
**Extension of Westchester Drive,
Glenside, Wellington:
Archaeological assessment of proposed
road extension**

Report to Stephen Harte, Wellington City
Council

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1. Introduction

Wellington City Council (WCC) proposes to join the two current segments of Westchester Drive, at Glenside, north of Wellington.

In February 2008 the consultant was engaged by Lindsay Daysh, of GHD Ltd to undertake an archaeological assessment of the proposal to meet the statutory requirements of the Historic Places Act 1993.

The location of the proposed work is shown in figure 1.

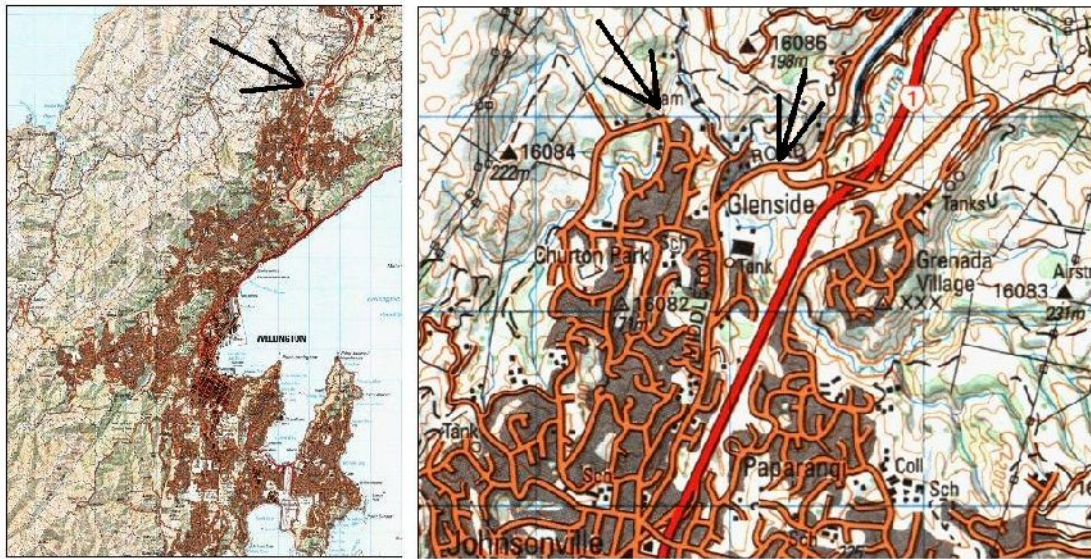


Figure 1: Location of proposed work at Westchester Drive, Glenside

Location of Westchester Drive is shown arrowed in figure on left; the two ends of Westchester Drive to be joined are shown arrowed in figure on right

1.1 Context and Data

Archaeological sites are defined in the Historic Places Act 1993 as:

“...any place in New Zealand that

(a) Either -

(i) was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900; or

(ii) is the site of the wreck of any vessel where that wreck occurred before 1900; and

(b) is or may be able through investigation by archaeological methods to provide evidence relating to the history of New Zealand.¹”

All archaeological sites in New Zealand that conform to the definition from the Historic Places Act 1993 cited above have legal protection under Part 1 of the Historic Places Act 1993, whether or not they are recorded or their existence is known.

¹ Historic Places Act 1993, Section 2, Interpretation.

In addition, the Resource Management Act 1991 identifies the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development as a matter of national importance (section 6f).

Historic heritage is defined as those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, derived from archaeological, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific, or technological qualities.

Historic heritage includes:

- ♦ Historic sites, structures, places and areas
- ♦ Archaeological sites
- ♦ Sites of significance to Maori, including wahi tapu
- ♦ Surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources

Archaeological sites by implication are physical and tangible; they can be observed and measured.

Archaeological sites may be of Maori origin and therefore of significance to Maori. There may also be other sites of significance to Maori for their spiritual and traditional values, and which may have no physical or tangible remains, and therefore do not fall within the legal definition of an archaeological site. This report is looking only at the archaeological resource in the study area, and will not attempt in any way to comment on or judge the Maori values of these sites. This is not meant to detract from or undermine the value of these places of significance to Maori; rather, this acknowledges that it is not appropriate for an archaeologist to comment on matters of significance to Tangata Whenua.

Archaeological sites only have a sense of meaning if they are examined in the context of a cultural landscape. Sites can be examined by archaeological methodology, that is, by applying a variety of scientific techniques to examine and rationalise the data; however, ultimately these places must be seen as remains of human populations, and their relationships with environmental factors are a by-product of this.

Archaeology can never say definitively "what happened" on a site or a landscape; instead, data and information is gathered, and a hypothesis is proposed to explain the possible relationships between data, known information and possible interpretations.

Data for this study was sourced from CINZAS (Central Index of New Zealand Archaeological Sites), the electronic version of the NZ Archaeological Association's (NZAA) site recording file that is maintained by the Department of Conservation. Data from the Historic Places Trust, Wellington City Council District Plan and Land Information New Zealand was checked.

