

2 September 2025

██████████ on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment  
██████████

Tēnā koe █████

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Thank you for your email requesting information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). A decision has now been made on your request pursuant to section 13 of the LGOIMA, and to provide the information requested.

In your request, you asked for information about sites and areas of significance to Māori (SASMs), specifically:

1. Does your Council recognise SASMs (or an equivalent mechanism) in your planning instruments and/or in a non-regulatory way?

Yes

2. How many SASMs are currently recognised in your district/region?

99

3. Please share with us any information you can on where they are located (including any maps you have) and information on whether (and if possible, how many) you have any SASMs on a closed register. Please provide any information you can on the SASMs you hold information on.

All SASMs are scheduled in SASM-SCHED of the District Plan [Schedule of Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori](#). They are shown spatially on the On-Line Maps Viewer [OnlineMaps](#) under the Operative District Plan/Cultural and Built Heritage/Sites of Significance to Māori layer (there is one layer for the points and another layer for the related polygons).

4. What types of SASMs are currently recognised by your council?
- For example wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna, statutory acknowledgement areas, urupā, pā, cultural resources, cultural landscapes, natural features etc.

Statutory acknowledgements are treated separately from SASMs as they are subject to separate legislative requirements under the RMA. The SASMs includes pā sites, sites of evidence of occupation such as food pits and terraces, natural features including a waterfall of significance and other sites of cultural significance.

5. How many SASMs are land-based, water-based, or are across both land and water?

Land based: 97

Water based: 1

Mix: 1

6. What are the potential implications associated with the recognition of SASMs in your district/region?
- For example are there any tikanga requirements, additional controls on development, special requirements for earthworks, water-takes, building etc.

Primarily, prior to making a resource consent application, engagement with the relevant iwi in our District is required. For most, this will result in a discovery protocol being included as a condition of consent. One of our SASMs (Wairere Waterfall) does have limitations on the built environment between the waterfall and the Whakatāne Awa.

7. What processes and areas of your council use SASMs?

Resource Consents, and Council works involving ground disturbance.

8. What is the rationale and evidence used to support the use of SASMs in these processes?

The location of an SASM within 100m of a proposed activity, or within the viewshaft for the Wairere Waterfall.

9. What rationale and evidence base does your council use when considering whether a SASM should be recognised in your council processes?

A request by iwi during a plan development or submissions.

10. Are there any other relevant statistics or other information relating to SASMs that you can provide that would help us understand how and why SASMs are recognised by your council in your district/region?

Not all SASMs have been identified in the District Plan. This was a result of discussion and submissions during the preparation of the District Plan considering the number of archaeological sites (known) recorded by the NZ Archaeological Authority and other sites of

significance to iwi/hapū. The list that was settled on was generally agreed by iwi/hapū for inclusion recognising that the Archaeological Authority sites are protected by other legislation, and that protocols apply for new resource consents in and around common locations of known sites, alongside direct iwi/hapū consultation. Other sites of particular sensitivity to iwi/hapū were excluded as the identification in the District Plan was seen to be more of a disadvantage than an advantage.

If you are not satisfied with my response, you are entitled to request a review by the Ombudsman. Further information can be obtained from the following website [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that this response may be published on our website. All personal information will be removed.

Nāku noa, nā



Steven Perdia  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE