

Mauao Historic Reserve Base Track Realignment Project: Research Strategy for site number U14/3654

1. Background

Mauao Historic Reserve is a rich and highly significant cultural landscape, and is also a wahi tapu. The reserve contains four known pa complexes represented by approximately 800-1,000 visible surface archaeological features including pits, terraces, platforms, house floors, shell middens and shell mounds.

The archaeological mapping of the project area identified a total of twenty (20) archaeological features in the area below the existing base track and three (3) further features partially within the existing alignment. These features are important components of the cultural landscape on the southern and eastern slopes of Mauao, which has been subject to modification in the past, and may continue to be influenced by degradation and loss. The features within the project area are relatively intact, although subject to coastal erosion processes, and therefore have the potential to yield a considerable amount of information regarding the history of occupation on Mauao, the use of the archaeological features and Maori resource use. The features have been recorded within the NZAA Site Recording Scheme as archaeological site no. U14/3654.

2. Research Objectives

In accordance with the Mauao Historic Reserve Management Plan management statement 5.1.2 j; the base track realignment project will be utilised to 'Enable archaeological research...to better understand the former settlement pattern and lifestyle of the ancestors who resided at Mauao...'

The research objectives for the investigation are three-fold.

1) To obtain information about the nature of visible and any subsurface archaeological features in order to inform an understanding of the specific use of these terraces (e.g. housing, storage etc.), in the context of broader historical narratives.

2) To collect material suitable for radiocarbon dating to provide a greater understanding of when these features were occupied and used by Maori.

3) To obtain and analyse, as appropriate, a representative sample of any faunal material that may be present within midden to provide information about the history of resource use.

In addition, the investigation provides an opportunity to obtain information about the character of such sites which will assist the future management and interpretation of the archaeological resource contained within the reserve. The outcomes of the investigation may

also be appropriate for inclusion within the development of cultural interpretation resources.

3. Methods

The proposed alignment corridor of the base track, and construction methodology have been designed to minimize impact on archaeological features. However, construction activity will have localized impact on several features, which will be the focus of archaeological investigation. These areas are:

- **In the vicinity of chainage 70 and 100** – A cut will remove the edge of a terrace feature 12 and will remove the majority of terrace feature 11.
- **In the vicinity of chainage 120 to 160** - Construction will significantly impact on terrace feature 18, resulting in its removal; as the base track revetment cannot be built over the top of the terrace.
- It is important to note that, while archaeological features within the project area have been mapped and represented as discrete polygons, the intervening spaces are highly likely to contain buried features. Such areas may be subject to investigation if considered appropriate by the supervising (section 45 approved) archaeologist.

Archaeological investigation will proceed by removing the upper topsoil layer from the terraces and other affected areas, assisted by a small hydraulic excavator (if considered appropriate by the supervising archaeologist), to expose the intact archaeological features. Thereafter investigation will proceed by hand excavation. All features will be defined, excavated, and recorded using standard techniques.

If appropriate material is encountered, samples will be taken for faunal analysis and radio-carbon dating.

The archaeological team will comprise Lynda Walter (section 45 archaeologist) with additional archaeological assistance as required provided by Archaeology BOP.

Any requirements for Tikanga Maori advised by Nga Poutiriao o Mauao will be followed, including karakia at commencement, and the presence of cultural monitors.

In the event that koiwi tangata are encountered, all works will cease on site, Heritage New Zealand, cultural advisors and the NZ Police will be advised and their response received prior to work recommencing.

4. Curation of Archaeological Material

Any artefacts will be held at Tauranga City Council Heritage Collection Storage Facility, Mt Maunganui, and notified to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, as required by the Protected Objects Act 1975.

5. Reporting

Reports will be submitted to Heritage New Zealand in accordance with the conditions of the authority.

Prepared by:

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