

109 BEACHLANDS ROAD, BEACHLANDS, AUCKLAND: PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Prepared for Neil Construction Limited



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INTRODUCTION

Project Background

Neil Construction Limited is proposing a residential subdivision at 109 Beachlands Road, Beachlands, Auckland (Figure 1). The legal description of the property is LOT 1002 DP 512674, and covers an area of approximately 16.2ha. It is bounded by Beachlands Road to the north, Mahutonga Avenue to the east, Kahawairahi Drive to the southeast, and recent residential subdivision to the west and southwest.

An archaeological assessment was commissioned to establish whether or not the proposed development is likely to impact on archaeological values. This report has been prepared as part of the required assessment of effects accompanying a resource consent application under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and to identify any requirements under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 (HNZPTA). Recommendations are made in accordance with statutory requirements.

Methodology

The New Zealand Archaeological Association's (NZAA) site record database (ArchSite), Auckland Council's Cultural Heritage Inventory (CHI), Auckland Unitary Plan Operative in Part (AUP OP) schedules and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (Heritage NZ) New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero were searched to determine whether any archaeological sites had been recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the property. Literature and archaeological reports relevant to the area were consulted (see Bibliography). Early plans held at Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) and aerial photographs were checked for information relating to past use of the property, but did not provide any additional information.

A visual inspection of the property was carried out on 20 May 2020. The ground surfaces were examined for evidence of former occupation in the form of shell midden, depressions, terracing, or other unusual formations within the landscape, or indications of 19th century European settlement remains. Exposed and disturbed soils were examined where encountered for evidence of earlier modification, and an understanding of the local stratigraphy. Subsurface testing with a probe was carried out across the property with spade testing in selected locations to determine whether buried archaeological deposits could be identified or establish the nature of possible archaeological features. Particular attention was paid to creek banks and raised landforms (topographical features where archaeological sites are often located). Photographs were taken to record the topography and areas of interest.

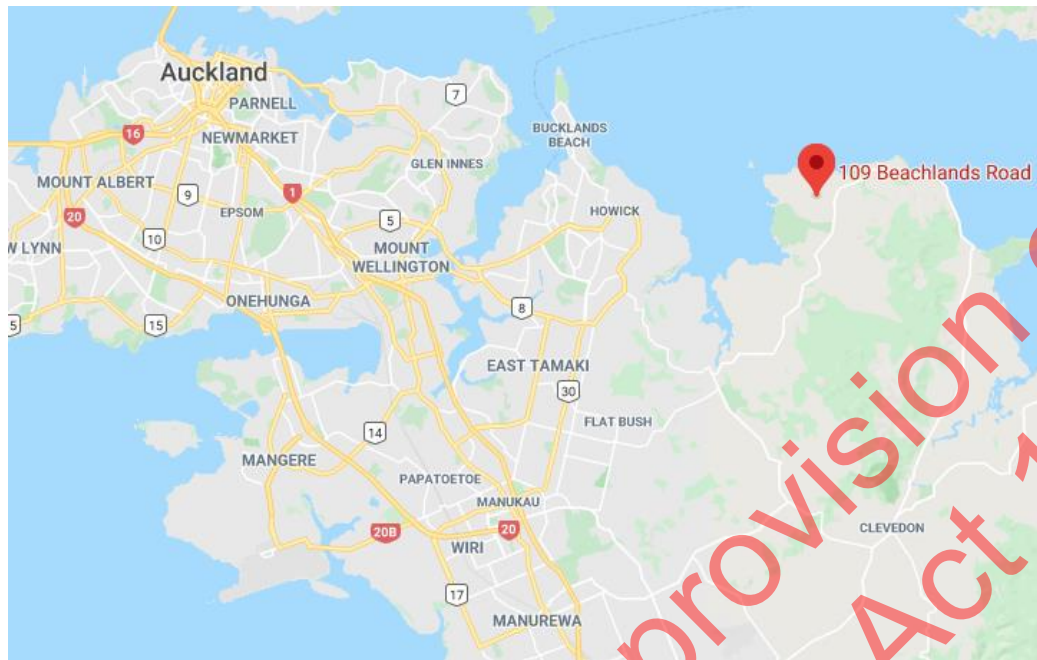


Figure 1. Location and aerial view of the property at 109 Beachlands Road (source: Google Maps)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Maori Settlement¹

The Beachlands-Maraetai area is historically associated with Ngai Tai, whose ancestral links can be traced back to members of the Tainui canoe.² Initially, the Tainui landed near Cape Runaway on the East Cape, but they subsequently journeyed northwards into the Hauraki Gulf. Once there the leaders decided to explore the west coast on the other side of the isthmus. En route, a small group of these migrants decided to stop off at the western end of the Tamaki estuary where they intermarried with local inhabitants to establish the tribe known more commonly as Ngai Tai (Stone 2001:13).

Ngai Tai established their own tribal area, which is said to have included a northern boundary from the Tamaki River to Browns Island, to Rangitoto and Tiritiri Matangi. Their eastern boundary included small islands as far away as Rakino as well as the larger islands of Motutapu and Motuihe. The southern boundary encompassed Pakatoa, Ponui, Pakihi and extended to the mainland area near Kawakawa Bay. Inland, Ngai Tai's traditional rohe extended from the northern Hunua Ranges across to the Otahuhu portage, a vast area. The heartland of Ngai Tai has always been close to the western Hauraki Gulf, especially the Wairoa River area and along the coast to Maraetai, which included Otahuhu (Murdoch 1988).

Having established a distinct rohe or tribal area of considerable size, Ngai Tai centred on their 'heartland ...close to the western shores of the northern Hauraki Gulf' (ibid.) – an area with which they still retain close spiritual and emotional links despite having had their land base whittled away since European colonisation. Today the tribe is centred around Umupuia and the marae of Whakapapa, with numerous tribal members living throughout South Auckland (Te Warena Taua in La Roche 1991: 27-28).

During the early decades of the 19th century, as a result of attacks during the musket wars, many Ngai Tai were either taken captive or left their homes and took refuge with relatives in the Waikato (Murdoch 1996: 10). Thus, when William Thomas Fairburn, a lay catechist with the Church Missionary Society (CMS), first visited the area in 1833, he described it as deserted, his only contact being a child and a man armed with a musket (ibid). Fairburn and the other CMS missionaries concluded that the disruptions in the area were the result of the land being contested by Waikato and Thames tribes (Stone 2001: 165). Another of the missionaries, Henry Williams, argued that the territory should be ceded to missionaries and held in trust as a buffer between the contending parties, thereby removing any immediate obstacles to peace (Stone 2001: 165; Tonson 1966: 51).

According to Stone (2001:165), however, the missionaries were mistaken in the belief that the underlying reason for the instability of the Tamaki region was the competition between Waikato and Thames tribes for the large area of relatively unpopulated borderland later incorporated in the 'purchase'. Instead, Stone suggests that the main reason for sparse settlement of the area was regional instability resulting from almost two decades of musket wars (Stone 2001:165). It has also been put forward that a fear held by Hauraki Maori, of

¹ From Clough and Baquié 2018. While based on reliable documentary sources, this information should not be viewed as complete or without other context. There are a large number of iwi historically associated with the Auckland region and many other histories known to tangata whenua.

² A number of other iwi also have associations with the area, including Ngati Maru, Ngati Paoa, Ngati Tamatera, Ngati Te Ata, Ngati Whanaunga, Te Ahiwaru-Waiohua, Te Akitai Waiohua and Waikato-Tainui.

conflict with Waikato tribes from the Manukau Harbour, was also responsible (Monin 2001: 81), creating, in fact, not two but many rival claimants for the territory, including Ngai Tai (Stone 2001:165).

