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# SH88 Safety Improvements project



Jim Harland, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency Director of South Island Regional Relationships and Dunedin Mayor Aaron Hawkins, who planted a tree at a recent event to mark work starting on the final section of the SH88 shared path.

Construction on another major transport project for our city gets underway in early January, when work begins on a \$31 million project to build the final leg of the SH88 shared walking and cycling path between Dunedin and Port Chalmers.

A 5km section of this path from Dunedin to St Leonards was finished in 2012. This left 5km of path from St Leonards to Port Chalmers needing to be completed to provide a safe, uninterrupted walking and cycling connection linking Dunedin and Port Chalmers. The new shared path from St Leonards to Port Chalmers is expected to be completed by mid-to-late 2022.

An event attended by guests including Dunedin Mayor Aaron Hawkins and representatives from the local community, was held recently to mark work starting on this project. A Southern Rata tree was planted as part of the event.

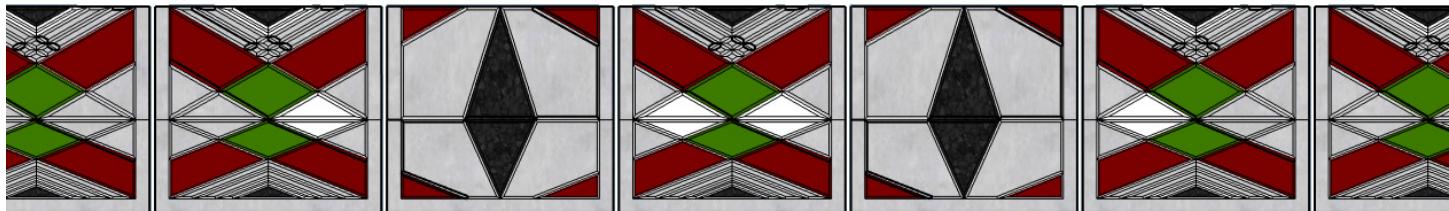
Safety upgrades on the existing highway are a critical part of this job. SH88 has been identified as a route where real safety gains can be made by installing roadside barriers, carrying out intersection upgrades including the SH88/Finch Street intersection, and using road markings that are easier to see at night and during wet weather. Collectively, these measures will help reduce the severity of crashes along this route, including several where drivers have run off the road and in many cases into the Otago Harbour.

## Project benefits



The path provides a safe and attractive alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists to SH88, a busy road freight route between Dunedin and Port Chalmers. It will also ensure a better cycle network connecting Port Chalmers, West Harbour, the central city and Otago Peninsula. This will encourage more West Harbour residents to try walking and cycling as a way of commuting to and from Dunedin.

## Path features



People will bike or walk on a well lit asphalted three metre pathway. Some sections will travel alongside the main trunk rail line with secure fencing safely separating path users from the rail tracks. Connections to local communities from the path will also be provided at safe and convenient places.

A notable feature of the St Leonards to Port Chalmers section of the path is a two-and-a-half metre high retaining wall. This is being built at the SH88 Roseneath cutting to carry what will be a securely fenced portion of the shared path above the road.

The retaining wall will be made using large concrete panels providing a canvas and the opportunity to display some of Dunedin's great talent. The Transport Agency engaged local Artist Simon Kaan to develop these works.

The panels depict the story of Matamata. This is a very localised tradition and it relates to a guardian taniwha known as Matamata. Matamata himself appears in many traditions in the South Island from as far north as Marlborough to the Hokonui Hills. He is an ancestor of the Kāti Māmoe tribe and the local Chief Karetai was his descendant. Following is an account recorded by the Rev. Thomas Pybus (1954a) from his book *The South Island Māoris*.

*'Regarding their legends, the Māori people of Ōtākou used to speak about taniwhas and fabulous monsters which performed extraordinary deeds. Hoani Karetai, the paramount chief of Ōtākou, used to speak about a taniwha which was the guardian of the spirit of a famous Kāti Māmoe chief. This taniwha lost its master and set out in search of him. From Silverstream near the base of Whare Flat, it journeyed as far as the present Mosgiel. Then it took its course down the Taieri River and wriggling, caused all the sharp bends and twists in the river. The same taniwha scooped out the Otago Harbour. The monster now lies solidified in the Saddle Hill. The humps of the hill are named Pukemakamaka and Turimakamaka.'*

## What the new section of path will look like

For the first 600m of Blanket Bay, the path will travel over the harbour on a boardwalk with a viewing platform and information board for the historic seawall. At St Leonards the path will, like some sections of the existing path, be built on the rail causeway with security fencing separating path users from the railway line.



Photo: Antony Hamel

If you require any additional information, please contact:



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