



New digs: Inspector Blair Telford stands outside the temporary Police Headquarters where they will be stationed while their new premises are built.

Photo: ROBERT CHARLES/FAIRFAX NZ

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Construction of a new cop shop is set to begin next month and New Plymouth police will be housed at a temporary location while they wait for their new premises.

Effective next Monday, the city's police unit will move to the former Fitness Company building on the corner of Dawson and St Aubyn streets.

Inspector Blair Telford said the past three months had been fairly

hectic bringing the temporary location up to scratch and a fulltime team had been established to look after the move.

"We'll be moving in there lock, stock, and barrel... it's like moving house, there's always a million and one things to do," he said.

Mr Telford said the design of the new \$13 million station was kick started a year ago when the decision was made to start from the ground up on the Powderham St site rather than revamp the current building.

"We thought if we did that it

would be like putting lipstick on a pig.

"We looked at different sites around town but decided the Powderham site was most suitable - it's close to the CBD, the court house, the prison, and has the two main streets on either side," he said.

The first police station was built on the site in 1908 and lasted about 50 years before being demolished in 1960 to make way for a new building.

The current station was finished in 1963 to house 29 officers and Mr

Telford said they had now outgrown the building with 145 officers in their unit.

"This building has also been open for 50 years and it's served its purpose, but it's now inadequate and outdated," he said.

"We're hoping the new one will last another 50 years."

The new building has been designed by Aecom architects with the construction contract awarded to Clelands Construction.

Mr Telford was optimistic the new premises would be completed and fully functional within 13-15

months: "It's been an exciting process and an opportunity to clean out a lot of junk that has accumulated over the years.

"We've been able to rethink how we do some of our business and the systems will be more efficient."

Mr Telford said staff had been consulted regularly throughout the design process of the bigger, newer, and more open-planned quarters.

"If they've got to be working in the environment, we thought they should have some input into it."