

# 155-157 BRIGHAM CREEK ROAD, WHENUAPAI, AUCKLAND: PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT



Prepared for  
Neil Construction Limited

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## INTRODUCTION

### Project Background

Neil Construction Limited is proposing to develop a residential subdivision on land situated at 155-157 Brigham Creek Road, Whenuapai, Auckland (Figure 1, Figure 2). As yet there are no details of the proposed development. The land is bordered to the north by Brigham Creek Road, and by private property to the east, south and west. The proposed development area consists of 3.62440ha of land formerly used for grazing and more recently for orchard. The legal description of the land is Lot 2 DP 334953.

A preliminary desk-top archaeological assessment was requested by Neil Construction Limited to establish whether there are any known archaeological constraints on future development of the property. 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), Unitary Plan Operative in Part (AUP OP) schedules, and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (Heritage NZ) New Zealand Heritage List were searched for information on archaeological or other historic heritage sites recorded on or in the immediate vicinity of the property. Literature and archaeological reports relevant to the area were consulted (see Bibliography). Early survey plans and aerial photography were checked for information relating to past use of the property. Limited archival research was also carried out to establish the history of the property.





Figure 1. General location of the proposed development at 155-157 Brigham Creek Road (bounded in blue). Source: Geomaps



Figure 2. Aerial image of the proposed development area (bounded in blue). Source: Geomaps

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Maori Settlement

Through time a number of iwi have had influence over the Upper Waitemata Harbour region. Of particular significance were Te Kawerau, Waiohua and Ngati Whatua and the many hapu related to these groups (Clough and Tanner 2004). However, other hapu from outside the region also maintained rights to fish in the waters of the Waitemata through the summer months, and archaeological sites in the area may relate to any of these groups.

The rohe of Te Kawerau a Maki once extended from the Waitakere Ranges north to Cape Rodney and Leigh. The ancestors of the people that would become Te Kawerau a Maki were on the coastline between northern Taranaki and Kawhia during the 13th and 14th centuries (Te Kawerau a Maki 2006). Around 1600 AD Maki and his followers migrated northwards settling initially near Waiuku, then at Rarotonga (Mt Smart), and set about conquering and intermarrying with the people of South Kaipara and Ngaoho of the Waitakere Ranges (Murdoch 1990: 13). By the late 1600s Maki's descendants occupied land from South Kaipara to Mahurangi and the Hauraki Gulf (Murdoch 1990:14).

By 1680 AD, however, Ngati Whatua of North Kaipara had advanced on the Waitakere area, initially intermarrying with Kawerau people and later, by conquest, taking all of the pa on the west coast (Murdoch 1990:14). By 1700 AD, many Kawerau had been killed while others sought refuge in the forests and caves of the Waitakere Ranges. Due to earlier intermarriages and relationships, Ngati Whatua left Te Kawerau in peace in the western (coastal) half of the Waitakere area (Murdoch 1990:14). There followed a period of relative peace until the arrival of the Europeans.

### European Settlement

When Europeans first began to settle the Upper Waitemata they would have encountered a landscape covered in kauri forest (North 2000). By 1840, after the arrival of numerous settlers, several timber mills were founded in the upper harbour at Lucas Creek, Paremoremo and Rangitopuni (North 2000; Morris 1995). The site known as Mill Flat in Riverhead was a site of one of the early saw mills (Morris 1995). In a little less than 20 years, practically all of the kauri was logged and gum diggers replaced the timber workers (North 2000; Morris 1995).

On 2 June 1853, 600 acres of land named the 'Waipareira Block' were sold by two chiefs of the Ngati Whatua, for £50. However, this sale proved to be controversial and later formed part of the 3000 acres of reserve land in West Auckland that was given back to Kawerau a Maki (Hahn 2007). In 1857, however, two European settlers named as Joseph Newman and Thomas Summerville managed to acquire the 600 acre Waipareira Block, reportedly for the sum of £250 (Hahn 2007).

