

Construction Newsletter

Issue 2 / March 2005

Excavation work to start

Excavation work on the Wellington Inner City Bypass will start this month beside Oak Park Avenue, while digging is to start on the Te Aro stormwater project in early April.

Work on the trench structure to take north-bound traffic under a new Vivian Street bridge, south of the Terrace Tunnel, is due to start. Excavation will begin around the former site of the Avonside boarding house, recently shifted from 215 Vivian Street, and the old Correspondence School in Oak Park Avenue, demolished in January.

This area off upper Vivian Street is the site of the southern section of the

trench to the Terrace Tunnel. From Willis Street the new bypass road gradually moves down into the trench, alongside Oak Park Avenue and Buller Street. The trench is a reinforced concrete and soil-nailed structure with a depth of up to eight metres. Excavation will be carried out in layers to enable ground strengthening work, such as soil-nailing, and drains to be laid at each stage.

This part of the project is expected to take about 18 months, with minimal disruption to city traffic as it is west of the current northbound onramp to the motorway, and away from the busy part of Vivian Street.



Transit project manager Jonnette Adams inspects preparatory work for the start of the trench structure.

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Visitors' centre opens

Are you interested in finding out more about the Wellington Inner City Bypass?

Then why not come to our Visitors' Centre, opened at 319a Willis Street, 11am-2pm, or by appointment outside those hours.

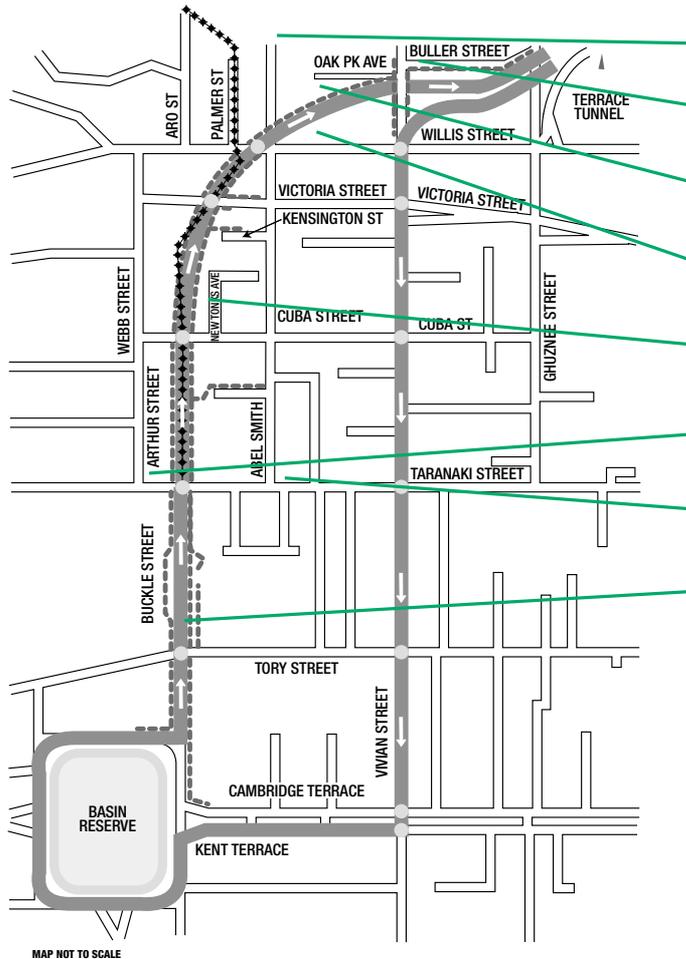
The centre offers the public - and groups such as school parties, residents' associations, and service organisations - the opportunity to look at detailed route plans, watch a

5-minute video on the project, and ask questions.

The visitors' centre is a Transit New Zealand initiative aimed at making information about the two and a half year project easily accessible.

It is preferable for groups to make an appointment. This can be done by phoning WICB public liaison officer Sandra Ford on 801 5559. Otherwise visitors should go to the front gate at 319a Willis Street.