Archaeological sites in New Zealand are recorded by the NZAA and records entered into the site recording scheme. A site will be included simply by virtue of its existence; the NZAA file is an information database and makes no selection or ranking. Grid references given for an archaeological site are simply an indication of the site's location, and do not delimit the site's extent. In addition, some sites

included in the NZAA list may no longer exist, as they may have been destroyed since they were recorded.

1.2 Scope and limitations of this report

This report presents an archaeological assessment of the proposed area of work, but it is only that. The land and wider vicinity may also be of significance to the Iwi through tradition or association; this report does not constitute an assessment of Maori values.

2. Archaeological resource

2.1 Recorded history of the area

The Porirua Stream runs along a broad natural valley floor between Wellington and the Porirua Harbour, and this valley has been used as a transport route for people since first human settlement of the area. Maori used this as a route between Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour) and the Porirua Harbour, with a route running off at Takapu and joining on to the top of the Wellington Harbour at Pito-one (Petone), known as the Takapu track. Later European settlers used the same route, first as a foot path, then for horse and bullock traffic. Eventually the route was made into a formed road, and was known as the Porirua Road. In the present day the section of the original road between Johnsonville and Tawa that is of interest to this assessment is known as Middleton Road from Johnsonville north for some kilometres, it then becomes Willowbank Rd south of Tawa.

There are several layers of human use and occupation along the road.

2.2.1 *Maori occupation*

Maori appear to have used the valley mainly as a transport route; however, there are no known or recorded archaeological sites of Maori origin along the valley. No doubt the resources of the stream and the forest would have been utilised, but these activities have left no known physical remains or signs.

2.2.2 *Early European settlement and farming*

The New Zealand Company ships with their load of largely British settlers arrived in Wellington harbour in 1840, with a plan to buy land for a new settlement. The settlement of Wellington was laid out and divided into 1100 one-acre blocks, or town acres, for sale.

The New Zealand Company acquired the land along the Tawa Valley in the early 1840s and parcelled the rural land into country sections of 100 acres each. Investors who purchased a town acre within Wellington also received a lot of 100 country acres.

Glenside is the locality at the southern end of the valley, at the northern end of Johnsonville. It was settled by Europeans in the early 1840s and was known then as The Halfway, as it was a resting-place for travellers halfway along the journey between Wellington and Porirua along a Maori trail. The name Glenside came in 1928, as a result of a competition. The Porirua Road through The Halfway/Glenside was used as a main route north of Wellington from 1840 until the stretch of motorway between Porirua and Johnsonville was opened in 1951².

² <http://glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php>

The area of development that is the subject of this assessment is located within former country acre 24, Porirua District.

Historical survey plans shows that country acre 24 was purchased by G Brown. It was subdivided in the early 1840s into smaller farming lots, shown on survey office plan SO 10983 (figures 2 and 3).

