

Cato Square Archaeological Works

3 April 2017

Uncovering Prahran's rich cultural history

What is the archaeological dig?

The Cato Street car park in Prahran has become the site of an archaeological investigation ahead of the City of Stonnington's recently announced new urban redevelopment, Cato Square.

Archaeologists from Dr Vincent Clark and Associates will excavate the site looking for significant archaeological remains of an 1850s farm and 19th century housing believed to be preserved beneath the present car park.

Where is the archaeological dig?

The archaeological dig is near the corner of Izett and Chatham streets, and is part of pre-construction works for the \$60 million Cato Square urban park and underground car park announced last month.

What are the archaeologists hoping to find?

The focus of the archaeological investigation is to look for significant archaeological remains of an 1850s farm and 19th century housing believed to be preserved beneath the present car park. Archeologists are confident of finding pieces of domestic items like crockery, cooking pots and bottles.

Why is there a need for an archaeological dig?

The archaeological dig in Cato Square is concentrating on a site of local, historical and archaeological interest to the City of Stonnington and broader Melbourne.

The Cato Street car park has experienced limited development since 1850 and there is a high potential for historical material to be preserved beneath the carpark.

It also presents a unique opportunity to investigate the diverse cultural heritage of Prahran, and provides a window into the growth and development of inner Melbourne's commercial and retail precinct.

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Visit the **Cato Square Information Hub**,
located on site – for map go to
stonnington.vic.gov.au/catosquare



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How long is the archaeological excavation project likely to take?

The archaeological excavation has already begun and is expected to take up to two (2) months to complete.

What will the archaeological project cost?

The archaeological dig is factored into the total project cost of approximately \$60 million.

What will the archaeologists do with the recovered remains?

All the artefacts recovered at the Cato Square site during the excavation period will be placed into bags, clearly identified and stored at Heritage Victoria, where they will be analysed, cleaned, and catalogued in accordance with Heritage Victoria's *Guidelines for Investigating Historical Archaeological Artefacts and Sites*.

Will the archaeologists report the findings to the public at the end of the project?

Yes. The archaeologists will be available for media interviews. Council is also hoping to display artefacts found at the dig site.

Will the public be able to watch the archaeologists recover features and artefacts?

Curious visitors will be able to watch the archaeologists comb through the area for historical features and artefacts, between Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

How will Council communicate the progress of the excavation project?

Council will keep the broader community informed during the excavation period.

The Cato Square Information Hub has been established on site (for map go to stonnington.vic.gov.au/catosquare), serving as a base for information sessions and community engagement.

We have created a dedicated section on Council's website where project updates will be distributed regularly. Updates will be communicated via the residents' newsletter, *InStonnington*, as well as local newspapers and Council's engagement platform, Connect Stonnington. Further information will be published across a wide range of digital and social media channels.

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About the excavation period

How will disruption during excavation be managed?

Council is consulting with traders and the community while actively pursuing a wide number of measures to minimise the impact of the excavation on Cato Street car park.

Only a small portion of the car park is affected by the archeological dig so we do not anticipate major inconvenience.

Over the coming months a traffic management system, including new state-of-the-art directional signage on nearby major roads, will be put in place to optimise traffic flow and minimise interruption to the area and surrounding roads.

How will noise in the area be managed?

As with all excavation sites there will be some noise associated with the excavation works. Council is actively pursuing a wide number of measures to minimise the impact of the excavation of Cato Square.

Operating hours will be in line with industry practice and EPA Victoria guidelines. Excavation will be limited within normal construction hours of Monday to Friday between 8am until 5pm.

How will dust in the area be managed?

As with all excavation sites there will be some dust associated with the works.

Council is providing plastic mesh fencing cloth around the contained area to provide maximum protection against dust for surrounding residents, and businesses.

Here's how to stay informed about the project:

Website: stonnington.vic.gov.au/catosquare
Email: catosquare@stonnington.vic.gov.au
Phone: 8290 1333
In person: Visit the **Cato Square Information Hub** located on site
For map: Visit stonnington.vic.gov.au/catosquare
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