

# **OLD ST PAUL'S: ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**




**REPORT TO  
THE NEW ZEALAND HISTORIC PLACES TRUST**

**BEATRICE HUDSON AND MATTHEW CAMPBELL**

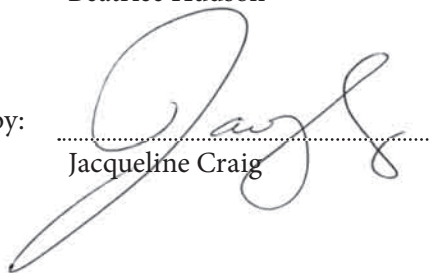
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THE NEW ZEALAND HISTORIC PLACES TRUST

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# OLD ST PAUL'S:

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

Old St Paul's church, built in 1865, is one of New Zealand's most significant heritage buildings and is an iconic part of the Wellington streetscape. The church and grounds constitute a Historic Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, owned by the Crown, and vested in The New Zealand Historic Places Trust (HPT), who administer it. Old St Paul's is located on Pt Lot 1 DP 8705 (all originally within Town Acre 542) but the Historic Reserve includes Lot 1 A 762 to the north (originally part of Town acre 534) and Subdivision C Tn of Wellington Sect 542 to the south. The church is recorded as archaeological site R27/407 in the New Zealand Archaeological Association site file. It is registered with HPT as a Category 1 Historic Place, Register Number 38.

HPT are installing a toilet block and associated utilities lines (sewerage and electricity) on the south side of the church property. An archaeological assessment by CFG Heritage (Campbell 2011) addressed the possibility of finding archaeological features in the area where the toilet block was to be built. This concluded that it was unlikely the land had been developed by Europeans prior to the construction of the church, though some small structures or rubbish pits may nevertheless exist. It also concluded that there was a possibility of finding archaeological evidence of pre-1864 Maori gardening activities related to Pipitea Pa. Excavation at 1–15 Pipitea St. in 2008 revealed gardened soils and a kumara storage pit from the historic period but probably predating the New Zealand Company settlement of 1840 (Campbell 2009). It is considered that the land where Old St Paul's stands could contain similar archaeological features. Monitoring of earthworks associated with the toilet block was undertaken on 15 June 2011 under authority 2011/414 issued by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust under section 14 of the Historic Places Act 1993.

### Historic background

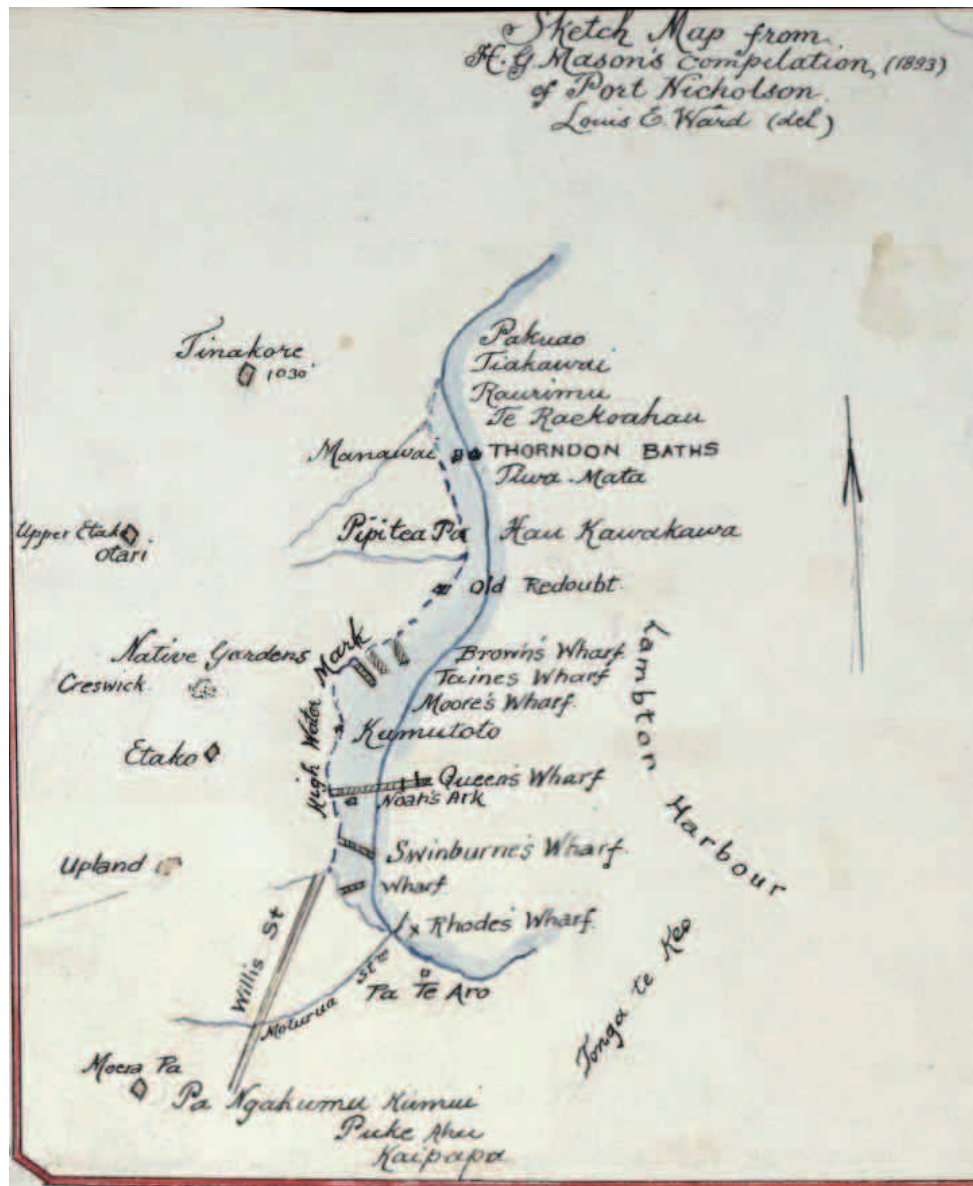
This section is taken from the assessment report (Campbell 2010).