Construction Programme March-May05



- Former Catacombs shifted to 132a Abel Smith Street
 - Temporary road diversion across Buller Street from top of Vivian Street
 - Excavation work for trench structure under Vivian Street, starts March
 - Three shops shifted 25m down Willis Street on western side, March/April
 - Houses relocated from Tonks Avenue to new Tonks Avenue, April-June
 - Te Aro stormwater main laying along Arthur Street, April/May
 - Ancillary stormwater upgrade March/April in Abel Smith Street
 - Installation of footpath and cycleway in Buckle Street, April
- Intersection controlled by traffic signals
 --- Footpath/cycle lane
 ++++ Te Aro Stormwater culvert
- For further information contact Sandra Ford, on 04 801 5559 or visit www.transit.govt.nz/innercitybypass

Clearing the way



A 33-tonne digger demolishes a brick building at number 2 Oak Park Avenue last month.

Prior to demolition, the interior was stripped of recyclables such as matai flooring, timber windows and doors. Roofing in reasonable condition was removed and recycled. Exterior walls were then collapsed inward using the excavator. The top level of the two storey building was collapsed inward first, using a chain connected to the wall and the excavator

bucket. This was done to ensure the building was demolished safely, rather than having an entire two-storey building collapsing.

The building is one of 18 being demolished in Oak Park Avenue, Willis, Arthur and Kensington Streets, and Tonks Avenue. They include the former Correspondence School in Oak Park Avenue that was originally a Zig Zag tobacco factory, and a former Organic Food Co-op building in Arthur Street.

Moving buildings

Relocation of heritage buildings in Arthur Street and Tonks Avenue, Kensington, Cuba, Willis and Vivian streets will continue over the next few months, with restoration to start in May.

A total of 16 heritage buildings are to be relocated. Four heritage shops in upper Cuba Street are to be resited on the western side of the street at the entrance to new Tonks Avenue - about 25 metres north of the existing Tonks Avenue. Three cottages and two stately homes, including the former Stagecraft Theatre, are to be relocated from Tonks Avenue to the new Tonks Avenue/Kensington Street area.

The former Catacombs building in Willis Street is to be relocated to 138a Abel Smith Street, while several shops in Willis Street including the old Bodega café, are to be shifted a little way down the road, closer to the old dental school. Other buildings to be relocated, ready for restoration, are numbers 14 and 21 Kensington Street, which are to be resited between Kensington Street and the end of the new Tonks Avenue.

Restoration will start as soon as it is practicable after each of the relocations. Transit has yet to decide what the refurbished buildings will be used for - potentially a mixture of commercial/residential usage.

Archaeologists investigate site

Glass and stoneware bottles, colourful ceramics, a brick well, and mid 18th century house foundations are among finds from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust's archaeological investigation of sites on the bypass route.

A team of 26 archaeologists from around the country assembled in Te Aro in late January for a month-long project to excavate and examine the buildings and sections in historic Tonks Avenue and Arthur Street. The investigations, and open days for the public, were among conditions set by the Historic Places Trust in the authority allowing modification of the archaeological sites.

Archaeologists have pieced together a picture of the history of the area, matching historical records with evidence from the ground.



The Tonks family built several houses in Tonks Avenue and rented them out, so there was a mix of family members and tenants living in a well-defined area. Early members of the Tonks family owned a brickworks on Webb Street adjoining Tonks Avenue from the 1860s, and at various times also had a drapers', a shipping company, and bread factory, and were responsible for reclamation of part of Wellington harbour.

A buildings' archaeologist has examined the Edwardian homes and pre-1900s workers' cottages built side-by-side in Tonks Avenue, to learn the patterns of construction, phases of additions, and materials used. Several of the dwellings that are being relocated metres away in a new Tonks Precinct, to the north of the bypass route, date back to the late 1860s.



Meanwhile domestic and industrial debris from the 1860s onward has been found during excavation of ground under demolished or resited buildings. The artefacts provide a sequence of changing styles and patterns of domestic ware throughout time, and the development of local businesses, particularly soft drink manufacturers.



Excavations in Arthur Street have also proved interesting. The foundations of a late 1860s house were found under one metre of fill that was deposited when the house was demolished in the late 1800s. Several sites in this street have shown a succession of buildings over time. Bricks from the Tonks brickworks were used extensively on all houses - both as chimneys and as paving in the yards of the houses.

Rubbish pits in the backyards of the houses have been uncovered and excavated. The contents of these pits give clues to what people were eating (bones), drinking (bottles) and the types and shapes of domestic cups, plates and dishes popular at the time. A pit behind one house contained several broken chamber pots.

After the houses in Tonks Avenue are relocated, the archaeologists will return to look under the buildings for evidence of prior landuse, and to record the position of the foundation posts.

