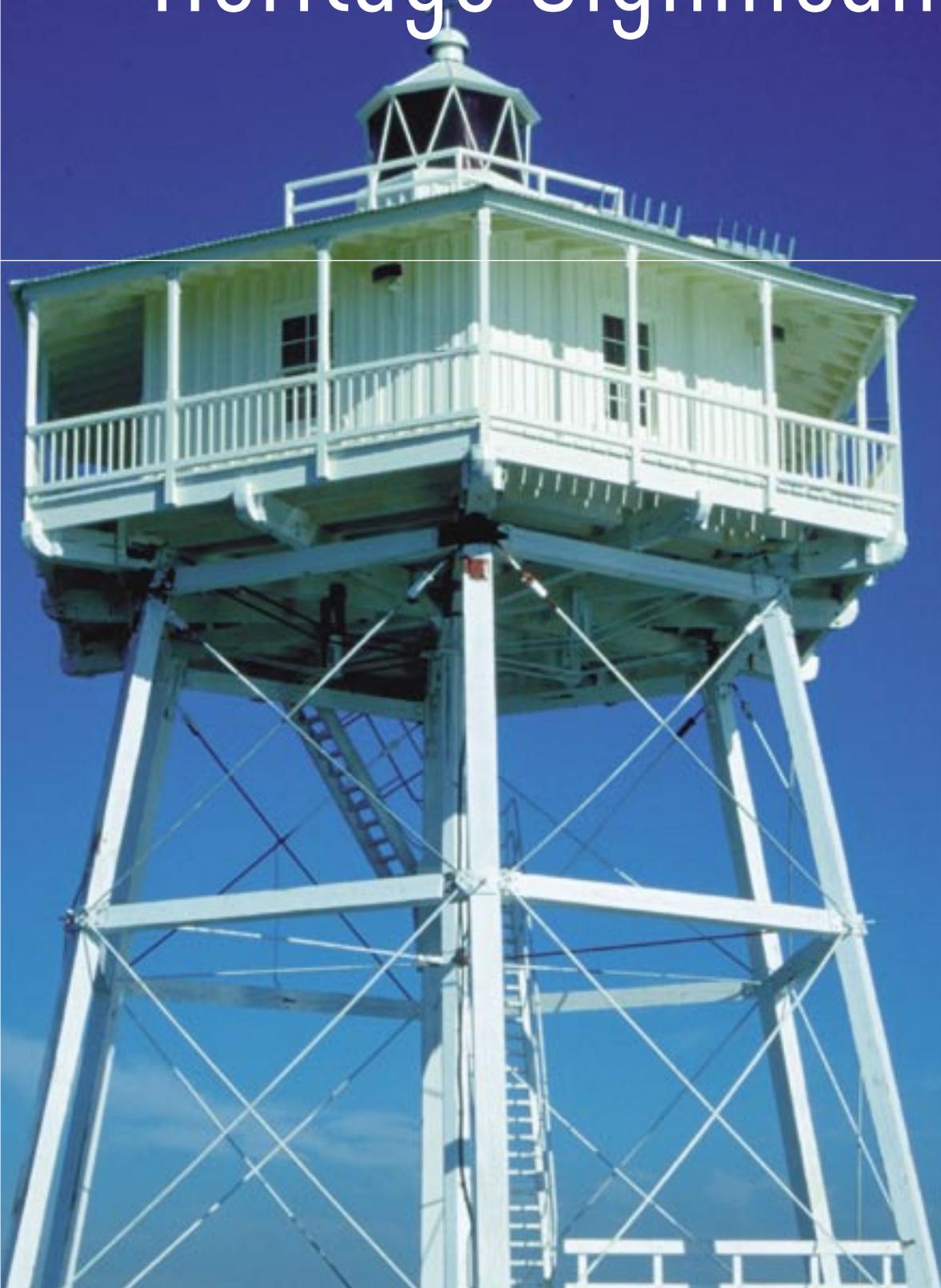


# Guidelines: Assessing Historic Heritage Significance



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



These 3 photographs: Alastair Jameson

Big Ōmaha wharf (1924), Ōmaha.

## Introduction

Agencies use many different methods and criteria to assess or rank historic places and areas, leading to highly variable information. These guidelines have been produced to promote the development of a consistent approach to assessing the significance of historic heritage in the region.



Kauri dam (1926), Aotea - Great Barrier Island.

