north of trig off Alexandra Rd
R27/114	Traditional location of Akatarewa Pa
R27/278	Rubbish pit Wellington Hospital site

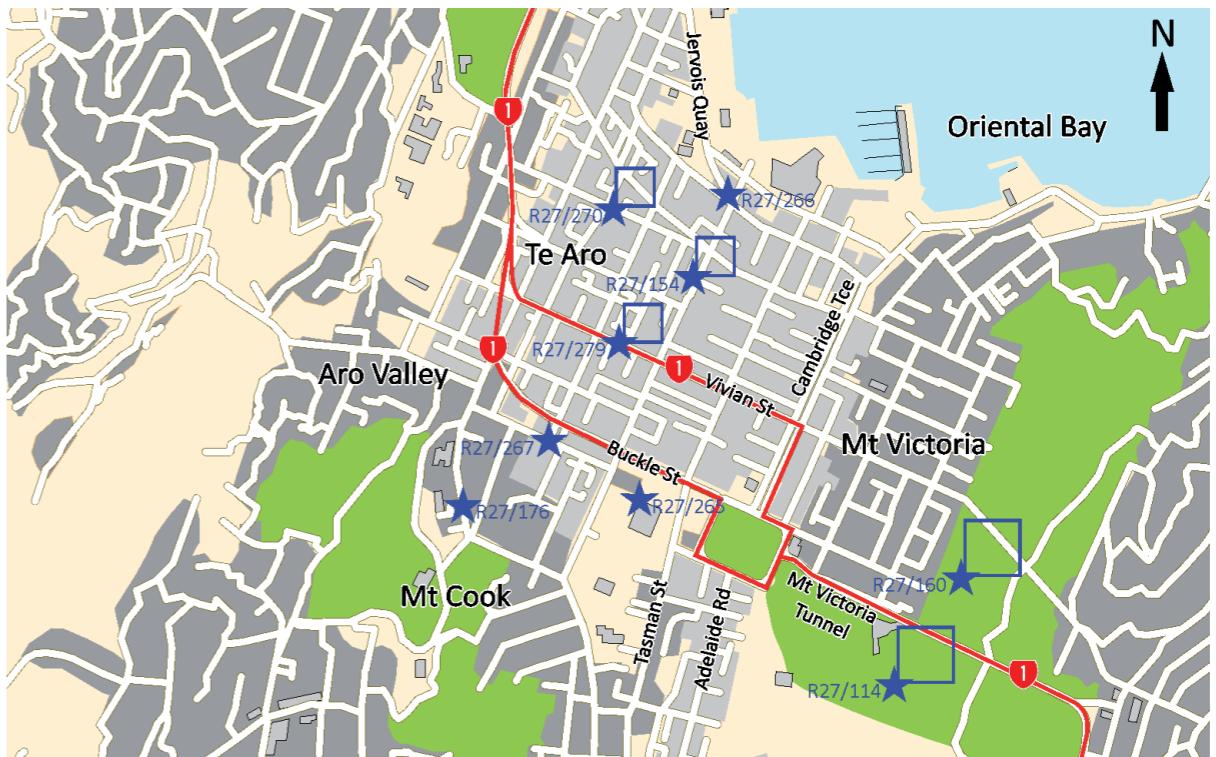


Figure 10.7: Map showing the location of recorded archaeological sites in Mount Cook district. Source NZAA ArchSite database August 2009

10.1.3 Summary

The area of Mount Cook surrounding the Basin Reserve has the potential to contain significant archaeological evidence, associated primarily with the early European occupation of this area, but potentially also with the earlier Maori occupation and use of the area. Although there are no specific archaeological sites recorded within the immediate area, it is important to note that the entire historic Wellington City area as defined by the 1900 Ward Plans, including the study area, is included on the record for NZAA site number R27/270.

10.2 Potential Impact of Project on Archaeological Resource

Examination of the streetscape around the Reserve today indicates a mix of historic (pre-1900 - 1920's) buildings and modern (1970's -). On properties where there has been building development after 1970 it is unlikely that any archaeological material survives. The reasoning for this statement is that foundations for modern buildings are much deeper than those for buildings constructed in the late 19th and early 20th century.

