



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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THE PRESERVATION OF AUCKLAND'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

H.J.R. Brown

Over the past twelve months the University of Auckland Archaeological Society has been actively engaged in compiling a record, as complete as possible in the time available, of pre-European settlement sites in the Auckland area. The sole purpose of this survey has been to reassert our claim that most prehistoric sites in Metropolitan Auckland have been destroyed beyond hope of reconstruction.

The compilation of this evidence has been undertaken by a few members who have done extensive field work and made a careful survey of historical records. To date 267 sites have been recorded and some 20 others remain for more detailed examination. Close inspection showed that reliable information could be supplied for only 246 sites. It was this group which was used for most of our statistical summaries.

A previous survey¹ was used as a basis in preparing this present work. With the aid of large scale aerial photographs and mosaics all known sites were assessed, and areas suspected of having evidence of habitation were carefully examined in the field by experienced workers. A form (Fig.1.) was made out for each site, from which information was extracted for a preliminary schedule. Some Auckland members were surprised that the basic unit of measurement was the square yard, but this was thought necessary so that all sites, even burials, could be assessed as accurately as time and knowledge permitted.

Five categories for scheduling were set up as follows:-

1. Permanent Preservation. Unique sites which probably hold the key to understanding the archaeological record of Auckland generally, and which are already protected to some extent by existing legislation, private owners or public demand.
2. Necessary, Salvage if to be Destroyed. If destruction is inevitable it is vital that a complete archaeological record is made.
3. Worthwhile, Salvage Wherever Possible. Sites which warrant detailed recording and investigation if time, labour and finance are available.

<u>Name of Site</u> a. Local b. Maori	SITE NUMBER
<u>Map number</u> <u>Map name</u> <u>Grid reference</u>	SITE TYPE
<u>Published References</u> <u>Summary of Material From References</u>	
<u>Total Area of Site (In Sq. Yds.)</u> Area Intact Area Already Destroyed Area Threatened	
<u>Summary of Principal Features</u> <u>Brief Description of Site</u> Fortifications Pits Terraces Special Features	
<u>Preliminary Scheduling</u> (1) PERMANENT Preservation (2) Necessary, SALVAGE if to be Destroyed (3) Worthwhile, SALVAGE (4) Operations NOT Regarded Wherever Possible as Worthwhile	

Figure 1.

4. Operations Not Regarded as Worthwhile. Unsuitable information is expected since the site is despoiled, insignificant or a better site of a similar type exists elsewhere.
5. Destroyed. No visible remains exist but the site is recorded in printed literature or reliable manuscript.

Having gathered this information, and given each site a schedule rating using the five categories set out above, we were able to draw up various tables summarising aspects of site destruction. The first table has a total of 267 sites, for which 21 have insufficient information to be included in the subsequent tables.

Table 1.

Scheduling of all known Sites in Greater Auckland

NZMS 1 Sheet Number	Destroyed	Not Worth- while	Worth- while	Necessary	Permanent	Totals
N38	6	8	4	2	0	20
N41	76	6	10	2	0	94
N42	87	15	17	9	10	138
N46-47	4	2	3	4	2	15
Totals	173	31	34	17	12	267

To give relevance to this information two further tables were compiled. Table 2 gives details of the extent of damage, within the Greater Auckland area, and this in turn is related to Table 3, which gives the type of destruction and names the agents responsible.

As the survey progressed it became obvious, as we had expected, that the greatest destruction had taken place on the Auckland Isthmus, where much of the City's population lives and works. Tables 4 and 5 verify this.

Table 2.

Site Destruction in the Greater Auckland Area

Number and Type of Site	Percentage of Area destroyed	Ownership
36 Hill <u>Pa</u>	29%	15 Domains, 3 Parks and Private.
50 Headland <u>Pa</u>	68%	3 Domains, 4 Parks and Private.
21 Other <u>Pa</u>	73%	Mostly Private.
98 Settlements	99%	Mostly Private, 1 Beach Reserve.
3 Cultivations*	100%	—
13 Middens	59%	Mostly Private.
25 Burials	100%	Various.
246 Total Sites	51% (Approx. average).	

* Note.- The addition of one large and well preserved area of cultivation on Puketutu Island in the Manukau Harbour would reduce this figure to 9.5% as it is the only extensive cultivation site that is fully known to us.

It has been suggested by some people that there are sufficient means in the legislation and elsewhere for safeguarding archaeological sites. Let us consider these means:

1. Public Education toward an awareness of the importance of preserving important sites: experience has shown that this is too slow where sites are being constantly mutilated.
2. Town and Country Planning Act 1953. It was felt that few people were aware of this Act's powers and shortcomings. These were well illustrated in a Newspaper article appearing in the Auckland Star on the 18th of September 1961 on page 1. A photograph shows a per-

Table 3.

Type of Destruction and Agents Responsible Within
Greater Auckland Area.