The Fairburn Purchase

Regardless of the true situation, and as a result of the missionaries' actions, in 1836 a large area of land (calculated by Fairburn at the time as being around 40,000 acres, although later calculations put it at a much larger size (Moore et al. 1997: 80)), was transferred to European ownership as part of the extensive Fairburn Purchase:

'Beginning at 'the Dragging Place at Otahuhu', the boundary line ran southeast to Papakura, then towards modern Clevedon, thence down the Wairoa River to Umupuia, up the western shore of the Hauraki Gulf to the Tamaki River and thence to Otahuhu, where it ends' (Stone 2001: 167).

The land was acquired by a series of payments, almost exclusively in trade goods such as blankets, pipes, adzes, tobacco, garden implements, clothing etc, valued at £907.17.6 (Stone 2001; Tonson 1966). Having purchased this vast acreage, Fairburn now found himself in conflict with the CMS for the scale of his acquisition (Monin 2001).

To alleviate the situation, on 12 July 1837, Fairburn signed an agreement promising to return one-third of the block back to its Maori owners once the boundaries had been surveyed (Stone 2001). During 1841-1842 Fairburn's Purchase was examined by the Land Claims Commission and eventually he received a number of grants totaling 5,495 acres, slightly less than one-seventh of his original purchase. However, the 'disallowed' parts of the Purchase did not automatically revert back to the Maori owners but instead became 'Surplus Land' at the disposal of the Crown. The acting governor at that time, Willoughby Shortland, agreed that Ngai Tai could remain on their land around the Wairoa River and a 6063-acre reserve was later confirmed by Governor Robert Fitzroy (Murdoch 1996: 13). Though various tribal groups still claimed certain areas within the Fairburn Block, Ngai Tai claimed mana whenua over the entire area. As a result, the Crown, represented by Land Purchase Officer John White, moved to complete the sale by paying the 'Chiefs of Ngāi Tai Tribe' £500 on 21 February 1854. 'Ngāi Tai who numbered under 100 people at this time maintained their old kāinga at Maraetai – Umupuia and on the eastern side of the Wairoa River inland to Otau' (Te Warena Taua in La Roche 1991: 36).

Between 1865 and 1866, the Ngai Tai reserve land was surveyed and divided into 10 individual blocks, nine of which had been alienated by 1869, leaving a little over 1,000 acres in collective Ngai Tai ownership (Green in La Roche 2011: 30).

European Settlement³

Settlement by European farmers, which had commenced during the 1850s and 1860s, continued and having cleared the land, which was heavily forested with kauri trees, the majority of the early Turanga (Whitford) settlers proceeded to make a living from various sources, including selling firewood, charcoal production as well as growing and selling produce to the Howick and Auckland markets (La Roche 1991:210). Some farmers

³ From Clough and Baquié 2018.

supplemented their income by selling kauri gum to be used in the manufacture of varnish. The timber from the felled trees was used to construct houses and schools in the area and for boat building (ibid.: 205).

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological records show evidence of pre-European Maori occupation throughout the Hauraki Gulf with extensive settlement of the Beachlands area. However, the majority of these sites are located within 250m of the coastline. Most of the recorded sites are small midden deposits (Figure 2).

This property was part of a previous preliminary assessment of the larger rural Beachlands area in 2006. The study area was bounded by Beachlands Road to the north, Whitford—Maraetai Road to the east and Pine Harbour and Pine Harbour Road and Jack Lachlan Drive to the west and south respectively. No archaeological sites were observed during the assessment (Clough 2006).

Of the few sites in Beachlands that have been subject to a full archaeological excavation the most recent is the 2017 investigation of site R11/343 at 27 Tui Brae, Pine Harbour, Beachlands. The investigation revealed three predominantly cockle midden deposits, a small number of earth ovens (hangi), postholes, and a drain feature. Shell midden and microfossil analysis showed evidence of estuarine shellfish exploitation as well as the consumption of puha and storage of kumara on site. Post-excavation analysis indicated a seasonal site consisting of a food processing and consumption area possibly associated with an adjacent whare at 23 Tui Brae. Radiocarbon dates suggest that activities on the site occurred around the turn of the 16th century and likely lasted less than 50 years.

