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ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SITE RECORDING SCHEME

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This paper reproduces the text of a document prepared for the Association's Council during 1992 and 1993 as the basis for discussions with the Historic Places Trust and Department of Conservation concerning the Site Recording Scheme. Both of these organisations have now formally acknowledged that this document forms the basis of their relationships with the Association concerning the scheme.

1. Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to define the nature of the Site Recording Scheme; the manner in which it is administered and used; the functions and responsibilities of file keepers and the officers of the New Zealand Archaeological Association running the scheme; and the relationships between the Association and other institutions involved in using, contributing to, or in other ways assisting with the Site Recording Scheme.

It updates an earlier (1979) description of the scheme in the light of modifications to the legislative, managerial and technological environment in which it now operates, and incorporates additional arrangements pertaining to the scheme that have developed between the New Zealand Archaeological Association, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and the Department of Conservation. These arrangements have been discussed in detail by representatives of the Archaeological Association and staff of the Historic Places Trust and Department of Conservation, and it is intended that this document should form the basis of the ongoing relationships between the New Zealand Archaeological Association and these organisations with regard to the Site Recording Scheme.

A. THE SITE RECORDING SCHEME

2. Objectives of the Site Recording Scheme

The Site Recording Scheme was established by the Association in 1958 to

fulfill one of its original aims: "To encourage the recording and surveying of archaeological remains by setting up and operating a National Site Recording Scheme."

The objective of this scheme is to create simple but systematic files of information about archaeological sites. It is intended that this information should be used as a basis for archaeological research, and to enhance the protection and conservation of archaeological sites.

For the purposes of the Site Recording Scheme an archaeological site is defined as *any specific locality at which there is physical evidence for its occupation in the past that is or may be able to be investigated by archaeological techniques*. There are no precise age limitations on sites that may be included in the scheme, and thus it may include sites that do not meet the definition used in the Historic Places Act (1993).

The Site Recording Scheme is the only national inventory of archaeological site information. In the 35 years that it has been operating, more than 45,000 archaeological sites have been recorded in the scheme. Information about these sites is retained irrespective of whether the site is subsequently destroyed. Anyone may contribute information to the Site Recording Scheme, and the updating of information about previously recorded sites is encouraged.

3. Organisation of the Site Recording Scheme

The Site Recording Scheme comprises a number of *District Files* of site records, along with a duplicate set of all records which are deposited in a *Central File*. For this purpose the whole of New Zealand is divided into mutually exclusive *Filing Districts* based on NZMS 260 (and NZMS 1) map boundaries. There are currently nineteen filing districts on the New Zealand mainland and one for the Outlying Islands (see Appendix).

Each District File comprises all the site records for that district and the filing cabinets in which they are stored, along with a set of index maps on which are marked the location and number of each recorded site, and a set of index lists which note the site number, grid reference and site type of the sites marked on each map sheet. Each archaeological site is recorded on a standardised *Site Record Form*. These forms, and any additional information appended to them, are filed according to the NZMS 260 (or NZMS 1) map sheet on which they are situated. Sites on each map sheet are numbered in order of receipt. Each district file is in the custody of a *District Filekeeper*.

The Central File is made up of duplicates of all records in each of the district files, and the filing cabinets in which they are stored. It is managed and maintained by a member of the Association appointed by Council as *Central Filekeeper*.

The Association has entered into arrangements with both the Historic Places Trust and the Department of Conservation concerning the operation of the Site Recording Scheme (see Section D), particularly in relation to the Central File. Under these arrangements both the Historic Places Trust and the Department of Conservation endorse the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information. The Historic Places Trust also developed a computerised database of archaeological site information extracted from the Central File. This Central Index of New Zealand Archaeological Sites (CINZAS) is now the property of the Department of Conservation and is managed by the Science and Research Division of that Department. CINZAS is not a part of the Site Recording Scheme and throughout this document CINZAS and the Site Recording Scheme are referred to separately.

4. Ownership of the Site Recording Scheme

The records produced and incorporated into the Site Recording Scheme are the property of the New Zealand Archaeological Association.

5. Administration of the Site Recording Scheme

All aspects of the Site Recording Scheme are under the ultimate direction of the New Zealand Archaeological Association Council, who administer the scheme in the light of its objectives outlined above and with due regard to its use as the national system for recording archaeological site information. The routine operation of the scheme is overseen by one member of the Council who is appointed as Site Recording Co-ordinator.

Matters which the Association Council shall administer include:

- the scope and format of information to be requested for standard site records;
- the physical arrangement of site records within files;
- the fixing of filing district boundaries;
- the location of files;
- the appointment of filekeepers;
- the procedures for communication between district filekeepers and the central filekeeper;
- the procedures for access to the files;
- the setting of fees for access to the files;
- such other matters as the Association Council may from time to time determine.

There are arrangements with other organisations integral to the operation of the Site Recording Scheme, and the Association Council has an obligation to respect these arrangements in its administration of the scheme. Where administrative matters concern other institutions involved in routine operation and obligations in relation to the Site Recording Scheme the Association Council's

decisions will be made after appropriate consultation.

B. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FUNCTIONARIES

6. Role and Responsibilities of the Site Recording Co-ordinator

The member of the Association Council with special responsibility for administration of the Site Recording Scheme is the Site Recording Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator to direct and manage the Site Recording Scheme and to be responsible for its day to day administration under the direction of the Association Council. To this end the Co-ordinator shall:

- oversee standard procedures for the routine operation of the scheme;
- report to the Association Council on the progress of the scheme and advise on matters requiring action;
- liaise with district filekeepers and represent their interests to the Association Council;
- liaise with the central filekeeper to ensure that the central file is maintained and used in a manner consistent with the objectives of the scheme and the interests of the Association;
- liaise with the Department of Conservation on matters to do with the Site Recording Scheme and convey to the Science and Research Division decisions made by the Council with respect to the Site Recording Scheme, and bring to the Council issues and concerns passed on by the Department of Conservation;
- liaise with the Historic Places Trust on matters to do with the Site Recording Scheme and convey to the Trust decisions made by the Council with respect to the Site Recording Scheme, and bring to the Council issues and concerns passed on by the Trust;
- make decisions and appointments as delegated by Council;
- keep a record of decisions made and actions taken in relation to the Site Recording Scheme;
- keep a record of all correspondence with filekeepers and other institutions involved with the Site Recording Scheme.

7. Role and Responsibilities of District Filekeepers

District filekeepers shall be financial members of the Association and are appointed by the Association Council. It is the responsibility of each District Filekeeper to manage and maintain their file in the manner set out in this document and as revised or instructed in greater detail by the Site Recording Co-ordinator.

Filekeepers may use any suitable person as an assistant for the purpose of

keeping the file.

File keepers may, with prior approval from the Science and Research Division of the Department of Conservation, reclaim funds expended for everyday running of the files via the Central Filekeeper. Expenditure of New Zealand Archaeological Association funds for filekeeping purposes may only be made when approved by the Site Recording Co-ordinator and authorised by the Association Council.

Specific responsibilities of the filekeeper include:

- keeping the file up to date and in good order;
- processing, checking and assigning site numbers to new records submitted for their filing district;
- deciding on the rejection of unsatisfactory material;
- forwarding duplicates of new records to the central filekeeper;
- controlling access to their district file records;
- assisting with legitimate requests for information from the file;
- maintaining and managing the file in accordance with the principles and procedures set out by the Association Council.

8. Role and Responsibilities of Central Filekeeper

The Central Filekeeper shall be a financial member of the Association and is appointed by the Association Council. The Central Filekeeper has special responsibility for the management and maintenance of the central file. It is the responsibility of the Central Filekeeper to:

- keep the central file up to date and in good order;
- control access to the central file records;
- liaise with district filekeepers on matters of mutual interest;
- liaise with the Site Recording Co-ordinator on matters of principle and procedure;
- maintain and manage the central file in accordance with the principles and procedures set out by the Association Council.