#### *Maori occupation*

Adkin (1959: 97), a noted authority on place names of early Wellington, gives the name Nga Pakoko for the area above the sea cliff at the "junction of Mulgrave and Sydney Streets." The evidence of Neville Gilmore before the Waitangi Tribunal shows that Old St Paul's lies within the core area of Pipitea Pa (Wai 145 F1, 28 Feb 1996, cited in Walzl 2009). Pipitea Pa was the harbourside occupation of Te Atiawa at the time of European settlement in 1840 (Campbell 2009). A map of early Wellington compiled by Louis Ward around 1925 and held at the Alexander Turnbull Library contains an insert of "H.G. Mason's compilation, (1893)" that shows "Native Gardens" over a wide area including the site (Figure 1). This area generally would have been used by Maori in the early 19th century for gardening and gathering of marine resources among other activities. Excavation at 1–15 Pipitea St in 2008 revealed gardened soils and a kumara storage pit from the historic period but probably predating the New Zealand Company settlement of 1840 (Campbell 2009). Similar evidence may exist beneath the church grounds.

In 1962, during excavations for the construction of the Government Printing Office, now National Archives, 10 Mulgrave Street, a Maori burial was found in a recess cut into the sea cliff 40–120 m from the proposed toilet block. This was recorded as site R27/104. The burial was accompanied by an adze of Nelson argil-

1. Inset of Louis Ward's ca. 1925 map of early Wellington from "H.G. Mason's compilation, (1893) of Port Nicholson" showing "Native Gardens." The site is a little to the north of the word "Gardens." ATL MapColl-832.4799gbbd/1840-1916/ACC.16123.



lite, which indicates a relatively early date and demonstrates a Maori presence in central Wellington well before the historically recorded Pipitea pa. While there is no other record of burials in this general area there remains an outside possibility that they may be encountered.

#### Land Ownership

Wellington was settled in 1840 by the New Zealand Company, which purchased the land from Te Atiawa chiefs. It was surveyed into sections, or Town Acres, by Captain William Mein Smith (Figure 2, Plan of the Town of Wellington LSW000), which were pre-purchased in Britain and chosen by the settlers after they landed in an order determined by the drawing of lots. Old St Paul's is located principally on Town Acre 542 though the Historic Reserve includes part of Town Acre 543. Both these sections are coloured green and labelled "N.R." for Native Reserve. The





2. Detail of Captain William Mein Smith's survey of Town Acres. Archives New Zealand, Plan of the Town of Wellington, Port Nicolson, the First and Principal Settlement of The New Zealand Company 14th August 1840, LSW000.