A search of the NZAA ArchSite database and Auckland Council CHI established that there were no recorded archaeological sites on or in the near vicinity of the subject property.

Within a 1km radius of the proposed development there are two archaeological sites recorded on both NZAA database and Auckland Council CHI, located to the northeast (Figure 2).

R11/2139 (CHI ID 14130) is described as a destroyed shell midden containing small crushed and fragmented pipi, cockle, and some scallop. Approximately 875m from 109 Beachlands Road. (E1779418 N5916282)

R11/2368 (CHI ref 17060) is described as a midden of predominantly broken/crushed cockle with pipi, fire-cracked rock and possible whelk over a 5m by 5m area of the flat top of a knoll. Approximately 640m from 109 Beachlands Road (E1779518 N5916058)

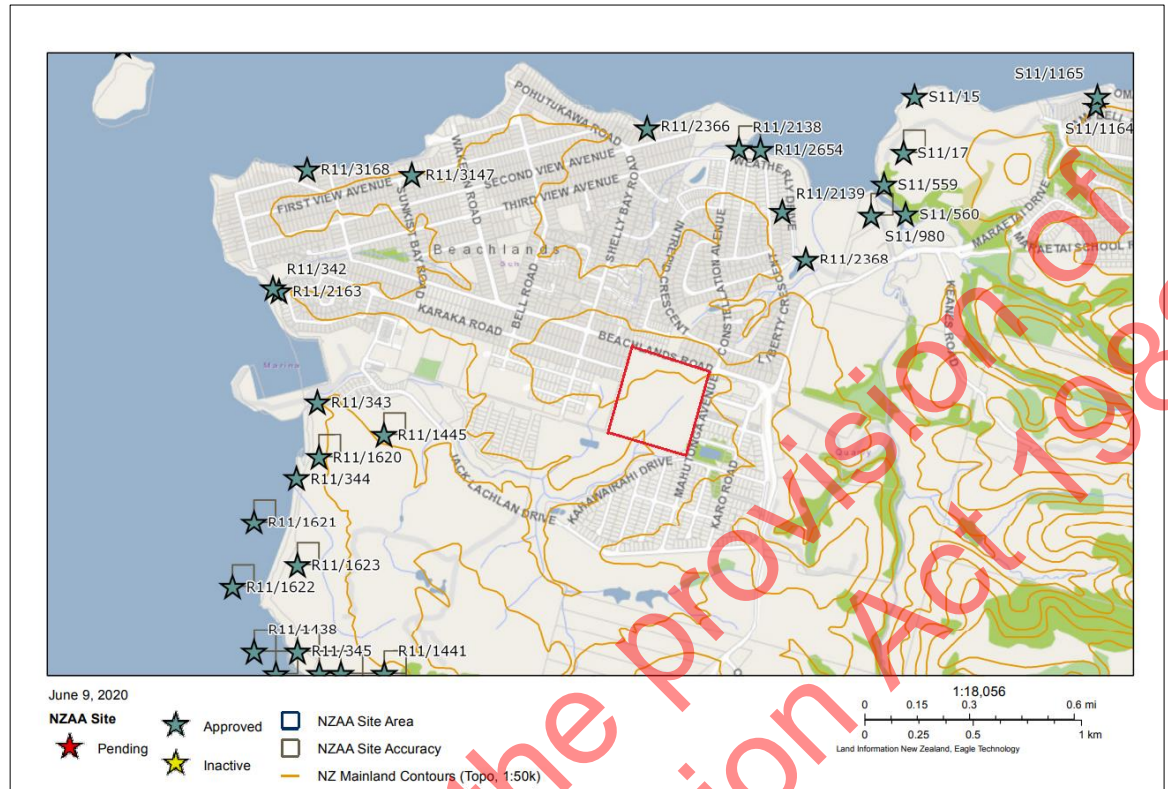


Figure 2. Archaeological sites recorded in the general vicinity. Proposed development area outlined in red (source: NZAA ArchSite)

