

Report No:	RESC12-02-03
File No:	
Date:	15 January 2012
<b>Information Only – no decision required</b>	

## REPORT SUMMARY

**Report to:** Engineering Services Committee  
**Meeting Date:** 02 February 2012  
**Report Author:** Steve Elkington, Transportation Projects Engineer  
**Subject:** **Turners Bluff – Archaeological Find**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the recent discovery of an archaeological site during the earthworks operation to realign Riwaka-Kaiteriteri Road at Turners Bluff.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That the report be received.**

### DRAFT RESOLUTION

**THAT the Engineering Services Committee receives the report, Turners Bluff – Archaeological Find, RESC12-02-03.**

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## 1. Background

- 1.1 A contract was awarded to Oldfields Ltd in October 2011 for the realignment of Riwaka-Kaiteriteri Road at a location known as Turners Bluff.
- 1.2 The work is being undertaken to realign the road for both safety and security of route. The road section being realigned is in part above an active slip face which in recent times has required a temporary barrier and signage to be erected thus narrowing the road.
- 1.3 Oldfields started work on site in mid-November with their earthworks sub-contractor Taylors Contracting starting topsoil stripping above the bluff.
- 1.4 Resource consent to realign the road was applied for some years ago and granted in October 2011 after successfully completing negotiations with the affected landowner and other parties.
- 1.5 As part of negotiations with the affected landowner (who Council acquired land from), it was agreed to further cut down the bluff reducing the height of the benched batter above the road, and to re-contour their section on top of the bluff enabling excess cut to waste material to be dealt with. As part of this work a further consent was granted for the additional earthworks.
- 1.6 For both consents consultation was undertaken with iwi and the NZ Historic Places Trust (NZHPT). There were no known sites of cultural or heritage values identified in Council's TRMP. Consultation with iwi and the NZHPT showed no concerns even though there are known sites along this coastline. Under both consents a condition of "Accidental Discovery" was volunteered, which sets out the precautionary actions taken by the contractor in the event of any items of cultural or heritage interest being discovered. Further to this iwi required monitors to be present during earthworks.

- 1.7 Until recent years, the land on top of the bluff had been farmed. An overhead transmission line currently crosses the front zone of the bluff. When originally constructed, the Riwaka-Kaiteriteri Road would have been cut through the front portion of the bluff with any subsequent road widening further reshaping it.

## **2. Discovery of Archaeological Remains**

- 2.1 Whilst vegetation was being removed above the bluff on 30 November 2011, one of the iwi monitors on behalf of Tiakina te Taiao, noticed geometrical shapes of colour variations in the overlying strata. Further investigation revealed friable topsoil that went down deep beside the highly weathered Separation Point Granite.
- 2.2 The iwi monitoring team then contacted one of the locally approved NZHPT archaeologists, Deb Foster to make an assessment of the surface findings. Deb Foster determined from the shapes in the exposed surface and from an exposed section in the embankment above the road, which had only been exposed with the clearing of vegetation, that these shapes were most likely Kumara Pits with some postholes. Based on this information, the archaeologist under powers of the Historic Places Act 1993, closed off a section of the work site above the bluff. The closed area encompassed a critical area of the earthworks operation resulting in the earthworks portion of the contract being suspended.
- 2.3 Fortunately Oldfields were able to continue with the task of installing the new large diameter culvert in the gully on the Kaiteriteri side of the bluff.



### **3. NZHPT Authority**

- 3.1 Council applied for “Authority” from the NZHPT to investigate and excavate the site. The application required input from the landowner, iwi and a brief archaeology report after further site investigation.
- 3.2 The Authority (copy attached) was issued on 20 December 2011. Under the Historic Places Act 1993 a 15-working day stand-down period is required before the Authority can be exercised. This period enables iwi as the affected party to object to any of the conditions. Unfortunately under the Act the 15 working days do not apply between 20 December and 10 January, further delaying the work.

### **4. Revised Programme**

- 4.1 The Authority was dated to become active on 31 January 2012 enabling Deb Foster and her team to excavate the pits prior to resumption of the earthworks. The archaeological investigation will involve producing a report recording what was found for NZHPT. NZHPT then has three working days after receiving the report to allow continuation of the earthworks. It is not envisaged that this approval will be withheld.
- 4.2 Deb Foster has indicated the contractor may be able to resume the earthworks on or around 7 February 2012.
- 4.3 Whilst the contractor has not yet revised the programme, it is anticipated the completion date for the work will now be the end of April 2012. However this is dependent on weather and any other unforeseeable technical delays. The sealing work is programmed for mid-March. The binder brew for the first coat sealing of the work can be designed with variance in the additives to compensate for temperature ranges if this is an issue.
- 4.4 The recent December rain event caused little if any damage to the site. Had the earthworks been more advanced then the sediment controls in place may have been tested.

### **5. Financial and Other Implications**

- 5.1 Oldfields had tendered a high daily works rate even though they were still the lowest conforming tenderer. The calculated cost of the work being delayed, presuming the contractor is able to restart the earthworks by 7 February 2012, can be covered under the contingency item allowed for in the contract.

- 5.2 The undergrounding work and disestablishment of the temporary overhead power transmission will also be delayed along with the outages for the watermain due to its modification. These later dates may be more acceptable to the seasonal demands of the area.

## **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1 That the report be received.

## **7. Draft Resolution**

- 7.1 THAT the Engineering Services Committee receives the report, Turners Bluff – Archaeological Find, RESC12-02-03.**

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – NZ Historic Places Trust Authority