Under the present arrangement between the Association and the Department of Conservation, the role of Central Filekeeper is carried out by a member of the Association who is an archaeologist employed by the Science and Research Division of the Department. This person also has special responsibility for regulating access to CINZAS in liaison with the Site Recording Coordinator. Any modifications to the personnel carrying out the role of Central Filekeeper and the procedures by which they operate are subject to approval by the Association Council.

C. PROCEDURES FOR THE PROCESSING OF SITE RECORDS.

9. Making and Submitting Site Records

Sites are recorded on Site Record Forms, with additional information, maps etc. placed on Site Description Forms. These forms can be obtained from District Filekeepers, the Central Filekeeper or the Science and Research Division of the Department of Conservation. One site record form should be completed for each archaeological site recorded. A full explanation of the information required in each section of the form is set out in Chapter 10 of Daniels, J.R.S. (1979) *New Zealand Archaeology: A Site Recording Handbook*, N.Z.A.A. Monograph 10.

Records should be typed, or if handwritten must be firm and clear. All sections of the form should be completed (type a dash if no information is available) and a site location map provided.

Once completed all records must be sent in duplicate to the appropriate District Filekeeper.

10. Checking of Site Records

On the receipt of a new site record the District filekeeper examines it for internal consistency, credibility and acceptability, then checks the grid reference on the appropriate map and compares the location with that described in section 1 of the site record form. Minor corrections that are obviously necessary may be made by the District Filekeeper (any changes made should be initialled), but other major problems are referred back to the site recorder.

Acceptable records with apparently correct grid references may be included in the Site Record File. Grid reference and site type are checked against the index list and index map of sites recorded. In cases of apparent duplication, new records are checked against existing ones. If both apply to the same already numbered site, that number is placed on the new forms, the top copy of which may be placed in the District File along with the the old ones.

11. Allocation of Site Numbers

When a new site record is acceptable and does not refer to a site that has already been recorded, it is assigned the next consecutive site number for the relevant map sheet. Each copy of the new record is marked with the assigned site number, signed and dated by the District Filekeeper. The index list and index map are updated accordingly.

If the sequence of site numbers becomes interrupted for any reason, such

as a record being cancelled, such unused or pre-used numbers should be re-assigned as soon as possible.

The issuing of blocks of site numbers by filekeepers to site recorders can lead to site record duplication, gaps in site number sequences, and the presence of inappropriate records in the files. For these reasons site numbers are allocated by District Filekeepers only after receiving and checking of site records.

12. Addition of Records to Files

Once a new site record has been marked with the assigned site number the top copy is placed in the District File, and the second copy is forwarded to the Central Filekeeper for inclusion within the Central File.

Acknowledgement of receipt of acceptable records is sent to the site recorder, together with a list of site numbers assigned to those records.

13. Sensitive Files

The Site Recording Scheme is founded on the belief that the interests of archaeological research, site protection and site management are best served by open access to information about archaeological sites. Nonetheless it is acknowledged that there may be some situations in which restricted access to this information may be warranted.

Filekeepers may create sensitive files if requested to do so by a site recorder, provided that there is a valid reason to do so. Sensitive files must be stored in such a way that they are not seen by persons making routine use of the file. They may be consulted by the original site recorder, the current District Filekeeper, Central Filekeeper and Site Recording Co-ordinator. Access to sensitive files by all others is at the discretion of the District Filekeeper, who may consult the recorder if appropriate. The Central Filekeeper also keeps a copy of sensitive files, stored in such a way that they are not seen by people making routine use of the central file. Access to these files is at the discretion of the Central Filekeeper.

The Association recognises its obligation to protect these records from illegitimate use, and may make alternative arrangements for the custody of sensitive files at their discretion.

