

Ōpārara Upgrade Project Update

March 2021

In 2018, \$5.7m Provincial Growth Funded was approved to upgrade McCallums Mill Road and the tracks and amenities in the Ōpārara Basin.

The Ōpārara Basin in Kahurangi National Park has significant conservation and biodiversity values. The Ōpārara Arch is the longest limestone arch in Australasia, while the Honeycomb Hill Caves systems are one of the largest cave systems in New Zealand and contain important fossil records.

The Ōpārara Basin hosts a wide range of biodiversity including the short-tailed bat, whio/blue duck, *Powelliphanta annectens*, great-spotted kiwi, kaka, kakariki, *Simplicia buchananii*, *Asplenium 'calcicole'*, pukatea, the cave spider *Spelungula cavernicolai* and the silver fern.



Figure 1: Moria Gate, Ōpārara Basin.

Photo: www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/nelson-tasman/places/Kahurangi-national-park/oparara-basin/

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The Ōpārara Arches project was split into two stages.

Stage One Works are nearing completion, these works included:

Box Canyon Toilet and Honeycomb Caves Security upgrade

The new flush toilet in the Box Canyon carpark is fully completed and has been used since December 2020 with no concerns. The existing long drop toilet will be removed over the coming weeks and the path rehabilitated.



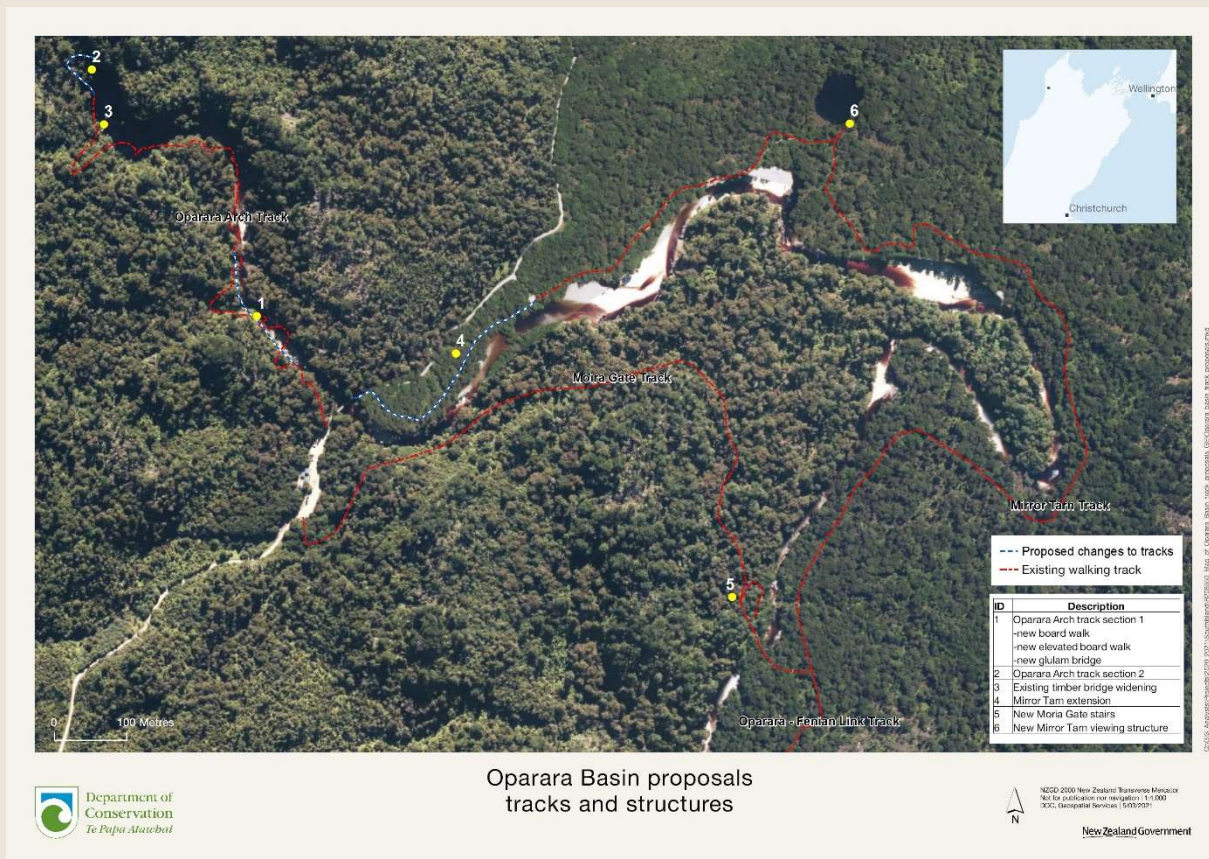
Figure 2- New toilet block Box Canyon car park showing security cameras

Remote cameras and sensors monitoring the restricted area have been fully installed along the track to the Honeycomb Caves to help protect the delicate ecological area.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Stage Two Works



Oparara Basin proposals
tracks and structures

Track and structures upgrade

The next stages of work looking to begin construction later in the year are;

The track realignments on the Ōpārara Arch track and Mirror Tarn track.

The widening of the timber bridge on the Ōpārara Arch track approximately 2/3rds of the way along.

Construction of the viewing structure at Mirror Tarn.

Work that is still in the design phase is:

The structures that look to bypass the steps on the Ōpārara Arch track.

Inground steps in the Moria gate entranceway.

Ōpārara Access Road Upgrade

Thank you to all the people that joined us on the 8th of March for consulting on public access to the Ōpārara basin during the upgrade work on McCallums Mill Road. Given the narrowness of the road, this will require tricky management of the site. Once a contractor is selected and a plan for managing access to the site is agreed on the department will host a follow up information session.

Site Interpretation

Final designs for the interpretation upgrade of the Ōpārara Basin are being worked through with the Gibson Group. Both Ngāti Waewae and the Ōpārara Valley Trust are joining us to decide how these designs look.