

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION
DEVELOPMENT**

LOT 1 DPS 89311

**12 HUNA ROAD
WHAKATANE**

Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

Project Background

This archaeological survey and report were commissioned by S & L Ltd in order to determine if archaeological sites are affected by the proposed residential subdivision development of Lot 1 DPS 89311 located at 12 Huna Road, Whakatane. The 10.8ha property will be subdivided into 71 residential lots as well as storm water and recreation reserves. Establishment of subdivision will involve extensive ground distance affecting all areas of the properties including the lowering of the northern dune ridge to provide fill for the low-lying areas to the south.

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the property and no previously unrecorded sites were identified during the archaeological survey, however, given the close proximity of several significant recorded archaeological sites associated with the pre 1900 Māori settlement of Pupuaruhue there is a possibility that unrecorded subsurface archaeological sites not identifiable by ground survey methods may be encountered during ground disturbance associated with the proposed residential subdivision development.

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.



Figure 1. Part topographic map W15 showing the location of the proposed subdivision (arrowed).

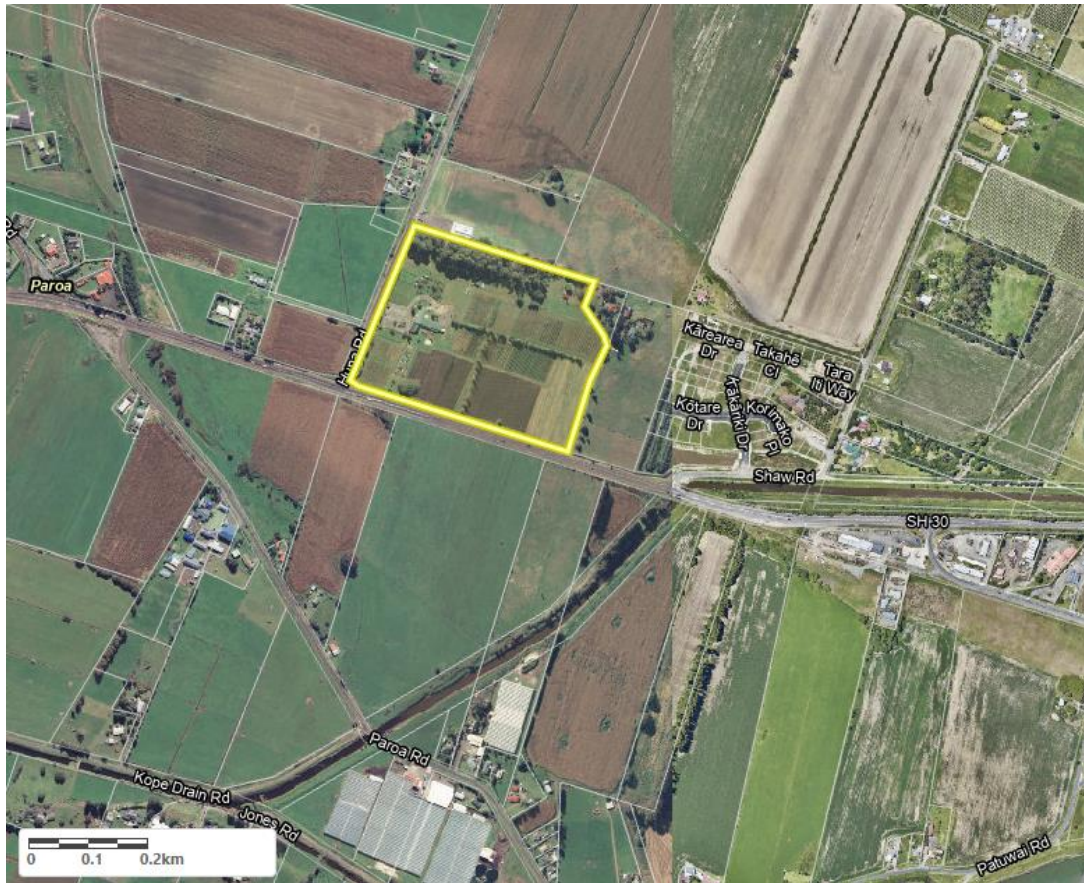


Figure 2. Aerial photo showing land use within Lot 1 DPS 89311.



Figure 3. Proposed subdivision plan prepared by S & L for Lot 1 DPS 89311.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014)

An archaeological site, as defined by the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 6(a), is 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.