Sensitive files may be reclassified as ordinary files by the joint decision of the Site Recording Co-ordinator and the Central Filekeeper, who may consult the District Filekeeper and recorder if appropriate.

D. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

14. Institutions Housing District Files

Many of the District Files are housed in public institutions such as museums or government department offices. In most of these cases the institution housing the file is also the place of work of the District Filekeeper. This situation is of benefit to the Association in that it provides a safe, secure and accessible location for each file. It is also of benefit to the institution concerned in that it provides the file keeper with ready access to information in the files which invariably is of use in their day to day employment.

It is the responsibility of institutions housing District Files to:

- acknowledge that the file, including the site records, maps and cabinets housing them are the property of the New Zealand Archaeological Association;
- acknowledge that management of the file is under the control of the file keeper;
- provide a safe and secure location for housing the file;
- ensure that access to the file is under the control of the filekeeper;
- ensure that there is no unauthorised access to the files or duplication of them on any media.

The Association acknowledges the valuable role that these institutions play in the Site Recording Scheme, and will consult with them about all relevant matters concerning the files in their care. However, all decisions concerning the files are made by the Association Council.

15. Historic Places Trust

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust has been closely associated with the Site Recording Scheme since its inception, and has contributed both financially and in other ways to the management and growth of the scheme. This relationship developed further when the Trust was given statutory responsibilities for the protection of archaeological sites under the Historic Places Amendment Act (1975). To assist the Trust in meeting these responsibilities the Association made available to it information in the central file of the Site Recording Scheme. In return the Historic Places Trust endorsed the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information.

The Trust undertook to manage and maintain the central file on behalf of the association, and to assist with filekeeping expenses. The Association continued to own and administer the scheme and provide the network of voluntary district filekeepers, and in addition permitted the Trust to extract information from the central file to develop its own computerised database

known as the New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (NZRAS - now known as CINZAS, see 16 below). The latter did not duplicate all information in the Site Recording Scheme, but provided an index to the more complete data held in the site files. It did not include any reference to sensitive files (see 13 above). The Trust also undertook to develop and maintain its statutory information systems (permits, authorities and registrations) in a manner consistent with the Site Recording Scheme.

Modification to this relationship came about with government reorganisation in 1987 which shifted the Historic Places Trust archaeologists to the newly formed Department of Conservation. While the Trust continues to have statutory responsibilities for the protection of archaeological sites it no longer maintains the central file or CINZAS, and information and advice on archaeological sites is provided by the Science and Research Division of the Department of Conservation.

Under the present arrangement the Historic Places Trust:

- acknowledges that the Site Recording Scheme is owned and administered by the New Zealand Archaeological Association;
- endorses the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information;
- will retain internal information systems consistent with the Site Recording Scheme;
- will encourage individuals and other institutions with whom it has dealings concerning archaeological sites to endorse the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information and to maintain information systems consistent with its operation;
- will consult with the Association on matters relevant to the Site Recording Scheme;
- may at any time make suggestions or comments on any aspect of the Site Recording Scheme to the Association Council.

The Association acknowledges the valuable role played by the Historic Places Trust in the Site Recording Scheme and that it has significant interests in the Site Recording Scheme. The Association also:

- acknowledges its obligation to permit Historic Places Trust access to information in the Site Recording Scheme for the purposes of fulfilling its statutory responsibilities for the protection of archaeological sites;
- will consult with the Historic Places Trust on matters relevant to the Site Recording Scheme.

16. Department of Conservation

In 1987 the Association agreed to transfer to the Department of

Conservation the same arrangements that had been in operation with the Historic Places Trust, and that these would be implemented by the Science and Research Division of the Department who would service the Trust's needs for access to information from the Site Recording Scheme.