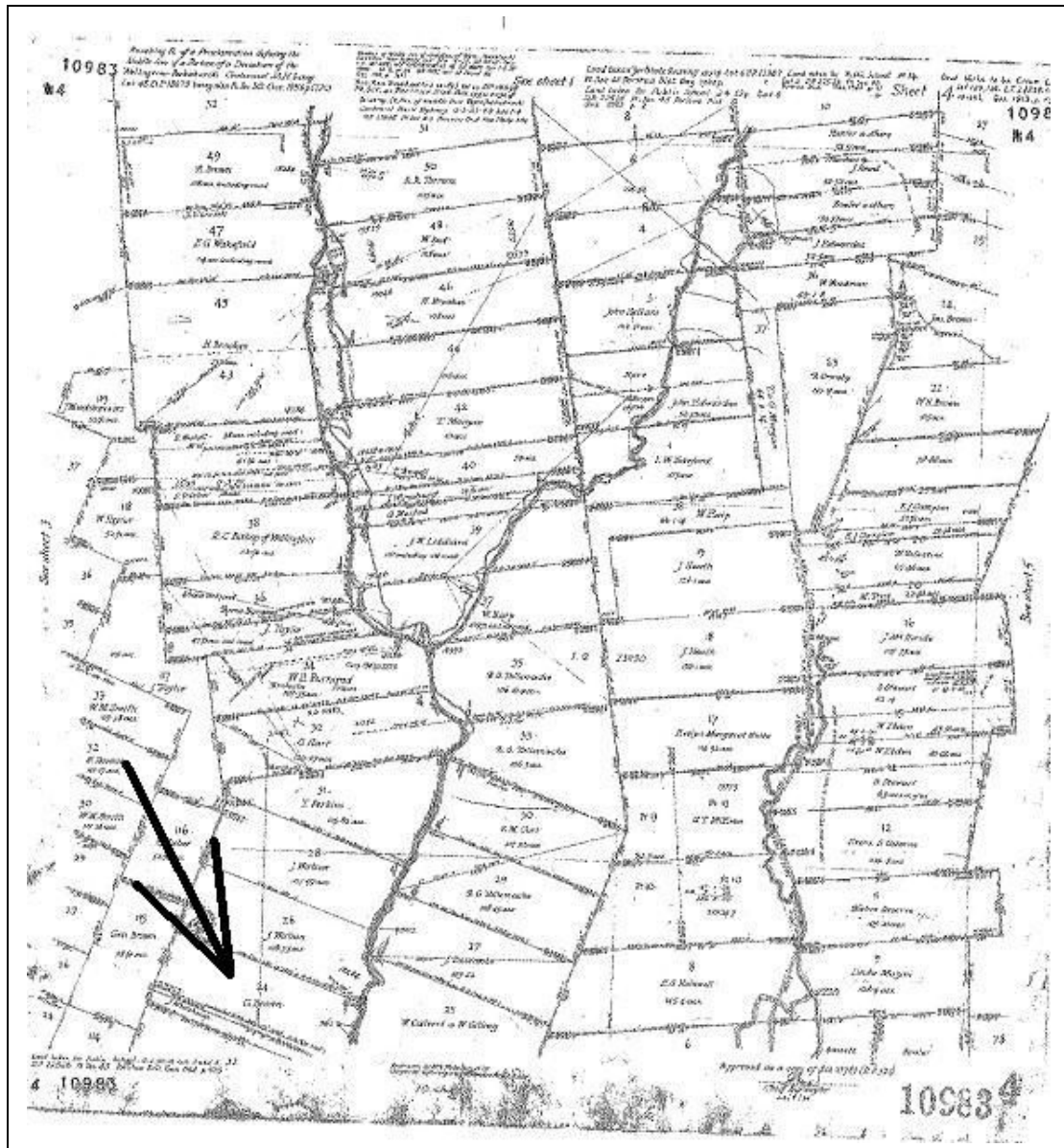


Figure 2: SO 10983, LINZ
Section 24 shown arrowed

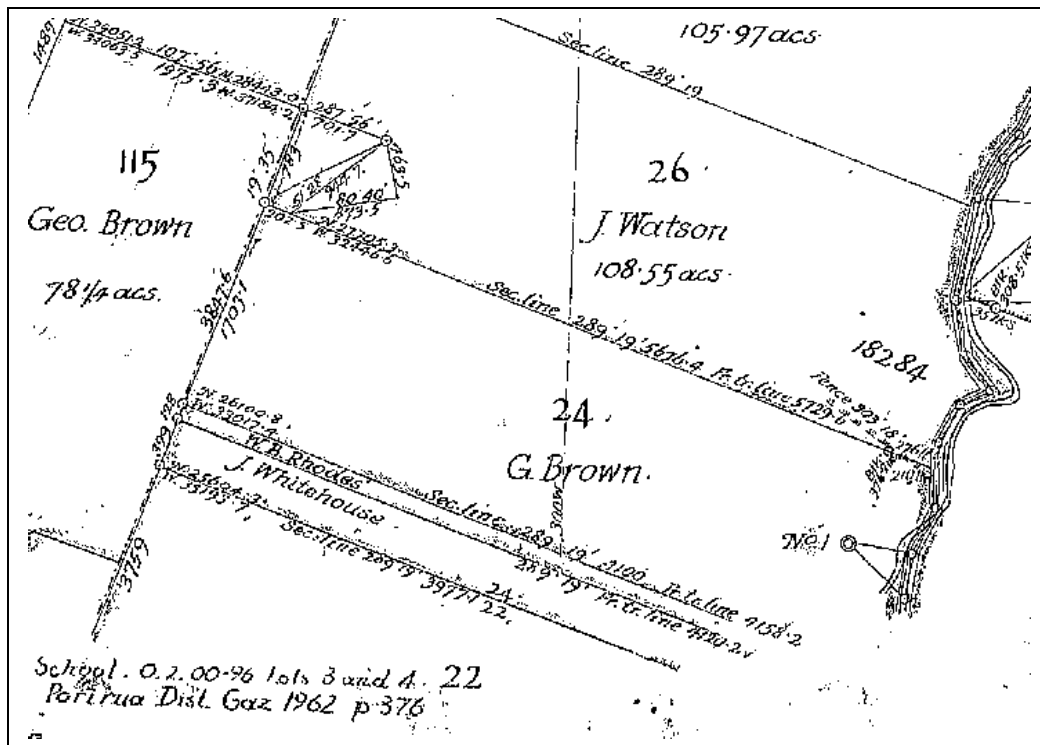


Figure 3: Detail of plan SO 10983, showing section 24

Bruce Murray's Historic Atlas of Tawa includes a composite plan, showing numerous owners of Section 24 (figure 4). The location of the Halfway House in adjacent Section 23 is considered to be wrongly located by Claire Bibby of the Glenside Residents Association; she notes that the Walls bought a subdivision of Section 24³