As is outlined in Section 11, there are a number of buildings in the immediate vicinity of the project area that are registered with the NZ Historic Places Trust and are listed in the Wellington City Council District Plan. These are: NZDF Former General Headquarters, HMNZS Oliphant; National War Memorial and Carillon; Former National Museum; Mount Cook Police Station; Former House of Compassion Crèche; Basin Reserve Pavilion and the William Wakefield Memorial. While the values and significance of these buildings is not discussed in this report, all of these structures are considered to have archaeological values, and these will also be taken into account by the Historic Places Trust when considering any proposal that may impact on the buildings and their sites. As is discussed below, the only registered building that appears to be physically impacted by the project is the former Home of Compassion Crèche building.

Any minor road realignment around the Basin Reserve (Dufferin, Sussex and Rugby Streets) may result in archaeological features or deposits being revealed.

10.3 Issues, Constraints, Risks and Opportunities

There are several pieces of legislation that assist with the protection and management of heritage sites. These must be considered in regard to any development or land use proposal that may affect archaeological sites and landscapes within an area. These are discussed further in [Appendix B](#).

There are a number of issues, constraints, risks and opportunities in relation to the potential impacts of this project on the archaeological resource around the Basin Reserve.

10.3.1 Issues

The key issue identified as a result of research carried out to date, is that any earthworks associated with this project will impact on archaeological resources. This is the case for all options proposed. In all instances it is preferable that physical impact on the archaeological resource is avoided where possible. This is not always possible however, and as a result, any earthworks associated with the project will require an application to the Historic Places Trust for an authority to modify archaeological sites. The Historic Places Trust can grant (with conditions) or decline any such application.

Although no statement can be made that will pre-empt the decision of the Historic Places Trust to grant or decline any application for an authority associated with this project, a review of similar projects and other developments in Inner City Wellington can provide some guidance as to the likelihood of any application being declined. The most appropriate project for comparison is the Wellington Inner City Bypass, in which instance authorities were granted, with a variety of conditions requiring extensive archaeological investigations. It is likely that if authorities are granted as part of the Basin Reserve project, similar investigations will be required.

10.3.2 Constraints

One of the key constraints to the project is that there are no areas within any of the options where there is no archaeological potential. Linked with this, it is identified that a further constraint may be the potential for the conditions of any authority that may be granted by the Historic Places Trust to require high levels of archaeological investigation. This is viewed as a potential constraint because of the high costs of work that may be required to meet and legal conditions. The extent and nature of archaeological investigations required may also impact on time constraints for other aspects of project. These constraints could be mitigated by ensuring that provision for costs and timing of archaeological work is factored into any further programming for works.

10.3.3 Mitigation Opportunities

The potential positive opportunities as part of this project are considered to be high. These opportunities include, but are not confined to:

- The recovery and recording of archaeological evidence within Mount Cook and the Basin Reserve;
- The potential to provide interpretation and greater appreciation for the history and development of settlement in Mount Cook;
- Potential to enhance heritage features within the area that will remain, linked with interpretation; and
- The potential to obtain and compare archaeological information with other sites in Wellington - particularly the Inner City Bypass, adding to our overall understanding of the settlement and development of Wellington City.

10.4 Summary

This section has identified that within the proposed project area there is high potential for archaeological sites to be affected by proposed works. This area of Mount Cook contains sites associated with early European housing and commercial activities dating from the 1860s. There is also potential for physical evidence associated with the old stream course and wetland area that became the Basin Reserve to be identified.

The project will impact on the archaeological resource in this area, predominantly on the northern side of the Basin Reserve, however there will be minor impacts associated with minor realignments around the entire Basin Reserve.

Any earthworks associated with this project will require an Authority to Modify from the NZ Historic Places Trust, and if granted works will need to comply with any conditions that are imposed. Identified risks and constraints include the potential for authority applications associated with the project to be declined or appealed, time constraints on other aspects of work resulting from required archaeological investigations, and costs implications associated with required archaeological investigations.

The opportunity to record and recover archaeological information in this area of Wellington as part of this project is considered to be of high positive benefit.