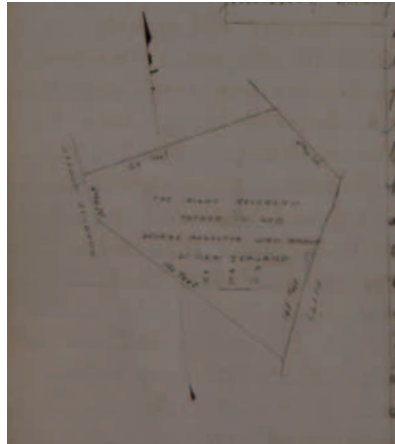
upper number is the order of ballot, so that Town Acre 543 was number 52 in order of selection and 542 was number 100.

As Town Acres 542 and 543 were to be Native Reserves, they were both selected by Captain William Mein Smith on 11 August 1840 in his capacity as Principal Surveyor of the New Zealand Company (Register of Selections NZC 133/2; Description of Native Reserves NXC 33/4). Though they were to be allocated under the 'Tenths' system whereby one in ten 1 acre urban and 100 acre rural lots would be set aside for Maori when the New Zealand Company purchased land, the result of their selection by the Company's agent was that these lands came into Company hands. Following the financial collapse of the Company in 1850, Company lands became vested in the Crown, who held them in trust for Maori (Waitangi Tribunal 2003: 257, 317). However, these lands were largely taken for other government purposes, such as hospital or education endowment lands, or military purposes. In 1848 the Anglican Church was given permission to occupy tenths reserves on town Acres 514 and 542 for a school and cathedral, which was confirmed by Crown Grant in 1853 (Waitangi Tribunal 2003: 319).

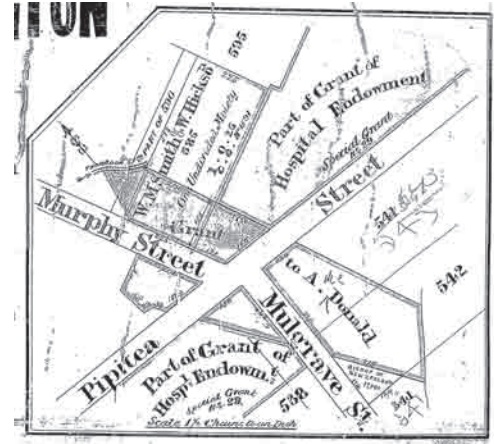
Prior to the New Zealand Company purchase, however, Robert Tod, a Sydney based speculator and trader, had purchased two blocks of land from Moturoa and Mangatuka of Ngati Mutunga in January 1840. This purchase included parts of what would become Town Acres 542 and 543, cutting across them at odd angles (visible still in the boundary between Pt Lot 1 DP 8705 and Subdivision C Sect 542, and probably also the angle of Murphy Street). On 6 September 1844 he sold his claim to Alexander McDonald so that when the block was granted by the Land Claims Commission on 31 March 1845 it was granted to McDonald (OLC 465). On 26 July 1853 McDonald sold his part of Town Acre 542 to the Bishop of New Zealand (Deeds Register 1 folios 4 & 503; Deeds Register 2 folio 494). This block



3 (left). Tod's claim granted to Alexander McDonald. The red line to the south is the boundary of Tod's other purchase (Deeds Register 1 folio 4).



4 (centre). The part of Tod's Claim sold to the Bishop of New Zealand by Alexander McDonald in 1853 (Deeds Register 2 folio 494).



5 (right). Detail of Crown Grants Record Map No 3 City of Wellington, 1879 (SO 10296) showing the part of Town acre 542 outside Tod's Claim granted to the Bishop of New Zealand.

was not square, but Pt Lot 1 DP 8705 was squared up by the grant of part of Town Acre 542 described in the Waitangi Tribunal report. Crown Grants Record Map No 3 City of Wellington, 1879 (SO 10296) shows the part of Town acre 542 outside Tod's Claim granted to the Bishop of New Zealand (Figure 5).

