

What is Cultural Heritage?

*the knowledge, activities and
remnants of people and communities...*



Maungarei - Mount Wellington, Panmure.

View from Ashby Homestead, Tāpapakanga Regional Park.

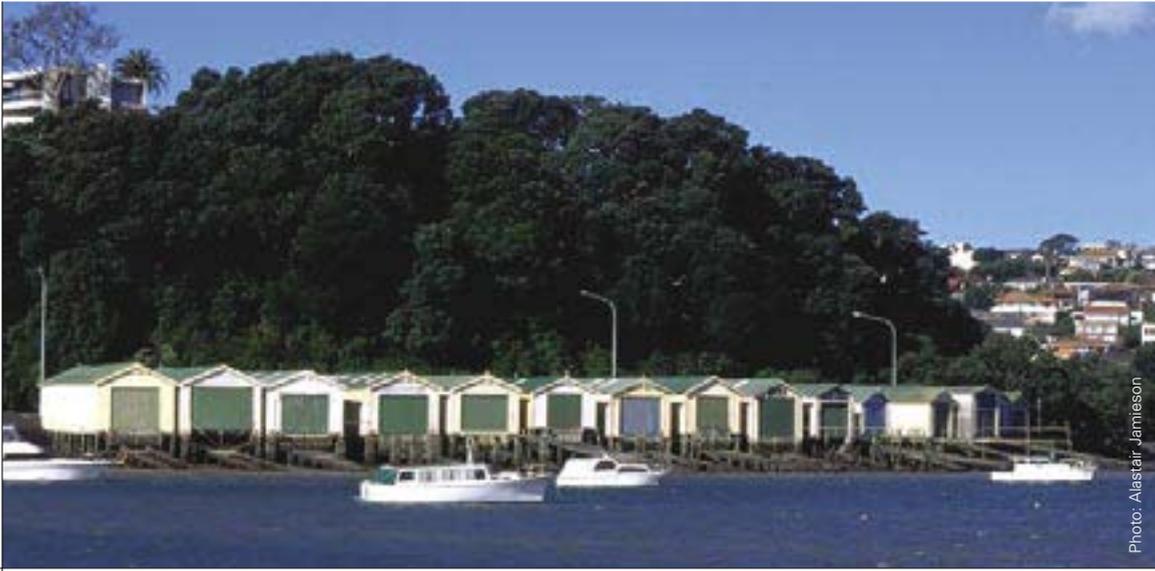


Photo: Alastair Jamieson

Boatsheds (1930s), Hobson Bay.



Tiriwa Pou, Montana Heritage Trail, Waitakere.

What is cultural heritage?

Cultural heritage is central to our present and future identity. Our culture is the system within which we live now. Heritage is the part of our culture that we have inherited or learned from generations past. Our cultural heritage includes physical structures and places such as historic buildings, archaeological sites and artefacts. It can also include music, language and traditions.

The Auckland Regional Council (ARC) promotes the preservation and protection of land-based cultural heritage. These are historic places and areas that are significant to us because they are associated with ancestors, cultures and our past.

Examples of these places include:

- Archaeological sites.
- Historic buildings, places, objects and structures.
- Places of special significance to Māori, including wāhi tapu, urupā, and places of traditional importance.
- Trees or other plants with historical or cultural associations.
- Cemeteries and burial places.
- Shipwrecks and other maritime heritage.
- Historic and cultural landscapes and areas.
- Places where significant events have occurred.

Our cultural heritage is valued because it is historical, archaeological, architectural, technological, aesthetic, scientific, spiritual, social, traditional or has other special cultural significance, associated with human activity.





Photo: Alastair Jamieson

Pukeiti Pā, Karioitahi, Waiuku.

Eroded shell midden, Whatipu.

Why is cultural heritage important?

Our cultural heritage is found nowhere else in the world. Our historic places are a physical reminder that connect the past with the present. They help form individual and collective identities, and contribute to our sense of place.

In addition, historic places can have educational and recreational values, and are important for our social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.

Recording Auckland's historic heritage

The ARC is one of a number of agencies with a statutory role in the preservation and protection of land-based cultural heritage. Other agencies include city and district councils, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) and the Department of Conservation (DOC).

The ARC maintains a regional database, known as the Cultural Heritage Inventory (CHI). The CHI is used by councils and the community to access information on historic places, heritage agencies and cultural heritage reference material. The CHI currently contains a record of more than 14,000 places of historical or cultural interest.