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Topography, Vegetation and Land use

The subject property dips gently to the south-west with two main gullies that feed into an unnamed stream that runs north-westward before emptying into the Waitemata Harbour just south of the Beachlands Marina. Pony club buildings and facilities including stables are located in the northeast corner of the property. At the time of the 2020 assessment the property was being used by a pony club and was under pasture grazed by horses.

The soil is a yellow ultic, which are strongly weathered soils that have a well-structured, clay enriched subsoil horizon. The soils are acid and strongly leached, with generally low levels of calcium and other basic cations (Landcare website). The underlying geology is Late Pliocene to Middle Pliocene pumiceous river deposits which are pumiceous mud, sand and gravel with muddy peat and lignite: rhyolite pumice, including on-welded ignimbrite, tephra and alluvia.

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Field Survey Results

A field inspection of 109 Beachlands Rd was completed on 20 May 2020. Survey conditions were good, and the grass cover had been grazed or recently cleared of gorse, so land contours were evident.

Visual inspection of the property did not indicate the presence of any archaeological features, although stock damage around the gullies and across the property in general provided many opportunities to assess the subsoils for any shell or dark cultural soils (Figure 3 to Figure 7).

Subsurface testing with a probe and spade were carried out to determine whether any buried archaeological deposits could be identified, and for any evidence of earlier ground modification. Extensive probing across the majority of the property did not indicate any potential subsurface archaeological remains except in one spot just to the south of the main farm building (NZTM E1778995 N5915508 \pm 4m), where probing and spade testing found several scattered shell fragments. However, further probing and spade testing in the area could not identify a source of midden or any other possible archaeological remains (Figure 8 and Figure 9).

No archaeological sites were identified within the property and the potential for unidentified subsurface archaeological remains to be present is considered to be low.



Figure 3. Facing towards southeast side of property at start of the westernmost gully (see Figure 1 for aerial view)



Figure 4. Facing north looking up the westernmost gully



Figure 5. Exposed south-facing section of westernmost gully



Figure 6. Facing east towards the junction of the two main gullies on southern side of property