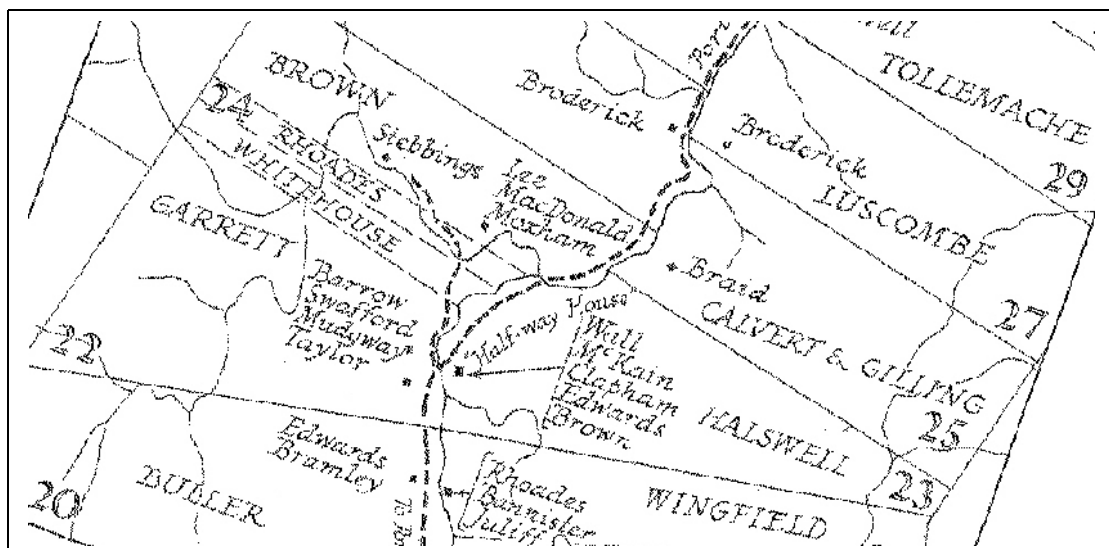


Figure 4: Detail from plan, Historical Atlas of Tawa, p. 29

³ Claire Bibby, e-mail to author, 26 April 2009

In addition to the owners shown on Murray's plan, the Glenside Progressive Association website notes a further owner of Section 24 as being F Johnson, believed to be Frank Johnson, a miller and founder of Johnsonville. Another early owner of part of the section was the Wall family of Porirua, who opened their home to accommodate travellers which became known as The Halfway House.

“In 1841, settlers Susannah and Anthony Wall agreed to purchase an eight-acre block of land sub-divided from Section 24. Their friend John Whitehouse bought an adjacent eight-acre block. It appears that the Wall's (sic) moved onto their block in the spring of 1841⁴.

Several cottages were built by early European settlers along Middleton Road, several of which are still extant:

- ♦ Greer House, also known as Clarence Farm, is still on site at 420 Middleton Rd, on former country acre 33.
- ♦ Nott House, also known as Ivey Bank Farm is located at 400 Middleton Rd,
- ♦ Halfway House, also known as Glenside is located at 246 Middleton Rd. The original Halfway House was built in 1841 in country section 24 on the west side of the Porirua Road (now Middleton Road). It was built by Anthony and Susannah Wall as accommodation for travellers between Wellington and Porirua, as it was about the halfway point in the journey. This house was replaced by a second “Halfway House” built on the opposite side of the road in country section 23 in 1849. The third and current house was built on this same site in 1880. (Murray, 2006:30)

None of these cottages are within or near the proposed road corridor.

The Wellington-Manawatu railway line was opened in 1886. This line has since been inundated by the main trunk line, which runs along the base of the valley.

Specific potential sites which may be affected by the roading proposal are discussed in section 2.5 of this report.

Military history

The developing Porirua Road became a focal point for Ngati Toa opposition to European settlement in the Porirua area⁵. The legality of land purchases was questionable. Buildings and bridges were pulled down. Te Rangihaeata placed a tapu on the road on 1845⁶. Conflict between European settlers and Ngati Toa at Wairau in Marlborough in 1843 escalated tension, and the Government realised the need to enforce access to the road. A series of stockades were built along the road, completed by the Paremata Barracks at Paremata on the Porirua Harbour.

⁴ <http://www.glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php/gravesite-overview-westchesterlink-124/104-gravesite-memories.html>

⁵ Day, 1991: 4

⁶ *ibid*: 7

2.2 Recorded archaeological sites

There are no sites recorded within the immediate area of work. There are two sites recorded within the wider vicinity, seen in table 1.