The Sinton family is credited with the building of one of Whenuapai's first houses (Ingersoll n.d.). On 19 January 1860, William Sinton and his wife Janet had embarked at Southampton for New Zealand aboard the vessel *Red Jacket* and four months later disembarked in Auckland (Ingersoll n.d.). After declining the opportunity to purchase 40 acres of land in Kaukapakapa due to Maori unrest in that area, Sinton worked for a while before he was finally granted 70 acres of land in Hobsonville in 1864 (Ingersoll n.d.). There was much manuka and scrub on Sinton's new land, perhaps due to natural regeneration following the clearing of the kauri forests. Much of the land at Whenuapai at the end of



the 19th century appeared barren and devoid of large trees after the loggers and gum diggers had passed through (Hahn 2007).

Around Whenuapai, early gum diggers lived in shanty style dwellings, and would take the gum that they had excavated to one of the two stores owned by the Sinton family at either Brigham Creek or Hobsonville (Morris 1995; Ingersoll n.d.). Here, they would be either paid in cash for their gum or they could trade it for goods and supplies (Ingersoll n.d.).<sup>1</sup>

Despite the presence of a few European settlers farming the land in the Whenuapai area, most chose to settle at nearby Hobsonville (Hahn 2007). It would appear that for the most part Whenuapai follows a classic pattern of rural land use in the greater West Auckland area. This is, that kauri forest was first logged and cleared, the ground was then excavated and worked by gum diggers, and then the ground improved by farmers to enable the development of good pasture for livestock or crop cultivation.

One crop that was cultivated successfully at Whenuapai was tobacco (Hahn 2007). The tobacco plant is known for its ability to grow in even the poorest soils and in a wide variety of climates, so the soil and conditions at Whenuapai posed no problems (Hahn 2007). So successful was tobacco cultivation at Whenuapai and Riverhead that by 1929, 120,000 pounds of tobacco was being produced annually (Hahn 2007). However, due to increased government taxation and pressure exerted from trade unions for improved working conditions and wages, tobacco production in Whenuapai steadily decreased. By 1940 tobacco cultivation had ceased and Motueka in the South Island had become the main centre of cultivation in New Zealand (Hahn 2007).

## Whenuapai Airbase

New Zealand's air force had its origins in June 1923, when the New Zealand Permanent Air Force (NZPAF) was officially established, and a small number of surplus British aircraft were acquired. The first training base was established in Canterbury at the Wigram Aerodrome, and in 1924 the Hobsonville Peninsula was chosen as a suitable location for an aircraft station for both seaplanes and land planes to defend the port of Auckland. Work began at Hobsonville in 1927 and it was operational soon after (Macready and Clough 2008).

In 1937 the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) was created as a separate defence service, replacing the NZPAF (under the Air Force Act 1937). The first Chief of Air Staff, Wing Commander (RAF) Ralph Cochrane, had written a comprehensive report assessing the needs of the new Air Force in 1936 and recommended sweeping changes (Macready and Clough 2008). These included the separation of land and seaplane operations and other functions, and identified the need for airbases in New Zealand that could accommodate the new Wellington bomber (ibid.; Ingersoll n.d.). By August 1938, some suitable and inexpensive land had been identified at Whenuapai, and a 600 acre purchase was made on 29 August (Ingersoll n.d.; Ministry of Defence Report 2004). After the land had been levelled, drained and topsoiled, four grass runways were constructed at Whenuapai (Ingersoll n.d.). However, to better cope with the increased numbers of heavy aircraft using the airbase for the Pacific arena of war by 1942, they were replaced with thick concrete (Ministry of Defence 2004; Ingersoll n.d.).

<sup>1</sup> Ingersoll states that 'Many times the store owners had lent them [the gum diggers] their first equipment to get started' from Ingersoll (n.d.):16.

In 1945, Whenuapai also opened to civilian aircraft and by 1947 the then National Airways Corporation was operating a passenger and freight service (Ministry of Defence 2004). Regular services commenced between Whenuapai, Paraparaumu, and Harewood and international services began in the late 1940s, and continued until 1965 when Auckland International Airport opened at Mangere (Ministry of Defence 2004). Since the war, Whenuapai has also retained military operations and today forms RNZAF Base Auckland (Ministry of Defence 2004). The Hobsonville Airbase was closed in 2002, surplus to defence requirements.