Figure 7. Exposed west-facing section of easternmost gully

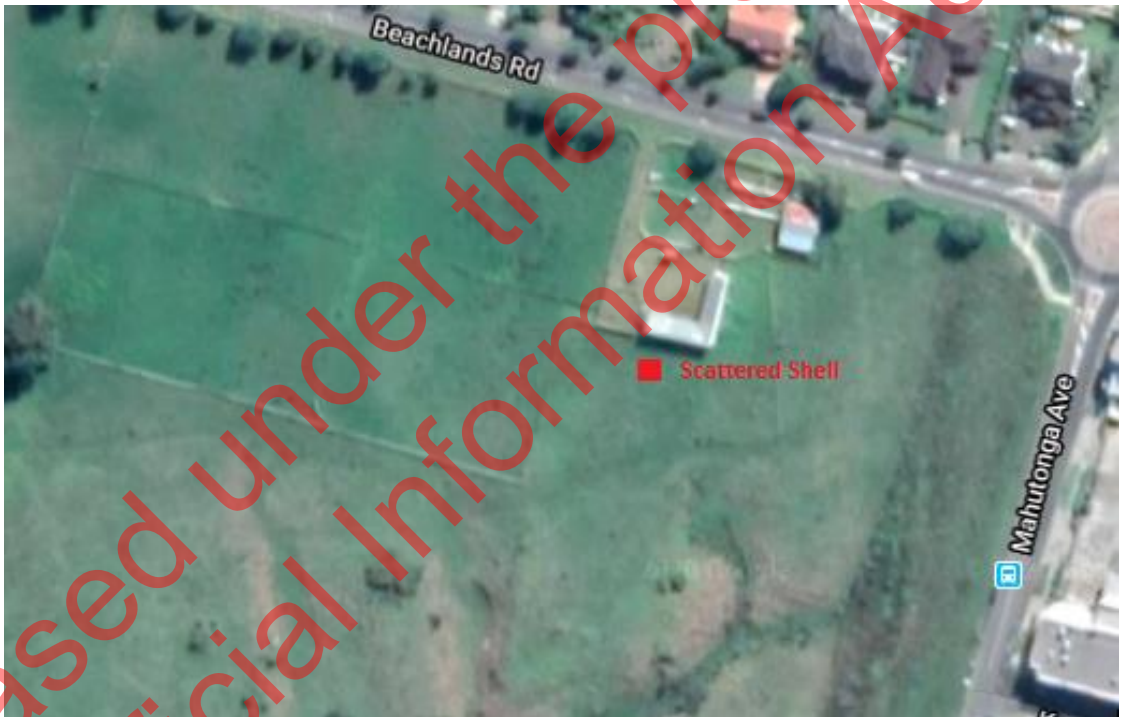


Figure 8. Approximate location of scattered shell



Figure 9. Shell fragments found to the south of the stable building

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Results

No archaeological sites have previously been identified within or in close proximity to the proposed development area at 109 Beachlands Road and no sites were identified within the property during this survey. The presence of some scattered shell located near the stables is likely to relate to recent activity and it is not considered to have any archaeological value.

Maori Cultural Values

This is an assessment of effects on archaeological values and does not include an assessment of effects on Maori cultural values. Such assessments should only be made by the tangata whenua. Maori cultural concerns may encompass a wider range of values than those associated with archaeological sites.

The historical association of the general area with the tangata whenua is evident from the recorded sites, traditional histories and known Maori place names.

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that archaeological survey techniques (based on visual inspection and subsurface testing) cannot necessarily identify all subsurface archaeological features, nor detect wahi tapu and other sites of traditional significance to Maori, especially where these have no physical remains.

Archaeological Value and Significance

The property had no known archaeological value or significance and only low potential for the presence of unidentified subsurface remains

Effects of the Proposal

As no archaeological sites are located within the development properties the proposed subdivision will have no known effect on archaeological values.

In any area where archaeological sites have been recorded in the general vicinity it is possible that unrecorded subsurface remains may be exposed during development. While it is considered unlikely in this situation as the archaeology of the area is concentrated on the coast rather than inland and no indication of archaeological remains was observed despite good survey conditions and subsurface testing, the possibility is provided for under the AUP OP Accidental Discovery Rule (E12.6.1).

Archaeological features and remains can take the form of burnt and fire cracked stones, charcoal, rubbish heaps including shell, bone and/or 19th century glass and crockery, ditches, banks, pits, old building foundations, artefacts of Maori and early European origin or human burials.

Resource Management Act 1991 Requirements

Section 6 of the RMA recognizes as matters of national importance: ‘the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga’ (S6(e)); and ‘the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development’ (S6(f)).

All persons exercising functions and powers under the RMA are required under Section 6 to recognize and provide for these matters of national importance when ‘managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources. Archaeological and other historic heritage sites are resources that should be sustainably managed by ‘Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment’ (Section 5(2)(c)).

Historic heritage is defined (S2) as ‘those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand’s history and cultures, deriving from any of the following qualities: (i) archaeological; (ii) architectural; (iii) cultural; (iv) historic; (v) scientific; (vi) technological’. Historic heritage includes: ‘(i) historic sites, structures, places, and areas; (ii) archaeological sites; (iii) sites of significance to Maori, including wahi tapu; (iv) surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources.