Under these arrangements the Department of Conservation:

- acknowledges that the Site Recording Scheme is owned and administered by the New Zealand Archaeological Association;
- endorses the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information;
- will maintain internal archaeological site information systems that are consistent with the Site Recording Scheme;
- will encourage individuals and other institutions with whom it has dealings concerning archaeological sites to endorse the Site Recording Scheme as the national system for recording archaeological site information and to maintain information systems consistent with its operation.

Through the Science and Research Division, the Department of Conservation:

- manages and maintains the central file on behalf of the New Zealand Archaeological Association;
- assists with district filekeeping operations;
- may use information in the central file to fulfill its obligations to service the Historic Places Trust and to fulfill its own statutory responsibilities;
- may store duplicates of central file records on some other media;
- may extract information from the central file to maintain its Central Index of New Zealand Archaeological Sites (CINZAS);
- will consult with the Association on relevant matters concerning the operation, development and application of CINZAS and procedures for the release of information from this database;
- may at any time make suggestions or comments on any aspect of the Site Recording Scheme to the Association Council.

The Association acknowledges the valuable role played by the Department of Conservation in the Site Recording Scheme and that it has significant interests in the Site Recording Scheme. The Association also:

- acknowledges its obligation to permit Department of Conservation access to information in the Site Recording Scheme to fulfill its requirement to service the Historic Places Trust, and to fulfill its own statutory responsibilities;
- acknowledges that CINZAS is owned and administered by the Department of Conservation;
- will consult with the Department on relevant matters concerning the Site Recording Scheme;
- may at any time make suggestions or comments on any aspect of CINZAS to the Department.

E. USE OF THE SITE RECORDING SCHEME

17. Principles

1. The Site Recording Scheme is founded on the belief that the interests of archaeological research, site protection and site management are best served by open access to information about archaeological sites. However, several factors require that some limitations are placed upon access to the files, and to the information that they contain.
2. The Site Recording Scheme files are a unique and valuable resource. To ensure the security, integrity and quality of the original records, access to the Site Recording Scheme files must be carefully controlled.
3. Some of the information in the files was provided on the understanding that it would not be made available to people making routine use of the files, and the Association has a responsibility to ensure that inappropriate use does not take place.
4. The Site Recording Scheme is the national system for recording archaeological site information, and new information is continually added to it. The release of information from the scheme to other databases must be carefully controlled to guard against the proliferation of outdated databases of archaeological site information.
5. The Association has entered into agreements with the Historic Places Trust and the Department of Conservation allowing them access to information in the Site Recording Scheme to fulfill their statutory obligations.

18. Access to the Site Recording Scheme Files

Access to District Files is controlled by the District Filekeepers, who will normally supervise any inspection of the files. They shall give access to the files at any reasonable time to the Site Recording Co-ordinator, and any person given authority by the Association Council to consult the file for the purposes of quality control. They may grant access to the files at their own discretion and convenience to:

- financial members of the Association;
- students of archaeology and related subjects;
- officers of government departments, local and statutory bodies;
- any other person or body having a legitimate interest.

Access to the Central File is controlled by the Central Filekeeper who will normally supervise any inspection of the file. The Central Filekeeper shall give access to the files at any reasonable time to the Site Recording Co-ordinator,

and any person given authority by the Association Council to consult the file for the purposes of quality control. The Central Filekeeper may grant access to others on the same discretionary basis outlined above.

Where access to files is denied, the applicant must be informed that they may appeal to the Association Council, and the filekeeper must report the refusal to the Site Recording Co-ordinator. The Association Council may reverse the filekeeper's decision to refuse access.

19. Requests for Information from Files

District filekeepers will usually deal promptly with requests for information from the Site Recording Scheme where these are:

- requests for information by the Historic Places Trust or Department of Conservation to meet their statutory obligations;
- small requests from financial members of the Association;
- small requests for the purposes of archaeological research, site protection and site management;
- superficial enquiries.

Large requests, particularly where these involve the filekeeper in site inspection and lengthy file searching may incur a Search Fee. These fees are set by the Association's Council and revised periodically.