## Land Ownership History

The early records for Lot 2A, Parish of Waipareira are held within a Provisional Register which is not available digitally and must be reviewed at Land Information New Zealand in Hamilton. It is likely that the land had been subjected to timber felling and gum digging before the land was converted to grazing land. Ownership of the subject property was reviewed from 1913 when a Certificate of Title was issued to farmer Walter Patterson Wallace (NA205/73, LINZ). From 1 September 1916 the property was subject to a 5-year lease by Thomas Henry Gibson. In August 1923 a portion of Lot 2A including the land at 155-157 Brigham Creek Road was leased by George Kennedy for a period of 8 years, however Kennedy completed a purchase for the land in 1928 (NA205/73, LINZ).

## RECORDED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

### Background

The Whenuapai area and other locations along the creeks and inlets of the inner reaches of the Upper Waitemata Harbour were occupied by Maori for generations before the arrival of Europeans, evidence of which survives in the form of recorded place names, oral traditions and archaeological sites (although many sites have been destroyed by 19th and 20th century development and natural processes). The name Whenuapai itself translates as 'fertile land' (Stewart 1997) or perhaps 'good land', although the original Maori name of the area was Waimarie which means 'calm waters' (Morris 1995; Simmons 1987). The harbour provided not only abundant marine resources but also access to some significant communication and portage routes, such as the Rangitopuni River and Lucas Creek. The Waitemata harbour was part of an inland water route stretching from north of Dargaville through to the centre of the North Island (via the Kaipara, Waitemata and Manukau Harbours and the Waikato River).

For the most part the archaeological sites in the vicinity of Whenuapai relating to Maori occupation are small and dispersed around the shoreline of the upper harbour, with the exception of Tauhinu Pa on the opposite side of the harbour from Hobsonville Landing. Subsistence strategies employed by Maori inland from the coast consisted of the hunting (by spear and snare) of kaka, kereru, kiwi, wood-hen, tui and other small birds, while rats were caught in pits or traps (Best 1903, cited in Hayward & Diamond 1978). Forest plants also provided a range of foods with fruits, bracts and tubers from a variety of plants all gathered and consumed, while those Maori who dwelt on the coastlines of the Waitemata Harbour would have had an abundance of fish and shellfish resources at their disposal.

There has been very little in the way of archaeological field survey or investigation in the Whenuapai area in the past. However, in 2010 the route of a proposed wastewater pipeline that crossed Brigham Creek to the northwest of the project area on its path to Trig Road near the Whenuapai Airbase was assessed, with field survey identifying three new shell midden sites (Phear & Clough 2010). Also in 2010, an archaeological assessment was undertaken of some 1400ha of land in the area of Whenuapai and Hobsonville for Waitakere City Council (Shakles et al. 2010). Field survey, including in the area to the south of Brigham Creek Road, did not identify any archaeological sites. Judge (2011) completed an assessment for a new pumping station on Brigham Creek Road and Shakles, Low and Clough (2014) assessed land at 34-42 Brigham Creek Road and 2 – 8 Dale Road, but no new archaeological or other heritage sites were identified. More recently, nearby land at 150-152 Brigham Creek Road and 2-18 Kauri Road was assessed (Low and Clough, 2018) with no archaeological sites noted.

### Archaeological Sites

A search of the NZAA ArchSite database (Figure 3) and Auckland Council CHI (Figure 4) showed no archaeological sites or sites of heritage significance within 500m of the property.