Archaeological sites cannot be modified or destroyed unless an authority is granted under section 48, 56(1)(b), or 62 in respect of an archaeological site, no person may modify or destroy, or cause to be modified or destroyed, the whole or any part of that site if that person knows, or ought reasonably to have suspected, that the site is an archaeological site.

Resource Management Act (1991)

The RMA 1991 recognizes as matters of national importance: ‘the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu, and other taonga’ (S6(e); and ‘the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development’ (S6(f).

Territorial authorities are required under Section 6 of the RMA to recognise and provide for these matters of national importance when ‘managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources’.

Historic heritage is defined 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 Māori, including wahi tapu; (iv) surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources’.

Constraints and Limitations

This is an assessment of archaeological values and does not include an assessment of Maori values. Consultation with tangata whenua is being carried out independently of this report. An assessment of the cultural significance of an area can only be competently made by the affected tangata whenua. It should be noted that an assessment of cultural significance might not necessarily correlate with an assessment of archaeological significance.

Methodology

Prior to the archaeological survey the records of the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) were consulted in order to determine whether any archaeological sites had previously been recorded within or in the immediate vicinity of land affected by the project. Early survey plans, aerial photos and archaeological reports relating to the area were also reviewed.

A visual inspection of the property was carried out by Ken Phillips in May 2022. The ground surface was 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). Subsurface testing including probing and spade test pitting in an attempt to identify cultural soils and deposits. Exposed soil profiles were also examined for evidence of subsurface archaeology.

RESULTS

Physical Landscape

The affected property is bounded by Shaw Road on the eastern and southern side and rural residential properties to the north and west. It straddles a low dune ridge extending east west through the property with low lying poorly drained land on the southern and north eastern boundaries. The dune ridge is mantled by Kopeopeo loamy sand soils derived from air fall Taupo and Kaharoa volcanic ash. These soils are free draining and suitable for the cultivation of sub-tropical crops.



Figure 4. Recent aerial photo with contour overlay showing the dune ridge extending along the northern property boundary.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

Prior to the archaeological survey the records of the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) were consulted in order to determine whether any archaeological sites had previously been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the property. Previous archaeological assessment and investigation reports carried out in the general area were reviewed.

Recorded archaeological sites on the Rangitaiki Plains are, with few exceptions, located on the remnant sand ridges that represent former coastal fore dunes formed during the progressive infilling of the Rangitaiki graben during the Holocene. The Kopeopeo loamy sand soils mantling many of these dunes provided the most suitable soil on the plains for the cultivation of traditional subtropical crops and consequently formed the main focus of pre-European Māori settlement of the plains.¹ One such dune extends east and west of the Patuwai bend in the Whakatane River. The western side of this dune ridge extends west to Huna Road and was the location of a large Maori settlement known as Pupuaruhe.

The Reverend J.A. Wilson visited the settlement in 1840 and estimated the population to be about 1200 at that time.² Elsdon Best describes this settlement as a defended pa, however, archaeological evidence of defensive features have, as yet, not been identified.

Previously recorded archaeological sites

There are five previously recorded archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the Huna Road property. Two of these sites (W15/332, 816) are located on the dune ridge in the vicinity of Mill Road 1km to the south east of Huna Road. Identified archaeological features within these two sites include pits, terraces and shell middens associated with the traditional Maori settlement of Pupuaruhe.

The remaining three sites at the eastern end of Patuwai on the left bank of the Whakatāne River include two pit features identified by Mallows in 2010 (W15/1061, 1062). Mallows' suggests the features may possibly relate to activity associated with an early 20th Century flax mill located nearby on the left bank of the Whakatane River. A pit feature identified by Jones during archaeological investigations carried out in 1986 (W15/333) had hangi stone inclusions in the lower pit infill and may reasonably be interpreted as an archaeological feature associated with pre Tarawera (1886) Maori activity.

Site No.	Site Type	Easting	Northing
W15/332	Pit / Terrace	1947692	5791879
W15/333	Midden / Oven	1947593	5791579
W15/816	Midden / Oven	1947968	5791830
W15/1061	Flax milling?	1947694	5791646
W15/1062	Flax milling?	1947593	5791606

Table 1. Previously recorded archaeological sites within 1km of Lot 1 DPS 89311.