Thus, by virtue of being part of Tod's Claim and by Crown expropriation, parts of Town Acres 542 and 543 fell out of Maori hands and became Anglican Diocesan lands. In late 1864 John McLaggan signed a contract to build the church, which was consecrated by Bishop John Charles Abraham on 6 June 1866. The full subsequent history of the church can be found in Kelly and Cochran 2000.

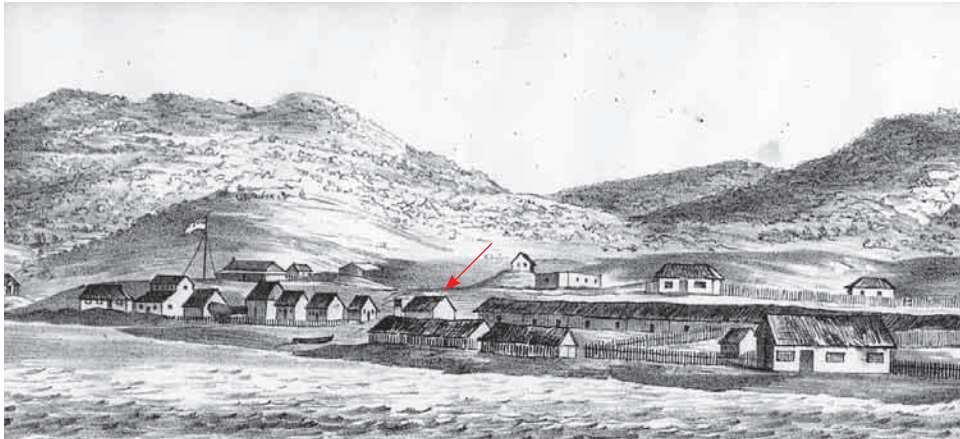
#### *Pictorial evidence*

Pictorial representations, both drawn/painted and photographic, of the site are sparse at best. Views of the wider Thorndon area by Charles Heaphy in 1841, Luke Nattress in 1840 or 1841 and William Mein Smith in 1842 (Figure 6 to Figure 8) show that Mulgrave Street, other than the Thistle Inn at the bottom of the hill, does not appear to have been built on in the early years of settlement. This seems to



6. Detail of a watercolour by Charles Heaphy of Thorndon Flat in April 1841. Alexander Turnbull Library C-025-010.





7. Detail of lithograph of an 1840 or 1841 panorama of Wellington by Luke Nattrass (publication date 1841) The Thistle Inn is arrowed. Alexander Turnbull Library C-029-003.



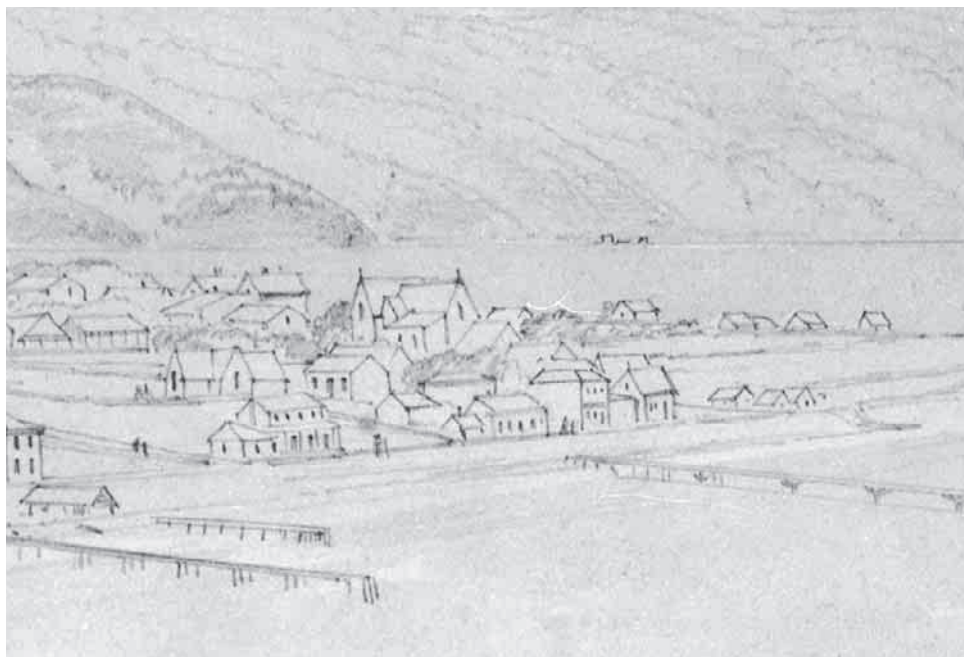
8. Detail of a lithograph of a drawing by William Mein Smith of Thorndon Flat sketched in the middle of the year 1842. Alexander Turnbull Library PUBL-0011-16-1.