Table 1: Recorded archaeological sites in vicinity of work:

Site number	Metric easting	Metric northing	Site type	Date recorded
R27/236	2663100	6000900	McCoy's stockade	2001
R27/237	2662500	5999000	Middleton's stockade	2001

These two stockades are part of the series of stockades built in the 1840s as a result of rising tension between European settlers and Ngati Toa (refer section 2.1 of this report.). McCoy's stockade was located next to the Main Road at Tawa, beside its junction with Sunrise Boulevard. Middleton's stockade was located south of McCoy's stockade west of Middleton Road. There are no visible remains of either stockade.

Neither site is near the proposed road corridor.

2.3 Statutory lists

There are no sites within the vicinity of the area of proposed work which have been included in the Historic Places Trust register of historic places, historic areas, wahi tapu and wahi tapu areas:

However Greer House, Middleton House and Halfway House, all located along the Porirua Road (Middleton Rd), have been considered for registration.

There are no items listed on the Wellington City Council district plan within the proposed area of work. However there are three listed items in the wider vicinity:

Item reference	Map number	Item
211	26	Nott House
360	26	Greer House
373	26	Cobb house

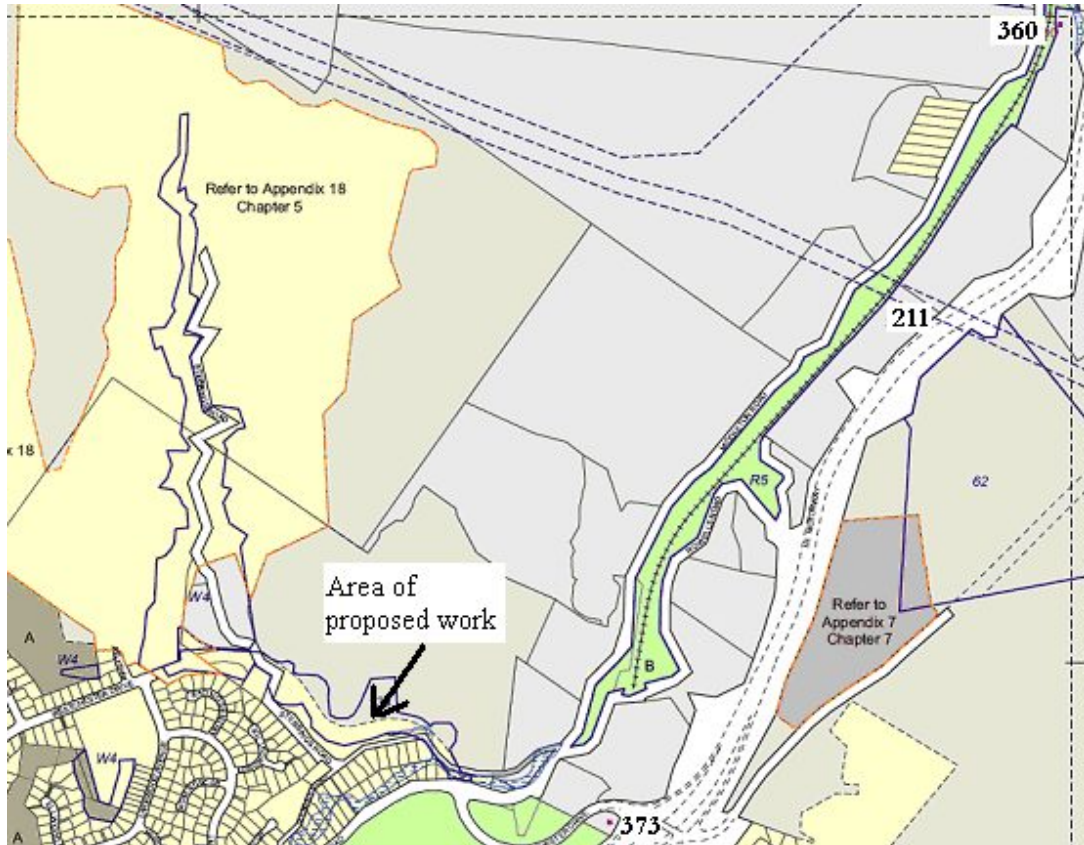


Figure 5: Items listed in district plan near vicinity of work
WCC website

2.4 Site visits

The consultant made several site visits to the area of proposed work:

- ♦ First visit on 10 March 2008, accompanied by Greg Leighton, GHD Ltd
- ♦ Ground Penetrating radar survey, 9 April 2008
- ♦ Ground truthing investigation 31 March 2009

2.5 Potential archaeological sites

There are three aspects of European settlement within former Section 24 likely to have left archaeological remains within or near the proposed road corridor.

2.5.1 1841 Gravesite

An historic grave is reported on the website of the Glenside Progressive Association, as being on the rural block of land known as Waitakaro, on the corner of Glenside Road and Stebbings Road.

“The grave is said to contain the body of a mother and child, the mother dying in childbirth because the roads were impassable due to rain and flooding.

Mr Len Stebbing’s (sic), whose family resided in the area since 1863, believed that the woman was the first wife of Mr Frank Johnson, of Johnsonville. He surmises that her untimely death resulted in Mr Johnson subdividing Section 24, selling out and relocating to Johnsonville.”⁷

The website also reports the grave as being fenced and well maintained up until the 1950’s.