## The law

The key legislation governing the use, development and protection of historic heritage in New Zealand includes: the Resource Management Act 1991, the Historic Places Act 1993, the Conservation Act 1987, the Local Government Act 2002 and the Reserves Act 1977. The Historic Places Act 1993 (section 23) and the Auckland Regional Policy Statement 1999 (chapter 6 policy 6.4.16) give direction for assessing significance. Local Authorities (city and district councils) also provide guidance through criteria in their district plans .

## The Guidelines

There are 13 criteria for assessing the significance of historic heritage:

### One – Historical

*“The extent to which the place reflects important or representative aspects of Auckland or New Zealand’s history.”*

1. How is the place important as a representative example of a type of historic place?
2. How is it important as a representative example of a historic place in terms of age, historical aspects, time periods, patterns or themes (like transport, warfare or women’s history)?
3. What is the association of the place with important persons, groups, individuals, organisations or institutions who have owned, lived in or carried out activities in or on the place?
4. Is the place associated with important historic events or actions? Is this reflected in place names or traditions associated with the place?
5. Is the place associated with important ideas or beliefs that symbolise or illustrate historic change in Auckland or New Zealand?
6. Does the place date from an early period of Auckland or New Zealand’s settlement?

### Two – Tāngata Whenua

*“The importance of the place to Tāngata Whenua.”*

1. This evaluation needs to be made by, or in full consultation with iwi Māori. It includes such matters as the historical, traditional (place names, people and events), cultural, spiritual, religious, symbolic, commemorative, social, educational, economic and contextual importance of a place. The importance may be at iwi, hapū, and whānau level.

### Three – Community Association

*“The community association with or public esteem for the place.”*

1. Does the place have qualities that make it the focal point



Terraced slopes, Maungakiekie - One Tree Hill.



Rolling lift bridge (1932), Viaduct Basin.

2. Is there evidence of strong feelings of community association with the place?
3. Does the place illustrate the distinctiveness of the community's identity, social history and way of life?
4. Has the community association with the place been formally recognised through the planning process?

## Four – Commemorative

*"The commemorative value of the place."*

1. Does the place commemorate an important person, event, idea or activity? Is it a memorial of some specific kind?

## Five – Symbolic

*"The symbolic value of the place."*

1. Is the place of symbolic value to the district, region or nation? Does it symbolise a feature of the area's past history? (A place such as a sacred mountain can have symbolic importance without being commemorative.)

## Six – Educational

*"The potential of the place for public education."*

1. Does the place provide potential to enhance public understanding and appreciation of the past?
2. What is its potential for interpretation for present and future generations?
3. Is the place accessible to the public?

## Seven – Archaeological

*"The potential of the place to provide knowledge of Auckland or New Zealand's history."*

1. Does the place have the potential to define or expand knowledge of earlier human occupation, activities or events through investigation using archaeological methods?
2. How important is the place as a representative example of a site type, feature or activity?
3. What is the research potential of the place?
4. Is the place a formally recorded or registered archaeological site? (Note: When evaluating the significance of an archaeological site all of the other criteria need to be considered.)

## Eight – Scientific

*"The potential of the place to provide knowledge of Auckland or New Zealand's history."*

1. Does the place have the potential in scientific terms (e.g. geological or biological) to provide evidence and knowledge relating to Auckland or New Zealand's human history?
2. Is the place important in the history of the development of science (e.g. agriculture or horticulture) in Auckland or New Zealand?

## Nine – Technological

*"The technical accomplishment or value of the place."*

1. Is or was the place important in the development of technology, technological innovation or technological processes?
2. Are those technological processes still carried out on the site?

## Ten – Architectural

*"The design of the place."*

1. Does the place provide a notable, rare or representative example of an architectural style, type or convention in either interior or exterior layout?
2. Is the place an important example of architectural innovation?
3. Is it an important example of a particular method of construction, use of material or design feature?
4. Does the place exhibit an important example of a particular form of craftsmanship?
5. Is the place an important example of the work of a notable architect, designer, engineer or builder?

## Eleven – Context

*"The extent to which the place forms part of a wider historical and cultural context or historical and cultural landscape."*

1. Is the historical context of the place important in terms of comparative age, or being part of a particular period?
2. Is the place important in terms of historical or cultural continuity?
3. Is the place an important component of a group of associated historic places?

4. Is the place part of a Registered or scheduled historic area?
5. What is its value as a component of the wider historical or cultural landscape, seascape or streetscape?
6. What is the importance of the place in terms of visual amenity, or aesthetic value (past or present beauty), or as a landmark?

