

Progress Update – Issued publicly on:

Koninginnedag / Koningsdag (Queen's Day) – 30 April, 2013

Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch

Major Step Forward for Dutch Museum Project

The day when Queen Beatrix, in the Netherlands, is succeeded by King Willem Alexander, is a great occasion to announce another good news story. A project that has been on the wish-list for many Dutch migrants and their families in New Zealand, these past few years, has taken a major step forwards.

We are now closer than ever to establishing The Dutch Connection, next to De Molen in Foxton. This museum and cultural centre will ***tell the story of the Dutch in New Zealand.***

In 2012, Council received 70 submissions supporting TANS. As a result, Horowhenua District Council has now included the Te Awahou–Nieuwe Stroom community and tourism facility in its 'Draft Annual Plan' – as a '***Priority Community Project***' for Foxton.

What this means is that Council is proposing the purchase of land and buildings, to house the Te Awahou–Nieuwe Stroom (TANS) facilities. The TANS area will include:

- The Dutch Connection (Museum and Cultural Centre)
- Te Taitoa Maori o Te Awahou (Maori Gallery and a Whare for carving and weaving)
- The new Foxton Library / Community Centre / Service Centre / Arts Centre
- The River Trust
- The Flax Stripper Museum
- De Molen (Dutch 17th century replica windmill)

Recently, people have made submissions to ***Council's Draft Annual Plan.*** Very soon – on 22 May – Council will make a decision: whether to include the TANS Project into its ***2013/2014 Annual Plan (the Final Version).***

There is still some water that has to go under the bridge. The Annual Plan – including the TANS Project – needs approval from Council. TANS and Council need to sign agreements. TANS needs to raise money. And the Dutch Connection needs a financial contribution from the Dutch Community – ***to create major Exhibitions in 'Onze Plek', or 'Our Place'.***

But on this great day for All-Things-Orange. We can tell you all: Things are looking good for our Dutch Connection! Let's celebrate the investiture of King Willem Alexander. And let's hope that next year – we can all celebrate his first King's Day in a big way:

In Foxton! In Onze Plek!

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Or visit: www.DutchConnection.org.nz