9. Detail of a watercolour by Charles Decimus Barraud of Thorndon from The Terrace in 1856. The Thistle Inn is arrowed. Alexander Turnbull library C-162-001.



10. Detail of pencil and wash sketch of Wellington in 1864 by George Curtis Fawcett Rowe. Alexander Turnbull Library B-009-003.



11. Photo of lower Mulgrave Street about 1858, photographer unknown, showing the Thistle Inn on the right. Alexander Turnbull Library E-296-q-170.



be the case right up to the time that Old St Paul's was built, with views by Charles Decimus Barraud in 1856 and George Curtis Fawcett Rowe in 1864 seeming to show the same lack of construction (Figure 9 and Figure 10). In all these views, however, key building predominate and it isn't possible to say what may have been left out: outbuildings, workshops, fences, etc.

Photos of Mulgrave Street in the 1850s show the view of Wellington *from* Mulgrave, generally lower Mulgrave Street below Old St Paul's, rather than views



12. Old St Paul's in the 1880s, photographer unknown, showing the fence along Mulgrave Street. Alexander Turnbull Library 1/2-021154-F.

of what was on Mulgrave itself. The photo in Figure 11 is one of these – it shows a fence on the east side of Mulgrave Street but not what was behind it. The near building to the right is the Thistle Inn, with Henry Warcup's plumber's premises beyond that.

Most views of the church are from the north east, meaning the site of the toilet block on the south west is not shown. The photo in Figure 12 from the 1880s is fairly typical. It shows a different fence than the current one and it seems likely there have been several iterations of the fence between 1864 and 2011.

### *Summary*

McDonald purchased Tod's Claim in 1845 and sold the part in Town Acre 542 to the Bishop of New Zealand in 1853. The part of Town Acre 542 south of Tod's Claim, now part of the Old St Paul's property, was granted to the Bishop in 1848. It seems unlikely that Tod built anything of significance on his claim and, given that within three years of McDonald's purchase from Tod, the Bishop was granted part of Town acre 542, it seems likely that there was an intention to purchase the remainder from an early date. Neither McDonald nor the Bishop would have developed lands earmarked for church construction. Images from the mid 19th century show the area as undeveloped, although small-scale constructions such as outbuildings and fences may have been present but not depicted by the various artists. No photographic views of the site pre 1864 have been found.

Archaeological and historical research at 1–15 Pipitea Street, adjacent to Old St Pauls, showed no clear evidence of European occupation prior to 1865, when John Elisha Smith and Bishop Charles John Abraham each obtained leases and built houses. The part of Town Acre 543 that was a hospital reserve, part of which now forms part of the Old St Paul's grounds (Lot 1 A 762), was leased for grazing until the 1880s (Campbell 2009; Walzl 2009). Town Acre 542 was probably similarly undeveloped.

### Archaeological monitoring

Excavation in preparation for the construction of the toilet block was monitored by archaeologist Beatrice Hudson, accompanied by Kathryn Hurren from HPT, on 15 June 2011. The area to be monitored included the footprint of the building, approximately 4 x 5 m, a 0.5 m square sump excavated to 1 m depth, and a narrow services trench connecting the toilet block to the existing church building, excavated to 0.7 m. These areas are shown in Figure 13 and Figure 14.