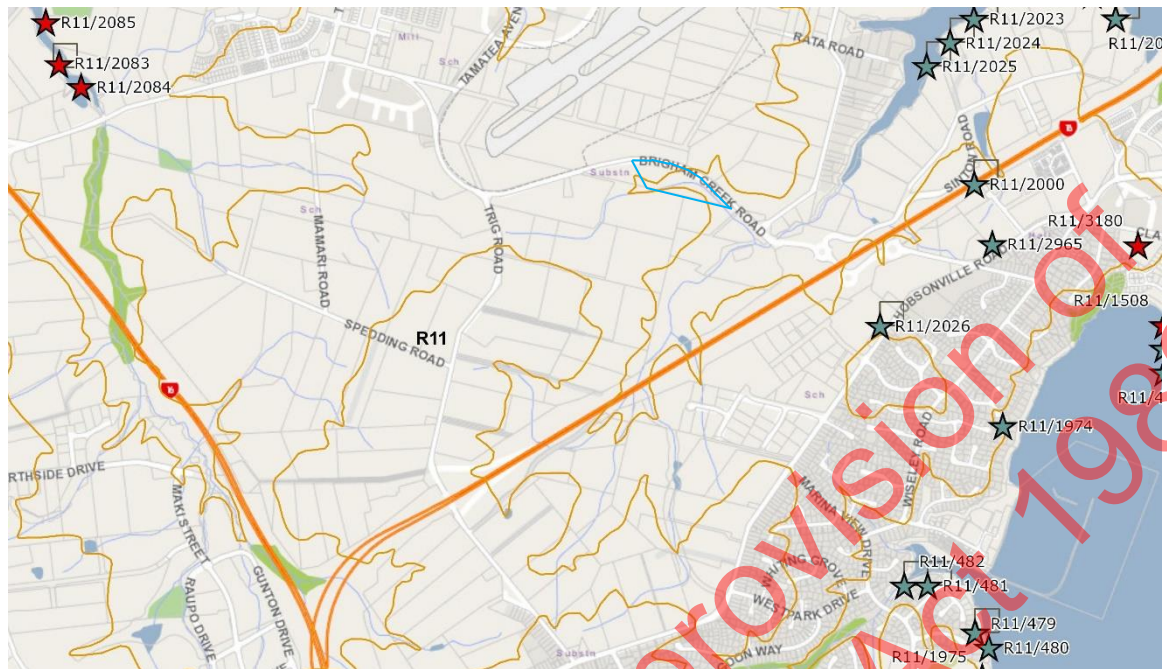


Figure 3. Recorded archaeological sites within the wider area with the subject property bounded in blue. Source: NZAA Archsite



Figure 4. Showing sites of heritage significance within the wider area with the subject property bounded in blue. Source: Geomaps



## HISTORICAL SURVEY

### Information from Early Maps and Plans

Survey Ordinance plans 12107, 30573 and 30575 were reviewed however no information relating to structures or land use was recorded.

### Information from Early Aerials

The earliest photograph located dated to 1959 (Figure 5) and shows the subject property in open grassland with no structures present. It was still undeveloped in 1996 (Figure 6).



Figure 5. 1959 aerial photograph with subject property bounded in blue. Source: Geomaps



Figure 6 1996 aerial photograph with subject property bounded in blue showing undeveloped pastureland. Source: Geomaps

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### Summary of Results

No archaeological sites had previously been recorded in the proposed development area and none were identified during the desktop analysis carried out for this assessment. The likelihood of encountering intact archaeological deposits during the proposed development is considered to be low.

### Maori Cultural Values

This is an assessment of archaeological values – and does not include an assessment an assessment of 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.

### Limitations

This is a desktop assessment – no field survey was carried out.

### Archaeological Value and Significance

While there is traditional historical evidence of Maori settlement and occupation around the wider upper Waitemata Harbour area in the past, no archaeological sites have been identified within 500m of the property. The Whenuapai area saw early European settlement from the 1860s, but there is no record of early use or occupation on the property itself, although tree felling, gum digging and stock grazing is likely. The property therefore has no known archaeological value or significance.

### Effects of the Proposal

There will be no effects on any known archaeological values as no archaeological sites have been identified within the area proposed for development.

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. In this case it is considered unlikely due to the lack of identified archaeological remains in the proposed development area and its distance from the known locations of recorded sites. However, 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 recognises 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 recognise and provide for these matters of national importance when ‘managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources’. There is a duty to avoid, remedy, or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment arising from an activity (S17), including historic heritage.

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.

The AUP OP does not identify any significant historic heritage places on or near the property.

If 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.

## 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)<sup>2</sup>

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 will not be required for the proposed development at 155-157 Brigham Creek Road as no known sites will be affected, and it is unlikely that any undetected sites are present. However, should any sites be exposed during development the provisions of the HNZPTA must be complied with.

## Conclusions

The proposed development will have no known effects on archaeological values, as no archaeological sites have been identified within the development area and the potential for any unidentified subsurface remains to be exposed during development is very low. However, if previously unidentified archaeological remains are exposed by earthworks, they would have statutory protection under the HNZPTA and cannot be modified without authorisation from HNZ.

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<sup>2</sup> Under Section 42(3) an Authority is not required to permit work on a pre-1900 building unless the building is to be demolished. Under Section 43(1) a place post-dating 1900 (including the site of a wreck that occurred after 1900) that could provide 'significant evidence relating to the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand' can be declared by Heritage NZ to be an archaeological site.

## 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 during development.
- 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).*



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