Summary of recorded historic places 2004

Archaeological sites	9,367
Historic, buildings, places, objects and structures	2,912*
Maritime places and areas	909
Reported historic places	117
Historic trees and other botanical sites	762
TOTAL (estimated)	14,067

*Includes 564 historic places recorded in the Waitakere Ranges, some of which may also be recorded in other categories.

Archaeological sites

There are over 9,000 recorded archaeological sites in the Auckland region. They have been identified by ground surveys or through archival research and are recorded in the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) Site Record File. Approximately 90% relate to Māori occupation and settlement.

In the Auckland region, as in much of the North Island, the most noticeable archaeological sites are earthwork fortifications or pā. Pā vary greatly in size, from the impressive and complex earthworks of the volcanic cones, to very small refuge pā consisting of a narrow headland cut off from the mainland by a defensive ditch and bank. Even more numerous than pā are occupation sites and food storage areas.

Earthwork terraces and storage pits can be found both within and outside pā and are sites where everyday activities took place. Evidence of cultivation can sometimes be seen in the form of shallow drainage features on slopes which mark garden plot boundaries. Other evidence of cultivation includes stone mounds, stone rows, and garden soils which have been modified through the addition of gravel, midden or charcoal.

Middens are the most common archaeological site type and they represent some 70% of all recorded Māori archaeological sites. Middens are places where food remains, such as shells and animal bones, ashes and charcoal raked out of cooking fires, and worn out or broken implements were discarded.

Midden sites provide us with information about early inhabitants, the resources they used, their lifestyle and the environment in which they lived. In addition, various dating techniques can provide information about what season of the year or how long a site was occupied. They can even tell which month of the year different shellfish species were gathered.



Historic artefacts, Scandrett Regional Park.



Couldrey House (1857), Wenderholm Regional Park.



Bach (1907), Āwhitu Regional Park.

Historic buildings, places, objects and structures

A large variety of historic buildings or structures can be found throughout the Auckland region. The majority of these sites can be categorised as residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial, military, transport and communication sites.

In the early years of settlement isolated communities established local industries to extract the resources this region had to offer. Industrial sites include mines, quarries, kauri gum workings and timber mills. Today the remains of these early settlements and industries exist in the form of smelters, potteries, brickworks, lime kilns, kauri dams, flour mills, breweries, creameries and dairy factories.

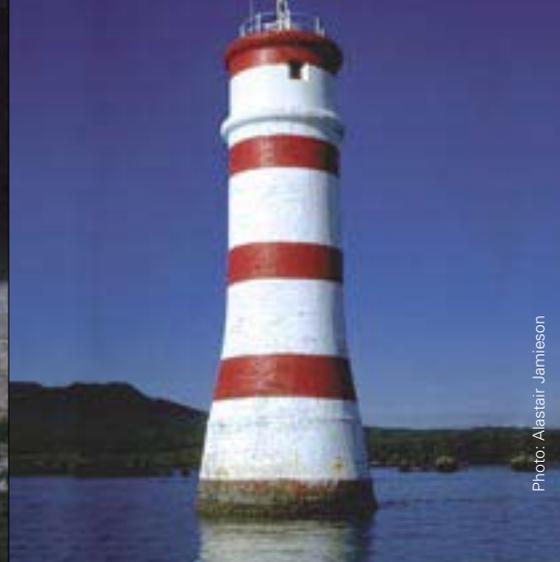
A number of important historic sites and structures were constructed in response to threats of war. Sites relating to the New Zealand Wars include earthwork redoubts, blockhouses, stockades, camps and battlefields. Later, in response to perceived threats from Russia and then Japan, extensive coastal defence fortifications and anti-invasion defences such as pillboxes, defence batteries and anti-tank ditches were constructed around the Port of Auckland and other potential landing sites.

Our cultural heritage is found nowhere else in the world. The volcanic cones of the Auckland isthmus and their archaeological landscapes are among the most conspicuous features of the cityscape.





Historic wharf, Āwhitu Regional Park.



Rangitoto Beacon (1887), Waitematā Harbour.

Photo: Alastair Jamieson

Shipwrecks and maritime heritage

People have lived in and used the coastal marine area since Māori first settled New Zealand about 700 to 800 years ago. The sea provided a wealth of food resources and the primary means of transport and communication. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Auckland region has a rich maritime heritage that contributes significantly to the character and identity of the region.