¹ Jones 1991, Phillips 2002

² Phillips 2002

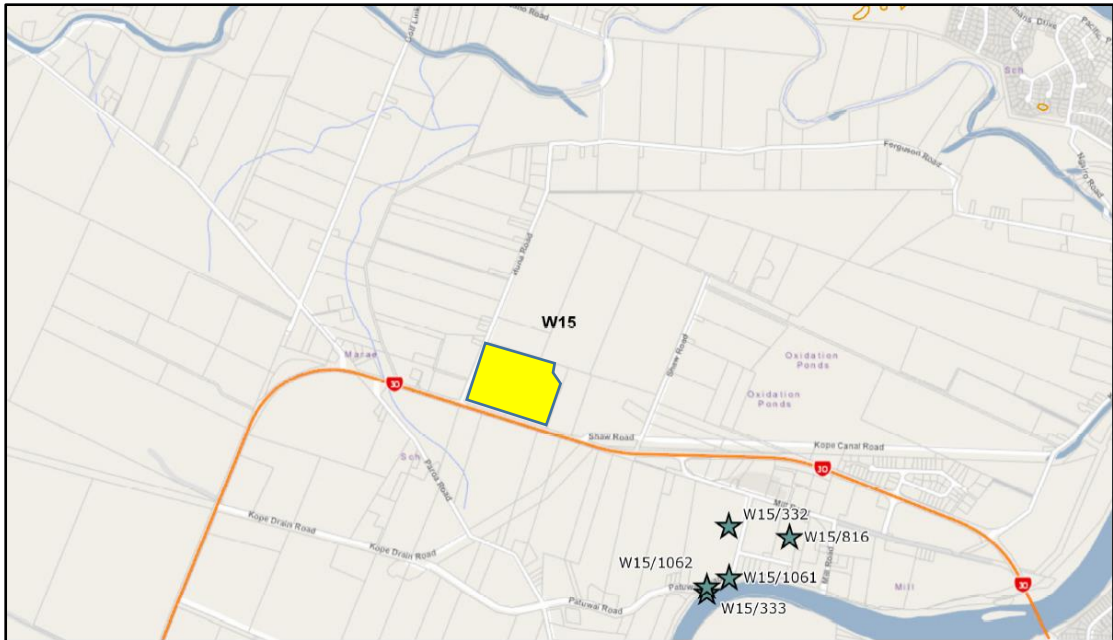


Figure 5. Cadastral plan showing the location of recorded archaeological sites in the general vicinity of Lot 1 DPS 89311 (highlighted yellow).