Regional, district and local plans contain sections that help to identify, protect and manage archaeological and other heritage sites. The plans are prepared under the provisions of the RMA. The Auckland Unitary Plan Operative in Part 2016 (AUP OP) is relevant to the proposed activity. There are no scheduled historic heritage places within the property.

This assessment has established that the proposed subdivision and future development will have no effect on any known archaeological values and has little potential to affect unrecorded subsurface remains. If resource consent is granted, consent conditions relating to archaeological monitoring or protection would therefore not be required.

However, if suspected archaeological remains are exposed during subdivision development works, the Accidental Discovery Rule (E12.6.1) set out in the AUP OP must be complied with. Under the Accidental Discovery Rule works must cease within 20m of the discovery and the Council, Heritage NZ, Mana Whenua and (in the case of human remains) NZ Police must be informed. The Rule would no longer apply in respect to archaeological sites if an Authority from Heritage NZ was in place.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 Requirements

In addition to any requirements under the RMA, the HNZPTA protects all archaeological sites whether recorded or not, and they may not be damaged or destroyed unless an Authority to modify an archaeological site has been issued by Heritage NZ (Section 42).

An archaeological site is defined by the HNZPTA Section 6 as follows:

‘archaeological site’ means, subject to section 42(3), –

(a) any place in New Zealand, including any building or structure (or part of a building or structure) that –

- (i) was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900 or is the site of the wreck of any vessel where the wreck occurred before 1900; and
- (ii) provides or may provide, through investigation by archaeological methods, evidence relating to the history of New Zealand; and
- (b) includes a site for which a declaration is made under section 43(1)'3

Authorities to modify archaeological sites can be applied for either in respect to archaeological sites within a specified area of land (Section 44(a)), or to modify a specific archaeological site where the effects will be no more than minor (Section 44(b)), or for the purpose of conducting a scientific investigation (Section 44(c)). Applications that relate to sites of Maori interest require consultation with (and in the case of scientific investigations the consent of) the appropriate iwi or hapu and are subject to the recommendations of the Maori Heritage Council of Heritage NZ. In addition, an application may be made to carry out an exploratory investigation of any site or locality under Section 56, to confirm the presence, extent and nature of a site or suspected site.

An archaeological authority is not warranted for the proposed development at 109 Beachlands Road as there are no known archaeological sites on the property and little potential for subsurface remains to be exposed once works are under way. However, should any sites be exposed during development the provisions of the HNZPTA must be complied with.

Conclusions

The proposed subdivision development will have no effects on any known archaeological values. Fragments of shell noted in the vicinity of the stables are likely to relate to recent activity rather than pre-1900 archaeology. No archaeological sites have been identified on the property at 109 Beachlands Road and it is unlikely that any unidentified sites will be exposed during development. The recorded sites in the general area have a predominantly coastal distribution and none are located in close proximity to the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There should be no constraints on the proposed development on archaeological grounds, since no archaeological sites are known to be present and it is considered unlikely that any will be exposed by earthworks.
- If subsurface archaeological evidence should be unearthed during construction (e.g. intact shell midden, hangi, storage pits relating to Maori occupation, or cobbled floors, brick or stone foundation, and rubbish pits relating to 19th century European occupation), or if human remains should be discovered, the Accidental Discovery Rule (section E.12.6.1 of the AUP OP) must be followed. This requires that work ceases within 20m of the discovery and that the Auckland Council, Heritage NZ, Mana Whenua and (in the case of human remains) the NZ Police are notified. The relevant authorities will then determine the actions required.
- If modification of an archaeological site does become necessary, an Authority must be applied for under Section 44(a) of the HNZPTA and granted prior to any further work being carried out that will affect the site. *(Note that this is a legal requirement).*
- Since archaeological survey cannot always detect sites of traditional significance to Maori, such as wahi tapu, the tangata whenua should be consulted regarding the possible existence of such sites on the property.

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