

Heritage Assessment

Site Address:	45-85 Curtis Street, Karori
Legal Description:	Section 2 Survey Office Plan 37014, Pt Lot 1-2 DP 1746 & Lot 1-4 DP 2089

Significance Assessment

1. Old Karori Road which the bridge was a part of, is of historical note as the original main route to Karori from the harbour for both Maori and early European settlers.
2. The site of the place formerly known as Devil's Bridge is buried under fill.
3. There are no other recorded heritage items or archaeological sites in the vicinity.
4. Reputedly there is a plaque on a concrete plinth that marks the site of the bridge – the location of the plaque has not been found.
5. Any excavation of the area under the garden centre will involve consultation with NZHPT regarding archaeological protection provisions of the Historic Places Act 1993.
6. Consultation with iwi would ensure consideration of the cultural importance of the track of which the crossing place was a part.

Description of the Site;

The area formerly known as Devil's Bridge, was located at what is now the corner of Curtis Street and Old Karori Road. During the 19th century various bridges which were often washed out and replaced, provided foot and cart access over the Kaiwharawhara Stream.

There is a clear cultural heritage link to tangata whenua for this site. The location of the Devil's Bridge was a crossing point on the Kaiwharawhara Stream used by Māori as the access to gardening areas in Northland. This route was taken over by the NZ Company in 1840 to form what is now known as the Old Karori Road.

It is likely that during stream culverting works of 1884-5, the bridge was demolished. As the area has been covered with fill, any remains are no longer visible. The bridge site is likely to be at some depth under the Karori Garden Centre. Extensive excavations would be required to uncover physical remains.

ArchSite database (consulted on 20/09/12) which records all known archaeological sites, shows that the nearest recorded archaeological site is the Karori tunnel. The site of the former bridge meets the definition of an unrecorded archaeological site and therefore is covered by the provisions of the Historic Places Act 1993 (HPA). Consultation with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) is advisable for any party considering excavating this area as NZHPT administers the HPA which provides protection for archaeological sites.

Conclusion

An archaeological assessment of the site is likely to conclude that the potential risk of damage to an archaeological site is minimal, unless excavations were to go to the former base of the gully and path of the stream.

Heritage Team
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