A report on the investigations will be written and will include an analysis of the buildings and their interior decoration (where that information has been made available), and a description of the archaeology and the artefacts found. This has been a substantial project, producing a large amount of data, and the report will take the archaeologists about a year to write.

Well still clear



A well found between heritage cottages in Tonks Avenue, that is still full of clear water.

Archaeologists checking an 1878 survey map saw the presence of a well between numbers 5 and 9 Tonks Avenue. Last month, the archaeologists scraped away soil in the vicinity and lifted the concrete cap. The well is over seven metres deep, lined with bricks and still full of clear water.

The well provided water to the two households prior to the early 1880s when water was 'laid-on' in Wellington city. As the well is not within the route of the road it will be protected and made available for viewing as a park feature, at the end of the project.

Public open days

More than 500 members of the public visited an archaeology site in the centre of Te Aro recently.

Archaeologists provided commentary on the history of the area and explained the work on the site in Tonks Avenue, and nearby Arthur Street, during two open days in February. The public also viewed a display of historic photographs from the collections in the Alexander Turnbull Library, and maps showing the new locations of the 16 heritage buildings to be shifted over the next few months.

Transit New Zealand organised the open days and would like to thank the New Zealand Historic Places Trust for providing the tour guides and opening the site to the public.



New address



The former "Avonside" boarding house, which for decades operated as "Woodside", has been relocated and is to be restored as part of the Wellington Inner City Bypass project.

Built originally as a family home for its first owner George Tiller, in the "Italianate" style in 1884. This is typical of this period and area where many substantial Italianate houses were constructed from the 1870s to 1900s.

The street address was originally 67 Ingestre Street. An article by David McGill in the 1970s says Lord Vivian and Viscount Ingestre were Cornish MPs who backed the New Zealand Company formation. By 1909 for no apparent reason Vivian Street had absorbed Ingestre Street.

There are no records of modification of the house until 1929 when it was bought by the Walker family and turned into a private hotel or boarding house. Ten rooms were added to the rear in 1930, with accommodation further extended to the west and east in 1936. The dwelling was variously licenced to provide accommodation for 20, 24 or 30 occupants.

However a letter from the city engineer to Mrs Walker in 1934 reminded her to update the licence: "*My attention has been drawn to the fact that you are again allowing some rooms or whares at the rear of your building to be occupied as dwellings...*"

By 1980 the New Zealand Government had taken over ownership of the building and the guest house was renamed Avonside.

Transit New Zealand has relocated the original house about 25 metres southwest, on the west side of Oak Park Avenue. It is to be restored to its original splendour as an important part of the region's history for the enjoyment of future generations.

The Wellington Inner City Bypass at a glance:

- Construction of the Wellington Inner City Bypass starts this month and is scheduled to finish in mid 2007
- The bypass isn't a motorway - it's a pair of two-lane, one-way 50 kph roads at ground level, with linked traffic signals at intersections
- Construction of a new Te Aro stormwater culvert for Wellington City Council is included in the project
- Relocation and restoration of 16 heritage buildings in the path of the bypass route
- More information about the Wellington Inner City Bypass is available on the Transit New Zealand website www.transit.govt.nz/innercitybypass/ or at the Visitor's centre, 319a Willis Street

Laying of stormwater main

Trench-work will start on the \$7 million Te Aro stormwater main next month.

The trench, up to six metres deep, will be dug from the Taranaki Street end of Arthur Street, with sections of pipe laid in stages. The 2.5 metre diameter main is to be laid along vacated land on the northern side of Arthur Street. Work will continue in stages along the remaining bypass route, until Willis Street where it veers up Palmer Street to Aro Park.

The project, commissioned by the Wellington City Council to coincide with the bypass construction, is due for completion prior to Christmas 2006.

It is part of ongoing expansion and upgrade of the stormwater system that drains rainwater from the Brooklyn and Aro Valley catchments. The existing brick main is about 130 years old and around 1.5 metres high and one metre wide, and is now too small to deal with heavy downpours.

Did you know ...?

Temporary spraypaint markings on roads and pavements mark locations of essential services, such as gas, water and power mains.

These markings are to assist the contractor to avoid cutting utilities to neighbouring properties and thereby safeguarding workers, residents and the public.

Fulton Hogan will ensure the footpaths and roads are reinstated appropriately, with markings removed, once work in the vicinity is completed.

Contact us

If you would like to discuss any issues or need answers to specific questions please contact:

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