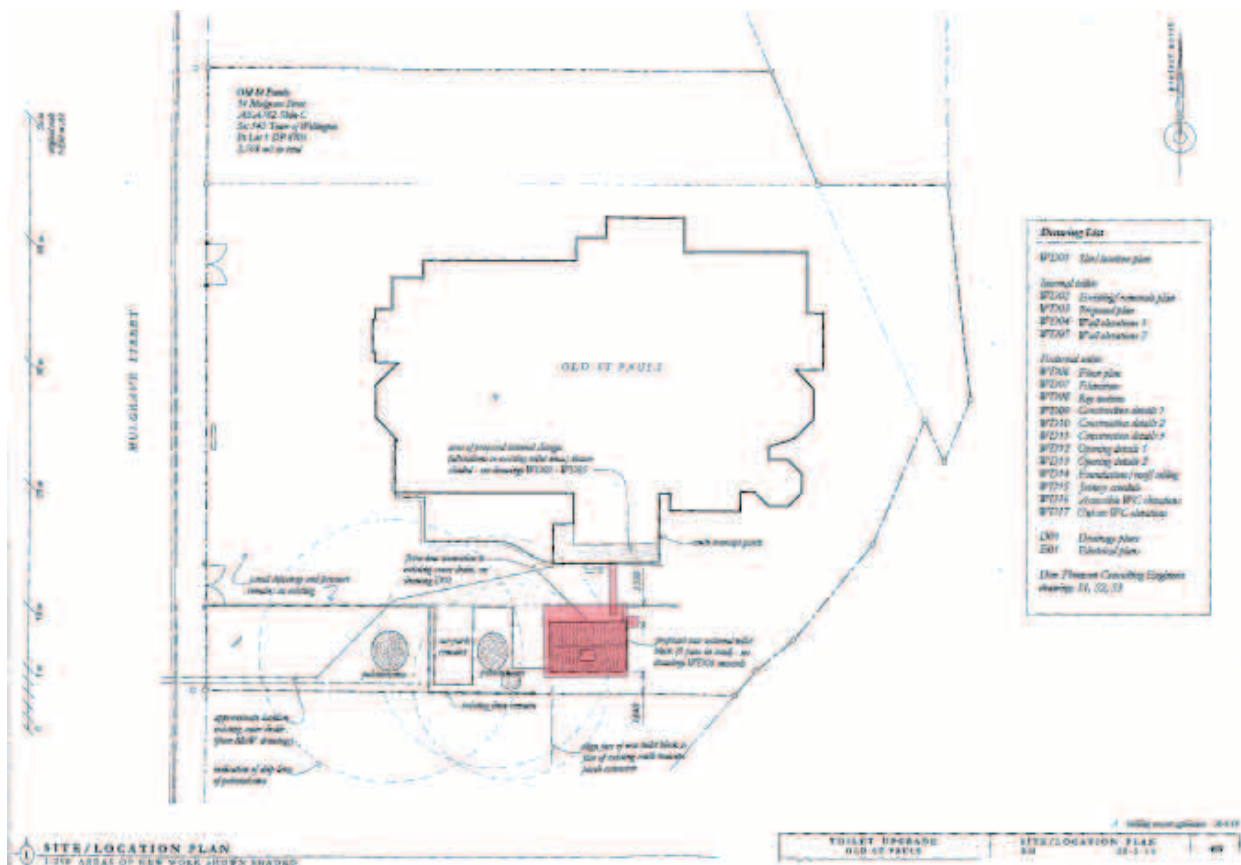
Vegetation and topsoil were stripped across the building footprint, initially with a 1.5 tonne excavator and then a 3 tonne excavator, and loaded out.

The topsoil over the area was 300–350 mm deep and overlay a mixed, mottled soil fill layer which was 200–250 mm thick and contained occasional small fragments of brick towards the south. This material had clearly been mixed and re-deposited and was not a natural subsoil layer. Construction did not require any deeper excavation over the whole footprint area, so the subsoil has not been inspected over the whole footprint and any archaeological features that may exist in the subsoil beneath the fill here will not be disturbed by construction of the building.

The uncovered fill layer was not made up of mixed subsoil from this area. It was a mixed red-brown clayey soil and did not contain the yellow-brown subsoil natural to this area. This fill had clearly come from somewhere else with a different soil matrix. It had been laid directly on the old topsoil and used to level the site.

Deeper footing trenches were excavated around the perimeter and across the centre of the toilet block footprint and these did reach the subsoil (Figure 15). The trenches were 300 mm wide and a total of 600 mm deep. They cut through the fill

13. Plan showing the location of the toilet block, sump and drain trench.







layer and revealed an old brown topsoil and a yellow-brown subsoil at a depth of 500–600 mm. These trenches showed no evidence archaeological features in the subsoil.

The sump showed the same soil profile of current topsoil on top of imported fill, with old topsoil and natural subsoil beneath that. The sump excavation cut 300 mm into the subsoil and showed it to be clean and undisturbed (Figure 16). Though the subsoil was not gravelly at the top, the sump excavation showed that it became gravelly as it got deeper.