When the Department of Conservation receives requests for information in the central file, the Department's Science and Research Division will:

- determine whether it is appropriate to refer the enquiry to a district filekeeper for comment or action;
- where appropriate, refer the enquiry to the Department's archaeologist with responsibility for the area concerned;
- advise the district filekeeper of enquiries and replies, as appropriate;
- where appropriate, apply a Search Fee;
- retain Search Fees to offset costs of maintaining the central file and supporting district filekeeper operations.

20. Duplication and Copying of Files

The Site Recording Scheme files are the property of the Association and may be copied only with prior approval. Filekeepers may at their discretion allow copying of site record forms for the purposes of archaeological research, site protection and site management. Requests for large numbers of files may be referred to the Site Recording Co-ordinator for approval. Costs incurred in making copies may be passed on.

21. The Site Recording Scheme and Electronic Databases

Summaries or indexes of information about archaeological sites are a valuable aid to archaeological research, site protection and site management, particularly when they are in an electronic form. However the Site Recording Scheme is an ongoing programme with new records being added continually, as well as additional information being appended to existing records. Unless updated frequently, any listings of sites recorded in the scheme become incomplete within a very short time. For this reason databases of information extracted from the Site Recording Scheme may be made only with the prior approval of the Association. Where this approval is given arrangements will normally be set in place to ensure frequent updating of the database, and to restrict the provision of copies of all or part of the database to third parties.

The Association has an agreement with the Department of Conservation allowing indexing of a specified subset of information from Site Record Forms for inclusion within their Central Index of New Zealand Archaeological Sites. Information about sensitive sites may not be incorporated in CINZAS.

Under this agreement the Department of Conservation may make copies of portions of CINZAS available to third parties for the purposes of archaeological research, site protection and site management with the following limitations.

1. Each release of information should be in response to specific requests and should be restricted to areas relevant to that request.
2. It should be accompanied by a statement indicating that:
 - a. Copyright remains with the New Zealand Archaeological Association and the Department of Conservation, and that the information cannot be passed on to third parties in electronic form. Where the information is passed on in hard copy form the source of the data must be acknowledged;
 - b. The data must be updated on a regular basis from the current CINZAS files;
 - c. Further information on the archaeological sites listed is contained in the Site Recording Scheme files;
 - d. Additional data collected on these and other archaeological sites is to be lodged with the appropriate Site Recording Scheme filekeeper;
 - e. The data has limitations, including that
 - each record gives the location of a site, but does not delimit its extent;
 - further sites may have been added to the Site Recording Scheme after this copy was made;
 - the absence of a record of a site in a specific locality can not be interpreted

as firm evidence that there is no archaeological evidence there.

3. When requests for information are received that go beyond existing practice and arrangements, the Department of Conservation will consult with the Archaeological Association about the release of information.
4. The Central Filekeeper will notify the Site Recording Co-ordinator when information has been released, and the Site Recording Co-ordinator will then inform the District Filekeeper.

22. Interpretation of Information in Files

The information held in the Site Recording Scheme Files has been recorded by archaeologists for the purposes of archaeological research and site protection. Proper interpretation of this information is possible only by people with thorough training and experience in archaeology. It is the policy of the Association that whenever information from the files is used it should be interpreted by people with appropriate archaeological training.

APPENDIX: FILING DISTRICTS AND FILE KEEPERS

The boundaries of Filing Districts in terms of NZMS 260 maps are shown in Figure 1, and for NZMS 1 maps in Figure 2. Both sets of boundaries are currently employed for South Island Filing Districts, as publication of the NZMS 260 map series is not yet complete. However, the NZMS 1 boundaries are no longer in use for North Island Districts, which now work entirely with metric maps. The Coromandel Filing District was created after the publication of metric maps, and thus was never defined in terms of NZMS 1 map sheets. The Wellington and Marlborough Districts share NZMS 260 map sheet Q27.

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