There is independent documentary evidence of the grave. Bishop Selwyn consecrated the gravesite on his first visit to Wellington in 1842. This event is documented in letters written by Mrs Susannah Wall of the first Halfway House, to her sisters in England:

“...the Bishop and severl (sic) church ministers came [in September 1842]...a poor woman at a neighbouring house ad (sic) died in the winter and the rodes (sic) was (sic) so bad at that time she could not be carried down to the burying ground in Wellington and she was burred (sic) with oute (sic) the burial service I told the Bishop and he went with me and the poor womans (sic) husband to the grave and read the burial service I cant (sic) tell you my dear sister how I felt at that time but I dare say you can tell my feelings better than I can express myself...”⁸

⁷ <http://glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php>

⁸ Letter of Susannah Wall, 18 December 1842, ATL

The precise location of the grave could not be verified from documentary sources. Survey plans held by LINZ did not note the grave, nor did the surveyors' fieldbooks. Births and Deaths registers held by the Alexander Turnbull Library for Wellington do not commence until 1848.

Older local Glenside residents and former residents remember the grave; their memories are shared on the Glenside Association website. Many residents remember the grave as being surrounded by a white picket fence.

The consultant made a site visit on 10 March 2008 to the approximate location of the grave as reported in the Glenside Progressive Association website. There was nothing to see on the ground surface - the vegetation is high grass and blackberry, which obscures the topography.

The likely area of the burial can be determined by some limitations in the landscape:

- ♦ It is unlikely to be located too close to the stream, due to flooding threat.
- ♦ It is unlikely to be located on the steeper slopes on the north side of the valley, as the steep slopes would be an unstable location to dig a hole to bury something, due to slope wash and creep.
- ♦ It is unlikely to be within the area of the stockyards. The burial of course well predates the stockyards, but the yards themselves are unlikely to have been placed with the burial within them.

This therefore leaves a relatively small parcel of land in which the burial may be located, as seen in figure 5.

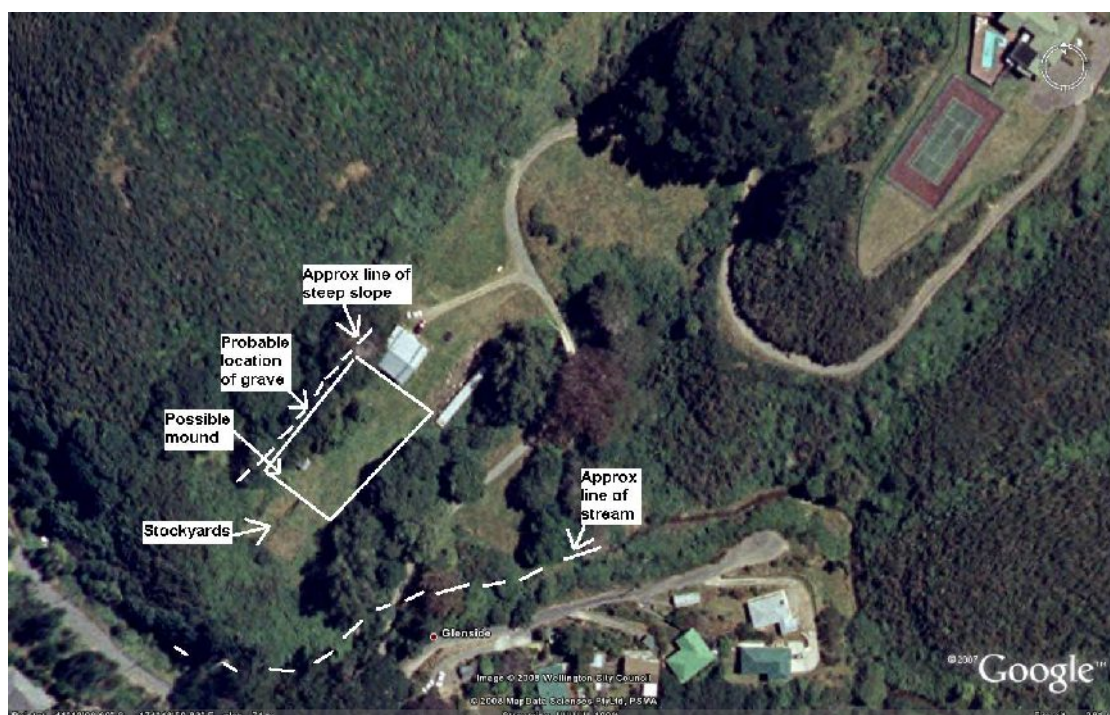


Figure 6: Likely area of grave

To attempt to specifically locate the grave, the consultant engaged Geometria to undertake a non invasive ground investigation, using ground penetrating radar. The survey was undertaken using a Fluxgate Gradiometer, which measures small underground magnetic anomalies. Both geomorphological changes and human-induced soil changes can be detected.

