

## Interpretation of data from the New Zealand Archaeological Association's Archaeological Site Recording Scheme



*ArchSite* is an online database that contains information about recorded archaeological sites in New Zealand. *ArchSite* uses GIS (Geographic Information System) technology to manage and display information on maps. It is the national inventory of archaeological sites in New Zealand. The information is used for research, site management and protection. There are currently over 60,000 sites in *ArchSite*.

*ArchSite* incorporates information from the NZ Archaeological Association's Site Recording Scheme. The Site Recording Scheme began over fifty years ago as a paper-based recording system for information about archaeological sites. Information has been provided by many different individuals and organisations over the years.

*All information is provided on the strict understanding that the New Zealand Archaeological Association and any person or organisation associated with the Site Recording Scheme shall not be held liable in respect of any omissions from, or errors in, the data provided.*

### **The following features of the data should be noted:**

- A grid reference gives the location of a site, but it does not delimit its extent. The location of sites is usually only recorded to within about the nearest 100 metres. A more precise location may be given if a handheld GPS was used, but all such measurements have a standard error.
- *The absence of data for any particular area should not be taken to mean that it contains no archaeological sites.* It may mean that no archaeological survey has been carried out, or that sites were obscured at the time the survey was done. In any given area there may be any number of undiscovered or unrecorded sites.
- Some recorded sites may no longer exist. (They may, for example, have been destroyed since they were recorded.)
- Historical (post-European contact period) archaeological sites, in particular, are currently under-represented in *ArchSite*.
- Not all sites recorded in *ArchSite* are archaeological sites in terms of the Historic Places Act 1993. They may, for example, post-date 1900 or no longer be able, through investigation by archaeological methods, to provide evidence relating to the history of New Zealand.
- The formal evaluation of site significance is not a function of the Archaeological Site Recording Scheme.
- While some archaeological sites may also be considered wahi tapu, the Archaeological Site Recording Scheme is not specifically concerned with such places. If information about wahi tapu is required, it should be obtained from the relevant iwi.
- Information about vulnerable burial sites will, in some circumstances, be withheld.

*For many purposes, an inspection by a qualified archaeologist will be required. Information from the Archaeological Site Recording Scheme is not a substitute for this.*