Number and Type of Site	Agents of Destruction					
	Erosion and Grazing	European Settle- ment	Indust- rial Quarry- ing	Through Private Agency	By Local Body	By Govern- ment
36 Hill Pa		15	25	18	20	7
50 Headland Pa	15	43	1	33	11	8
21 Other Pa	10	14	1	14	3	2
98 Settlements	36	65		62	3	1
3 Cultivations		3		3		
13 Middens	2	11	1	6	6	2
25 Burials		23	3	23		2
246 Total Sites	63	174	34	159	43	22

Note - Totals may be more than number of sites since several agencies may be at work on any one site.

plexed land-owner reading an order from a Local Body for the demolition of an Auckland building constructed in 1846. This 115 year old building had been registered as an Historic Place to prevent alteration or demolition. Three years later it was de-registered by the same Local Body that originally registered it and demolition was ordered.

An Act of Parliament which allows a policy of "on the register, off the register" at short notice will not assist the preservation of archaeological sites which could become, for instance, building or quarry sites. With twenty-four Local Bodies making these decisions it becomes extremely difficult for us to keep a constant, close watch on their activities.

Table 4.Site Destruction Within the Auckland Isthmus Only

Number and Type of Site	Percentage of Area Destroyed	Ownership
15 Hill <u>Pa</u>	43%	10 Domain, 1 Park and Private.
18 Headland <u>Pa</u>	91%	Mostly Private 5 Parks.
2 Other <u>Pa</u>	100%	1 Park.
10 Settlements	96%	Mostly Private.
3 Cultivations	100%	" "
6 Middens	94%	" "
12 Burials	100%	" "
66 Total Sites *	89% (Average Destruction)	

* Information is only included for sites with reasonable documentation. Many sites are so poorly recorded or now completely destroyed that we have no reliable information on them.

3. The Reserves and Domains Act 1953. Under the provisions of this Act the administration of Public Domains, vested in the Crown, is delegated from the Minister to local Domain Boards composed of interested and responsible local persons who must report to the Minister or his officers, but who have only generally defined limits to their powers. This appears necessary, as the Crown controls large areas of land which a few Government officers could not administer satisfactorily themselves, and also because it is felt that local people could act as the best "caretakers".

An example of the inadequacies of this Act has appeared in our daily press, summarised as follows:-

Table 5.

Site Destruction Within the Auckland Isthmus Only

Number and Type of Site	Agents of Destruction					
	Erosion and Grazing	European Settlement	Industrial Quarrying	Through Private Agency	By Local Body	By Government
15 Hill Pa		9	12	9	9	6
18 Headland Pa	4	17		13	2	4
2 Other Pa	1	1	1		2	
10 Settlements		10		8	2	1
3 Cultivations		3		3		
6 Middens		6		2	3	1
12 Burials		11	2	10		1
66 Total Sites	5	57	15	45	18	13

Auckland Star, 15th March 1961 p.3. The Mount Albert Borough Council, acting as the Mount Albert Domain Board, decided to efface a 150 foot ridge on the top of Mount Albert because of its danger to children.

31st July 1961 p.9. The Mayor denied that the bulldozing, which had just commenced, would destroy the mountain's beauty.

9th August 1961 p.3. Mr. V.F. Fisher, a member of the National Historic Places Trust, protested to a meeting of the Mount Albert Borough Council at the disturbance of Maori earthworks. The Mayor "thought the major workings of the Maori earthworks had not been touched".

New Zealand Herald, 11th August 1961, Section 1 p.6. The bulldozing of the ridge was criticised by the University Archaeological Society which showed this part of the hill to be an important link between two parts of the site.

This example, one of many, demonstrates the inadequacy of the Reserves and Domains Act. Too frequently action can only be taken at a point when it is already too late. It should also be noted that under Section 51 of this Act Domain Boards have "the powers, duties and functions which the Commissioner of Crown Lands has over Crown Land." Such local boards come under everyday economic pressures, which are not easily reconciled with the longer-term historic value of the areas they administer. Again we have found it difficult to counteract these pressures when twenty-four Local Bodies are involved.

Part V of this Act has provision for establishing Historic Reserves, but these are restricted solely to Crown Lands. This has not been applied to sites in the Auckland area. Again, this part of the Act suffers the same disadvantages as Section 51, above.

4. Maori Affairs Act 1953. This has an extremely valuable section which allows Maori freehold land to become a Maori Reserve on the recommendation of the Court. As such it is "inalienable whether to the Crown or any other person". Difficulties may arise, however. It does apply very well, but only to Maori-owned land.

Unless a satisfactory solution is found within the next year or two, many of our country's most valuable sites will have been mutilated or destroyed. We must, as an organisation, press for better legislation, and meanwhile do our utmost to save as much as possible by urging the enforcement of the existing statutes. What we are attempting in New Zealand has been normal procedure for many years in many countries. A most recent example of an enlightened archaeological approach comes from Canada.