This survey took place on 9 April 2004. An area between the stockyards and the corrugated iron building on site was covered by the GPR survey, including a longer strip along the edge of the stream.



Figure 7: Location of GPR survey

Shown as white outline

Geometria reported interference in the survey data results from both the corrugated iron building, and from metal within the stockyards⁹.

Geometria did, however, report a possible indication of a grave site. Advice from the local community recounted that the grave site was once surrounded by a cast iron fence, as was common in early historic period burials, but that this had fallen over many years ago. In the immediate area where the grave was most likely to be located,

⁹ Geometria, 2008: 5

there was a very strong ferrous signature of interest. Cast iron has a particularly strong signature compared to other iron objects. The area of the strong signature at Glenside had a rectangular shape and was of dimension appropriate to fenced grave. Geometria speculated that the single strong signal may be the accumulated signature of several pieces of cast iron fencing that have fallen inwards over the grave¹⁰.

The target identified by Geometria was tested by ground truthing on 31 March 2009. As the burial may have been revealed by excavation, a disinterment licence was obtained beforehand from the Ministry Heath.

The surface vegetation and topsoil was cleared using a small digger with a clean up bucket.

Two areas were cleared:

- ♦ The area between the stockyards and the corrugated iron shed, including the target identified by Geometria
- ♦ an area south of the stockyards, as one resident was certain he remembered the grave being this far south (in contrast to the memories of the majority of the elderly residents, which placed the grave site further north between the stockyards & iron shed).

In each area the soil was cleared down to the uniform yellow-brown soil layer beneath the topsoil.

No indication of the burial was found. The burial was expected to be seen as a discoloured regular rectangle or oval, in marked contrast to the subsoil. In all cleared areas the subsoil was uniform in colour and appearance.

The target identified in the GPR survey was revealed to be a piece of corrugated iron beneath the vegetation.

¹⁰ *ibid*: 5-6



Figure 8: Clearing work underway
(M. O’Keeffe, 2009)



Figure 9: Cleared area north of stockyards

(M. O’Keeffe, 2009)



Figure 10: Cleared area south of stockyards

(M. O’Keeffe, 2009)

It is noted that the purpose of the testing was not to find the grave per se, it was in fact to determine whether or not the grave was located within the road corridor. The archaeologist is satisfied that this testing has determined the grave, if present, is outside the road corridor.

2.5.2 Glenugie farm homestead

This farm homestead was located at Waitakaro, on the corner of Glenside and Stebbings Road, Glenside (the grave above is located within the area of this former farm).

The five bedroomed homestead was built in 1886 and lived in by the May family, who were prominent in the early Wellington fishing industry. The homestead was demolished about 20 years ago¹¹.

¹¹ Glenside Progressive Association website



Figure 11: Glenugie in 1886.

Murray Henderson Collection, Glenside Progressive Association Website.

The former homestead site is still extant – it can be seen as a regular flat platform on the east side of the stream, when walking down the farm track from the corner of Stebbings Road. Large elm trees line the track, and there are domestic plants extant including camellias. The Glenside residents also report bulbs are present in spring.

The Glenside Progressive association website records that “The elm trees were originally planted along the stream by early settlers. One of the ancestors of the Stebbings family was a cart-wright and the elms were planted for their wood, used in the construction of the cart wheels.”¹²

Archaeological elements that may be present include house foundations, artefacts or material associated with the physical house, domestic artefacts associated with the occupants, and rubbish pits in the vicinity of the house.

2.5.3 Ridge

Claire Bibby of the Glenside Residents Association took the archaeologist up the ridge west of and beside the stream at the grave site. Ms Bibby reported orally that early residents have memories of a track along the ridge, and a possible whisky still on a benched platform on the ridge.

The location is on the spur of the ridge above the Porirua stream, as it turns a corner northwest past the possible gravesite. An historic photo from the Glenside Residents Association website appears to show a benched cut in the ridge side; it is possible this is a Maori track.

¹² <http://www.glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php/gravesite-overview-westchesterlink-124/105-gravesite-archaeology.html>



Figure 12: Ridge above Porirua Stream

<http://www.glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php/gravesite-overview-westchesterlink-124/104-gravesite-memories.html>

The ridge is currently very overgrown, so a clear view of the surface topography is not possible. There were no clear signs of a benched track. The flattened platform on the spur was apparent, but the surface was not as flat and regular as would be expected from an artificial surface.

The three areas of potential archaeological interest are shown in figure 13:



Figure 13: Areas of archaeological interest

- 1: Glenugie house site and surrounds
- 2: Potential grave site
- 3: Possible bench cut on ridge

3 Assessment

3.1 Proposed work, and impact of proposed work

Wellington City Council proposes to construct a local purposes road, joining the two ends of existing Westchester Drive.