Our maritime historic heritage includes places associated with Māori settlement and tradition, historic buildings, wharves and jetties, shipyards, lighthouses and beacons, seawalls, coast defence installations, shipwrecks and hulks.

Reported historic places

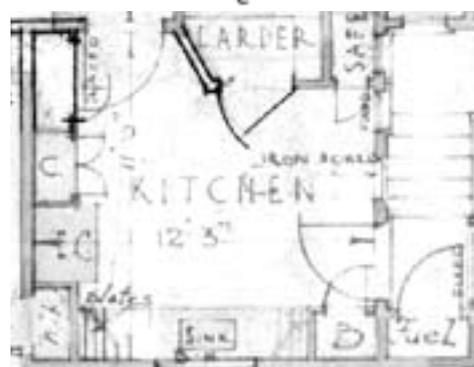
This category includes monuments marking places where historic events occurred. It also includes places or areas mentioned in historical documents or referred to in books as having significant historical associations.

Historic trees and other botanical sites

Karaka and taro are examples of plants grown by Māori that can sometimes still be found growing on old settlement sites. Sometimes such plants may be the only surviving marker of a historic place or dwelling.

Trees of historical value include those planted by significant individuals such as Governor George Grey, Bishop Selwyn or Sir John Logan Campbell. Botanical sites like gardens and collections associated with historic homesteads, rare native or exotic species also have historic value.

Pā were constructed on 33 of the 50 volcanic eruptive centres of the Auckland volcanic zone. Now only 16 of these significant archaeological sites remain in reasonably intact condition.



Rose Hellaby House (1939), Waitakere.

Another significant archeological site type in the Auckland region are remnants of once extensive stonefield garden systems. Archeologists estimate that some 8,000 hectares of fertile lava fields that were originally occupied and used by both Māori and Pakeha over the last 150 years have however destroyed all but some 200 hectares, most of which are located in Manukau City, South Auckland.



Te Upoko o Mataoho - Māngere Mountain, Māngere.

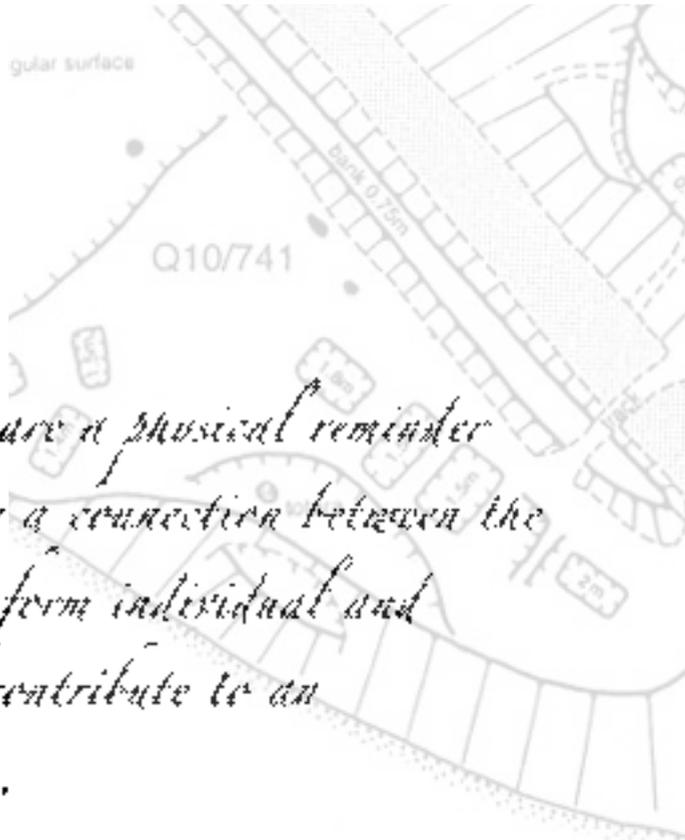


Bean Rock lighthouse (1871), Te toka a Kapetaua, Waitematā Harbour.

What is the state of cultural heritage resources in the Auckland region?

Auckland's continued popularity as a place to live has meant that many of our historic places are under threat. This is particularly the case in the coastal environment where pressures are greatest. In spite of the value historic places and areas have for us, they are being depleted and continue to be threatened by development. The increasing value of property, especially in central Auckland, increases the pressure to redevelop historic buildings, destroy archaeological sites and remove heritage trees.