British Columbia in 1960 brought down an "Archaeological and Historic Sites Protection Act".² This legislation is good, but would cause difficulties if it were applied in its existing form to the New Zealand scene. The major difficulties would be in:-

- (a) policing the permit system needed for all archaeological work except field recording.³
- (b) the nature and composition of the Advisory Board. This may be better replaced, under New Zealand conditions, by a Director and immediate staff, with paid and trained regional staff. This regional staff should be distributed on a population basis, since the size and growth of urban areas are assumed to be proportionate to the extent of site despoliation.

Throughout this survey Archaeological Society members were pleased to note the co-operation of the Press, Historical Societies, the local Regional Branch of the Historic Places Trust, Museum and Regional Planning Officers and members of the general public who gave valuable assistance and information. May we here thank them for their co-operation.

References

- (1) Brown H.J.R. 1954. Prehistoric Geography of the Auckland Isthmus. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. University of Auckland.
- (2) Archaeological Sites Advisory Board 1961, "A Guide for Amateur Archaeologists". Department of the Provincial Secretary, Victoria, British Columbia.
- (3) Brown H.J.R. 1961. "The Despoliation of Auckland's Archaeological Sites". N.Z. Arch. Assn. Newsletter. Vol.4. No.2. p.66-67.

Appendices

Relevant sections of three Acts of Parliament are appended here so that all members can know of the types of help which they can reasonably expect from appropriate authorities whenever important sites are threatened.

Town and Country Planning Act 1953

The usual Code of Ordinances adopted by Local Bodies to fulfill the obligations of the Town and Country Planning Act 1953 and its Amendments is as follows:

Ordinance 21. Preservation for Historical Interest and Natural Beauty:-

(1) Register to be kept

In respect of any object or place of historical interest or natural beauty which is specified in the Scheme Statement as intended to be preserved, the Council shall enter particulars thereof in a register to be kept at the office of the Council; and shall forthwith notify the owner and occupier of the land upon which any such object or place is situated that it has been registered and is required under the Scheme to be preserved. The register shall be open at all reasonable times for inspection by persons interested.

(2) Registered objects or places to be preserved

No person shall, without the written consent of the Council,

wilfully destroy, remove, or damage any object or place registered by the Council as aforesaid.

- (3) Power to cancel entry in Register
The Council may at any time cancel such registration, and shall thereupon make an appropriate alteration in the register and notify accordingly the owner or occupier of the land upon which the object or place is situated.

(Note: In interpretation "Council" includes Road Boards or any committee, sub-committee, or person to whom the Council's powers, duties and discretions under this code have lawfully been delegated pursuant to the powers of the Act.)

Reserves and Domains Act 1953
Part V. Historic Reserves

S.63 (being)....(a) Lands associated with early inhabitants of New Zealand....

(b) Places associated with events of national or local importance, including....trees, sites, earthworks.... rocks, outcrops, caves, or objects of any kind.

(c) Natural objects of any kind traditionally held to be identified with the legend and mythology of the inhabitants prior to the colonisation of New Zealand by inhabitants.

64 (2) The Minister may from time to time by notice in the Gazette, declare that any public reserve or part of a public reserve shall be....an historic reserve.

(3) The Minister may....by notice in the Gazette declare....an historic reserve....shall cease to be subject to this part of the Act and shall be deemed....a public reserve.

65 Private Historic Reserves

66 Minister may mark and protect historic places etc.

67 Excavation and Scientific Investigations

The Minister may promote, supervise or authorise excavations and other activities by scientific organisations intended for the discovery and preservation of relics, chattels or other things of historic interest or national importance.

Provided that no such excavation or other activities may be made or carried on on any private land without the consent of the owner of the land first being obtained, and nothing in this section shall be deemed to prevent the owner of any land from making any such excavation or carrying on any such activities on his land,

- 68 The Minister may manage and preserve historic reserves.
- 69 Fees for the admission to historic reserves. The administering body may charge such fees for admission to any historic reserve under its control as the Minister approves from time to time.

Maori Affairs Act 1953

Section 439.

- (1) The Governor General may, by Order in Council issued on the recommendation of the Court, set apart any Maori freehold land or any European land owned by Maoris as a Maori reservation for the purpose of a village, or place of historical or scenic interest.
- (5) On the recommendation of the Court, any Order in Council made under this section may be at any time in like manner varied or revoked.
- (6) No Order in Council under this section shall affect any lease or licence, but no land shall be set apart as a Maori reservation while it is subject to any mortgage or charge.
- (7) The Court may, by order, vest any Maori reservation in anybody corporate or in any two or more persons in trust to hold or administer it for the benefit of the persons or class of persons for whose benefit the reservation is constituted.....
- (9) The land comprised within a Maori reservation shall while the reservation subsists, be inalienable whether to the Crown or to any other person. Provided that the trustees in whom any Maori reservation is vested may, with the consent of the Court, grant a lease or occupation licence of the reservation or of any part thereof for any term not exceeding seven years, upon and subject to such terms and conditions as the Court thinks fit.