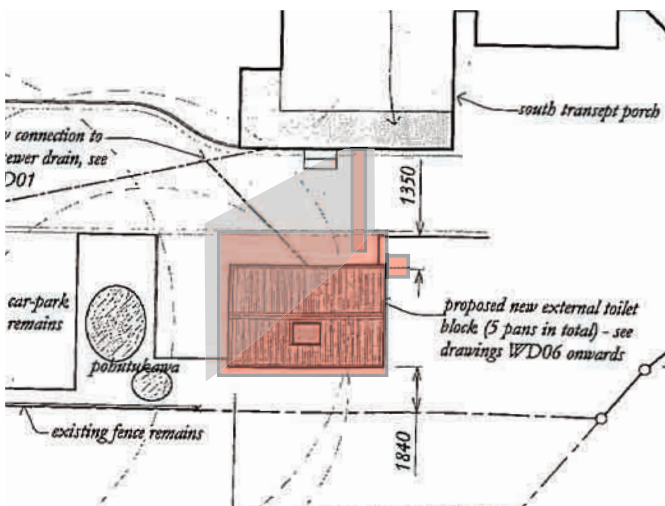
In the northwest corner of the area there was a change in the fill layers. A diagonal line across the area (south west 210°) marked a change from the mixed fill layer to a thinner cap of fill (up to 100 mm thick) that was essentially the same material as the imported fill, but which was denser and less mixed, with larger lumps of soil and clay and lenses of shell and gravel on top of it (Figure 17). It was only in the fill in this area that a few very small historic items were found. These included a very small fragment of stoneware bottle, a fragment of black beer bottle

*14 (top left). The area to be monitored, prior to topsoil stripping. Wooden stakes in the fore- and background mark the area for the toilet block.*

*15 (bottom left). The footing trenches excavated into the subsoil.*

*16 (right). Soil profile in the excavation for the sump showing, top to bottom, the topsoil, fill layer, old topsoil and natural subsoil.*





17. Showing the change in fill in the north west of the area, marked by a dark line.

18. Diagram indicating the location of the shell and gravel layer.

body glass, a small fragment of terracotta drain pipe, and a very corroded nail. This material indicated that the fill was probably brought in from an area that had been used and/or occupied in the 19th century. This cap of mixed fill thinned out and ended in line with the edge of modern driveway and so may be related to levelling or building up of the adjacent ground when the current driveway was laid.

There was one feature of note visible in the profile of the service trench and the profile of the trenches on the west edge of the building footprint. This was a layer of gravel and very fragmented shell up to 100-120 mm thick. It ran diagonally across the area, in line with the dark line visible above in Figure 17. Figure 18 shows a diagram of the area, as extrapolated from where it could be seen in the trench profiles, and Figure 19 shows the shell and gravel layer as it was visible in the profile of the service trench. Immediately above this is the fine gravel base course for the driveway paving. Two small samples were taken of the shell and gravel layer.

The shell and gravel layer was sitting directly on top of the old topsoil and was located underneath the cap of fill in the north west area of the toilet block footprint, and below the paving of the driveway in the service trench. It probably represents a path around the side of the church. It is also visible in Figure 20, the profile of one of the footing trenches, where it ends when it

meets the darker gravel and soil that created the dark diagonal line running across the area. This material was slightly mixed with the adjacent soils at its edges and may be a result of gardening or planting along the edge of a path.

The possibility that the shell and gravel layer could be a result of soil modification for Maori gardening was considered, though it is considered unlikely. The layer did not appear to be a modified soil, the gravel was quite dense and in large pieces (10 to 20 mm across). The gravel was generally water-rolled pebbles. The shell may have come from a Maori midden and been redeposited here, where it was highly fragmented and mixed through the gravel, mostly unidentifiable to species. Occasional larger fragments showed that cockle (*Austrovenus stutchburyi*) and tuatua (*Paphies australis*) were both components and there were some small fragments of unidentified gastropod.

## Conclusion

The excavation did not reveal any discrete archaeological features and the only artefacts uncovered were some redeposited fragments of items found in a mixed fill layer. There was one layer of shell and gravel that was of interest since it sat beneath the fill layers and on top of an old topsoil. The shell and gravel was probably laid as a path around south side of the church. The timeline given in the Old St Paul's Conservation Plan (Kelly and Cochran 2000: 27) notes that paths around the church were shelled and gravelled in 1909. The path was formed on top of the ground surface at that time and was subsequently covered by fill from another area – perhaps when the church expanded. The minor transept on the south side was introduced in 1876, though it is more likely that the fill layers were added as part of subsequent landscaping that took place when the church was restored in 1969-1971 (Kelly and Cochran 2000: 28).

Simon Duff from HPT had monitored the installation of the flag pole and sign in the south west corner of the property, and noted that the soil excavated for those structures was the same mixed fill as was seen in this excavation overlying about 300 mm of hard aggregate, so it seems that fill has been laid and the ground has been built up slightly across the whole southern side of the current Old St Paul's property (HPT file note 12004-339).



19. The shell and gravel layer sitting on top of the old topsoil over the natural subsoil.

20. Profile of one of the central footing trenches in the toilet block footprint. The shell and gravel layer can be seen under the thin fill cap in the far left, and it can be seen to end where it meets a darker mixed soil (centre). The deeper fill layer is visible on the right side of the trench profile.

## References

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## ADDENDUM: MONITORING OF FENCES

ANDY DODD

On 5 August 2011 earthworks for the installation of the fence along the western portion of the northern boundary were monitored by Andy Dodd on behalf of CFG Heritage Ltd. An 8.5 x 0.6 m trench approximately 300 mm deep was excavated from the footpath on Mulgrave Street to the termination of the low brick fence on the northern boundary (Figure 21). Particular attention was paid to the interface between natural and fill layers and brief notes were taken on the stratigraphy exposed in the profile of the trench.

The stratigraphy was fairly consistent, and comprised a shallow topsoil (50 mm) overlaying a fill layer of large angular gravel in a grey-brown clay loam matrix with occasional artefacts (250 mm) which in turn was deposited on the naturally occurring basal layer of yellow-orange-brown clay and rotten rock. Of some interest was an additional layer (50 mm) of fine gravel fill exposed in a 2 m long section of the trench between the grey-brown clay fill and basal layer (Figure 22). This feature began approximately 2 m west of the end of the brick wall and was approximately 2 m long.

A few artefacts were encountered within the fill layer but, aside from this, no in situ archaeological features were encountered (Table 1, Figure 24).

Also inspected were the excavations around the northern gatepost on the southern Mulgrave Street entrance (Figure 23). Repairs to this post required removal of pavers and a 750 x 750 mm excavation, 300 mm deep to pour a concrete footing. This area had been previously disturbed by the earlier landscaping works which include the garden bed, tree roots, footpath, paved driveway, and the post and rail fence itself. No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered. The depth of fill in this area was 140 mm from below the pavers.

21 (left). Northern fence trench.

22 (right). Southern profile of trench showing fine gravel fill.





Class	NISP	MNE	Artefact	Comments
Glass	2	1	Black beer	1 shoulder/neck; 1 body fragment
			Black glass square bottle	1 body fragment
	1	1	Colbalt blue bottle	1 lip/neck fragment
	2	1	Clear glass square bottle	2 body fragments embossed "...OSTO..."; "...N
MA..."	1	1	Clear glass stopper	Fragment
	1	1	Green glass	Fragment
Ceramic	1	1	Stoneware jar, Bristol glaze	1 shoulder/neck fragment
	1	1	Stoneware jar, cream glaze	1 body fragment
	1	1	Blue and white transfer	
			print plate or serving dish	1 base fragment
	1	1	White with red band plate	1 footring/shoulder fragment
	5	1	White teacup	3 rim; 2 body fragments
	1	1	White, non-diagnostic	1 body fragment

Table 1. Artefacts from the northern fence trench.

23 (above). Fence post.  
excavation.24 (right). Artefacts  
from the northern  
fence trench.

### Summary

The artefact sample was from insecure context and generally too small to yield any substantive information. It contained evidence of alcohol and pharmaceutical bottles, along with fragments of plates and stoneware jars which is consistent with refuse from a domestic setting in the late 19th, or early 20th century. It also demonstrates the potential for archaeological material to be present at Old Saint Paul's, particularly below the landscaped topsoil and modern fill layers