## Twelve – Rarity

*“The frequency with which the historic place can be found.”*

1. Is it a rare type of historic place?

## Thirteen – Integrity

*“What is the integrity of the place?”*

1. Does the place have integrity in terms of its original form or fabric?
2. Does the place have integrity in terms of its historical or cultural setting and its relationship with associated structures?
3. Is the place located on its original site?
4. Has the place been modified, altered or restored in a significant or sensitive way?
5. What is the physical state or condition of the place?
6. Is the place dangerous or does it pose a threat to the health and safety of people?
7. Is the place vulnerable to modification or destruction?

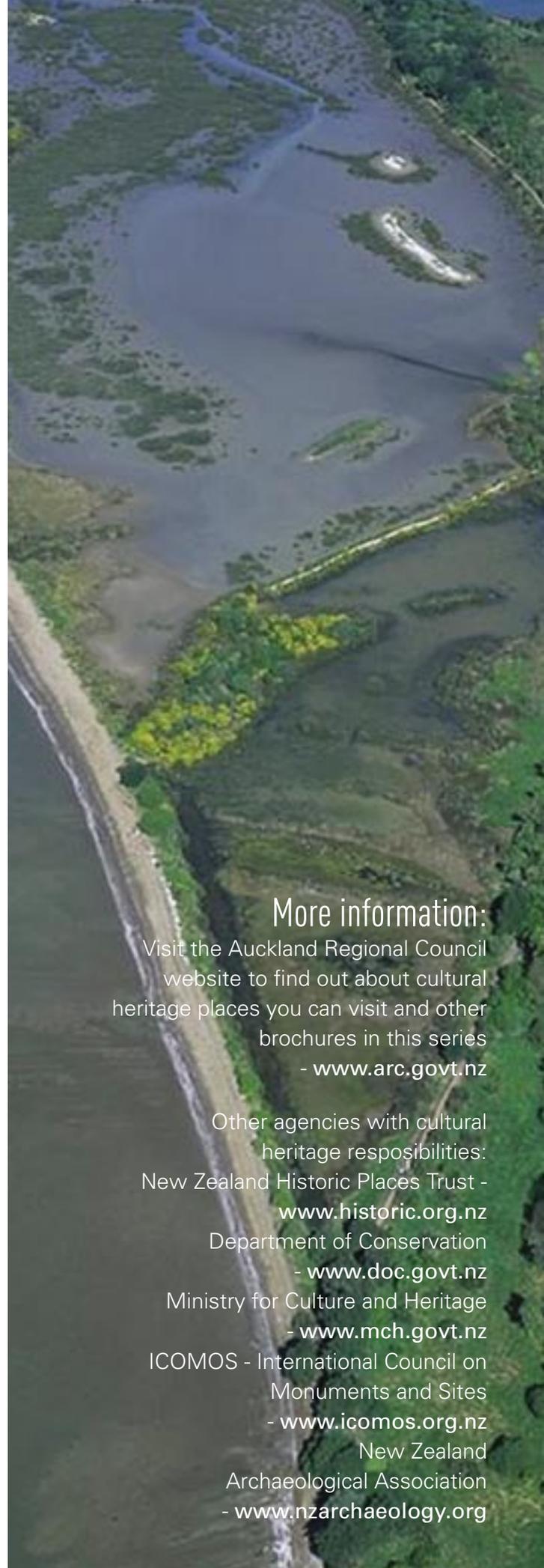
Please note the following when using these guidelines:

1. Any type of historic place can be assessed using the above criteria;
2. A place may be assessed as being significant under any one of the above criteria;
3. All archaeological sites, historic areas, buildings, places, objects, structures, and trees, should be assessed under each of the criteria; and
4. Although all these criteria are inter-related, the historical criteria should be assessed first because these values link with all others.

Two recent publications provide further direction:

1. Walton, T. 1999. *Assessing the archaeological values of historic places: procedures, methods and field techniques*. Department of Conservation Science and Research Internal Report no 167.
2. New Zealand Historic Places Trust. 2004. *Heritage management guidelines for resource management practitioners*.

Tāhuna Tōrea fish traps, Tāmaki River.  
Photo: Alastair Jamieson



### 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](http://www.arc.govt.nz)

Other agencies with cultural heritage responsibilities:  
New Zealand Historic Places Trust -  
[www.historic.org.nz](http://www.historic.org.nz)

Department of Conservation  
- [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

Ministry for Culture and Heritage  
- [www.mch.govt.nz](http://www.mch.govt.nz)

ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites  
- [www.icomos.org.nz](http://www.icomos.org.nz)

New Zealand Archaeological Association  
- [www.nzarchaeology.org](http://www.nzarchaeology.org)