Figure 14: Area of proposed road construction

The road will run along the valley of the Porirua Stream for much of its length.

3.2 Impacts on potential archaeology of development area

In the vicinity of the potential archaeological sites identified in section 2.5 of this report, the road is planned to run along the valley floor beside the stream. As the ridge on the north side is quite steep, a batter will be cut into the ridge face.

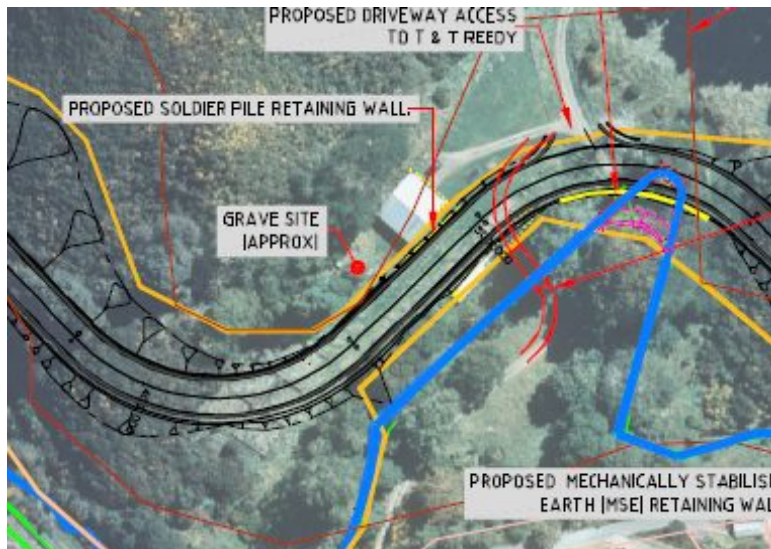


Figure 15: Proposed work in area of potential archaeological sites

The possible impacts on the three potential sites are listed:

1. Glenugie house site and surrounds

No construction or cutting work is planned in this area. However, as the area is clear and relatively flat it is an obvious area for storage of equipment, placement of sheds and utilities, or parking for machinery. No subsurface clearing or digging should take place without an archaeologist present, as features or artefacts may be present

2. Gravesite

The ground truthing arising from the GPR survey indicates it is highly unlikely that the gravesite is within the roading designation and area of work. However the presence of the grave cannot be categorically ruled out, and thus an archaeologist should be present during work in this vicinity.

3,. Benchcut on ridge

Figure 15 shows that it is highly unlikely that the batter or other construction works will extend so far up the ridge slope so as to impact on the possible benched cut on the ridge spur.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The Porirua stream was an area of early settlement and transport for early European occupants and settlers to Wellington. The land was surveyed and sold in the early 1840s.

Wellington City Council propose to build a local purposes road along a section of the stream valley. This construction has the potential to impact on potential archaeological sites. The sites include the site of an early European settler family's house, a possible 1840s grave and a possible benched cut which may be a Maori or European track or occupation site.

There are no surface indications of the presence of any of these potential sites. Nevertheless a precautionary approach is considered prudent.

It is recommended that Wellington City Council apply to the Historic Places Trust for an authority under Section 11 of the Historic Places Act 1993 to modify, damage or destroy archaeological sites within and beside the Porirua Stream, at Glenside.

The following conditions for the authority are recommended:

1. That an archaeologist monitors all surface clearing, trenching, construction or other invasive subsurface groundwork within the three areas of potential archaeological sites, as defined in section 2.5 of this report, being the Glenugie house site, the potential grave site, and the potential benchcut site. The archaeologist should be given the opportunity to examine any archaeological deposits disturbed by the development work, and to make recommendations for further detailed examination of these deposits where appropriate .
2. Artefacts and material uncovered and recorded during site clearing work will be lodged with an appropriate repository. The developer will pay for the cost of any conservation required for artefacts or material
3. Artefacts and material recovered will be given to the Glenside Residents Association, to incorporate into an historical display on the history of the area.
4. If the burial is located, the bones will be disinterred and reinterred in an appropriate location, to be decided by WCC, the Historic Places Trust and the Glenside Residents Association.

Sources

Primary:

Glenside website: <http://glenside.wellington.net.nz/index.php?>

Land Information New Zealand survey plans:

SO 10503	nd
SO 10983	nd copy of roll plan 321
SO 11022	nd
SO 11731	nd
A 2839	1909
A 2838	1910
SO 18284	1926
SO 18641	1928
SO 18617	1929
DP 10666	1934
SO 19422	1934
DP 15923	1950
DP 18799	1955
DP 52518	1980

Land Information New Zealand fieldbooks:

Fieldbooks 158, p 276

Fieldbooks 3211 p 24

Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga register of historic places, historic areas, wahi tapu and wahi tapu areas

NZ Archaeological Association database and central file

Tawa Historical Society website:

<http://www.tawahistory.wellington.net.nz/index.html>

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