Even though there are an estimated 14,000 historic places currently recorded in the CHI, about 75% (375 300 hectares) of the Auckland region remains to be surveyed. Many sites are reported, but have not yet been formally recorded and assessed.



Our heritage places are a physical reminder of history that can provide a connection between the past and the present, help form individual and collective identities, and contribute to an individual's sense of place.



Farm building conservation, Scandrett Regional Park.



Site recording, Scott's Landing, Mahurangi.

What are we doing about it?

The preservation and protection of New Zealand's historic heritage is primarily promoted by the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Historic Places Act 1993. These statutes provide the legislative mandate for local authorities to be actively involved in identifying, protecting, and managing historic places and areas. Through the Auckland Regional Policy Statement (1999) the ARC has a directive to provide the public and tāngata whenua with information on heritage issues and heritage sites within its region.

The ARC is developing projects, working with local authorities, iwi and other heritage agencies with the following objectives:

- To preserve or protect a diverse and representative range of the Auckland region's land based cultural heritage for present and future generations.
- To protect and restore historic places and areas, whose heritage value and viability is threatened.
- To maintain those historic places and areas that contribute significantly to the quality and diverse character of the landscapes of the Auckland region.

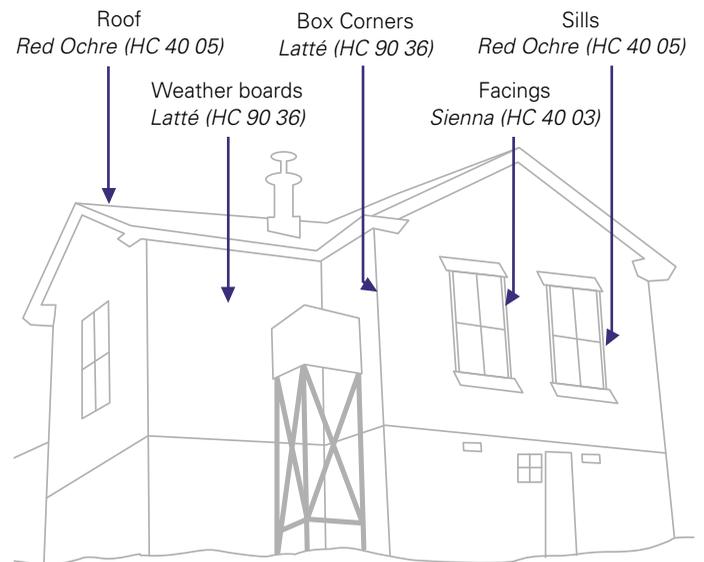
In response to these objectives, the ARC has researched and evaluated historic heritage within the coastal environment, and has developed a schedule of significant sites for preservation and protection in the Auckland Regional Plan: Coastal (2004). District councils are also promoting the protection and preservation of historic places through their District Plans. Approximately 18% of the sites recorded in the Auckland region have been afforded some level of protection in regional and district plans.

The ARC is preparing conservation plans for heritage buildings and structures on Auckland regional parkland. Recent work includes re-painting the Brook homestead (Āwhitu Regional Park), restoring the Vine farmhouse at Lagoon Bay (Mahurangi East Regional Park) and the historic farm precinct at Scandrett Regional Park.

The ARC is undertaking regular monitoring of a selection of archaeological sites, built structures, botanical sites and maritime historic resources that are scheduled in the Auckland Regional Plan: Coastal (2004), or are located on regional parks.

The ARC aims to raise awareness, advocate, integrate and monitor places of cultural heritage value in partnership with the regional community.

The 'Our History' local history booklets and 'Our Heritage' poster series have been developed to provide information, celebrate our heritage and promote cultural well-being.



Huia School colour scheme, Huia.





Pou, Wenderholm Regional Park

Historic stonewall (1880s), Ambury Regional Park

More information:

Visit the Auckland Regional Council website to find out about cultural heritage places you can visit and other brochures in this series
- www.arc.govt.nz

Other agencies with cultural heritage responsibilities:
New Zealand Historic Places Trust
- www.historic.org.nz
Department of Conservation
- www.doc.govt.nz
Ministry for Culture and Heritage
- www.mch.govt.nz
ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites
- www.icomos.org.nz
New Zealand Archaeological Association
- www.nzarchaeology.org