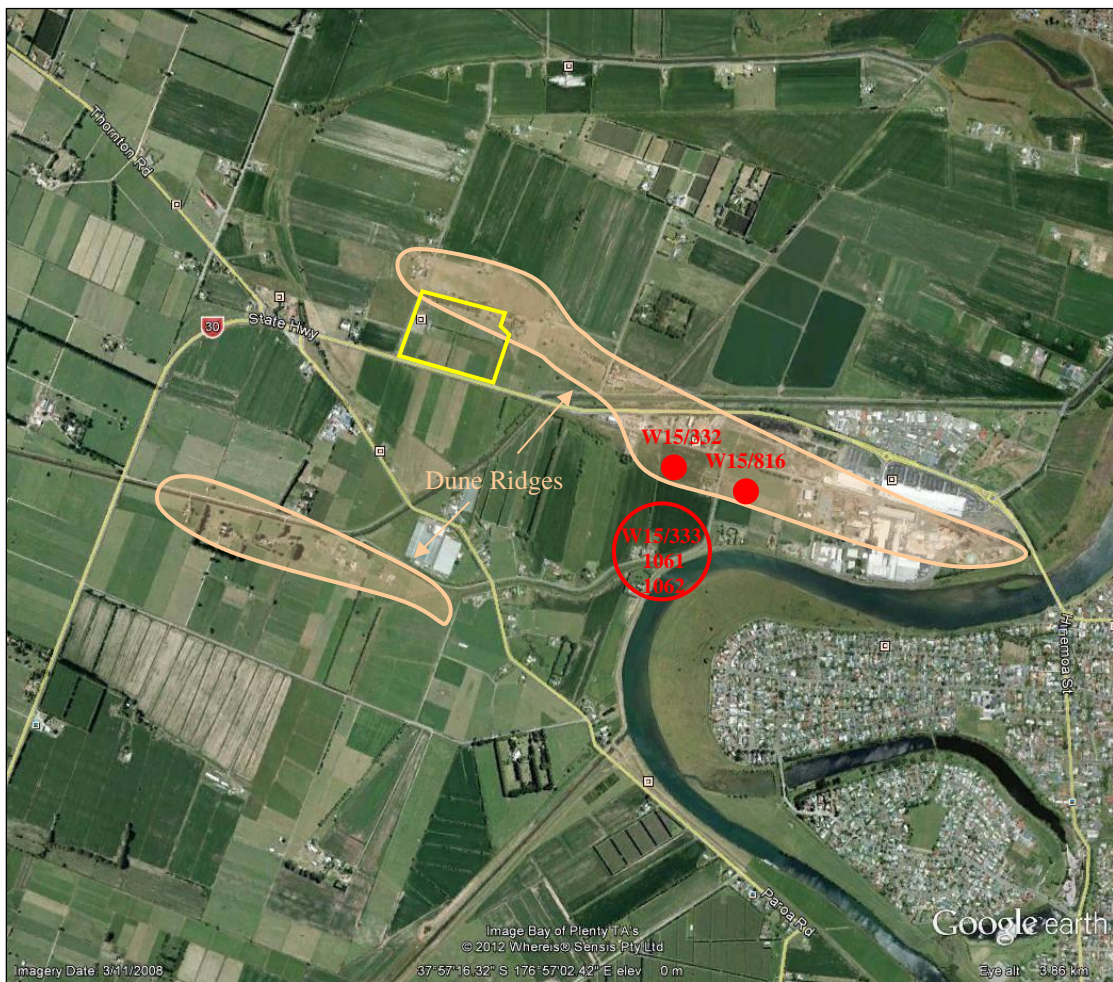


Figure 6. Aerial photo showing the location of recorded archaeological sites on the Pupuaruhe dune in the relation to the Shaw Road property outlined yellow.

SURVEY RESULTS

At the time of the survey land use within the property included landscaping and cultivations on the low lying Rewatu fine sandy loam adjacent to State Highway 30 and grazing on the southern slopes of the dune ridge extending along the northern property boundary. A grove of exotic trees covers the dune crest.

Spade test pits on the dune ridge generally revealed a natural soil profile comprising 10 - 15cm topsoil overlying sterile sands. Spade test pits on the low-lying areas revealed a soil profile modified by frequent 21st century ploughing and cultivations.

No intact archaeological features were identified within the property during the survey and spade test pits did not reveal evidence for the presence of buried subsurface archaeological features.

While no unrecorded archaeological sites were identified during the survey of the property it should be recognized that it is not possible to provide absolute assurance that unrecorded subsurface archaeological sites are not present. Given the prevalence of pre European Māori settlement and cultivation sites on the Kopeopeo dune ridge across the Rangitaiki Plain, including Pupuaruhe 1km to the east, it is a possibility that unrecorded subsurface archaeological sites may be encountered within the property during earthworks associated with the proposed subdivision development.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Ground disturbance associated with the proposed residential subdivision development will be extensive and will include topsoil removal, cut and fill earthwork, construction of internal roading and section and installation of utilities.

No archaeological features were identified within the properties during the May 2022 survey, however, there are five recorded archaeological sites within 1km of the property on the dune formation extending south east from the property. Given the close proximity of known sites and the apparent limited modification to the dune ridge on the property there is a possibility that unrecorded subsurface archaeological sites are present within the property that may be affected by the proposed development.

Therefore a program for the mitigation of effects on possible intact archaeological features should be established before the commencement of ground disturbance. This mitigation program will require an authority from Heritage New Zealand to damage or destroy possible unrecorded archaeological sites within the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations for avoidance or mitigation are provided below.

1. That a Heritage New Zealand (HNZ) authority to modify damage or destroy possible unrecorded archaeological sites within Lot 1 DPS 89311 located at 12 Huna Road, Whakatane is obtained prior to the commencement of earthwork associated with the development.
2. That archaeological monitoring of topsoil removal is carried out by the project archaeologist in order to identify any intact subsurface archaeological features within the properties.
3. That in the event that intact archaeological sites are encountered during ground disturbance associated with the development all work must stop in the immediate area until the project archaeologist has carried out appropriate investigation, sampling and recording in accordance with conditions of an HNZ authority.
4. That if koiwi tangata (human remains) are encountered, no further modification of the site concerned shall occur until tangata whenua and the HNZ have been advised and their responses received.
5. Archaeological survey cannot always detect sites of traditional value to Maori, such as wahi tapu. Tangata whenua should be consulted regarding the possible existence of such sites and informed of the recommendations of this report.

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