

Blake Road Reserve, Harania Catchment, Māngere, Auckland – Making Space for Water, Proposed Flood Resilience Works: Preliminary Archaeological Assessment

Prepared for Auckland Council Healthy Waters



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Prepared by

Charlotte Judge (MA Hons)

Phoebe Mohns (BA)



Origin Archaeology

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Introduction

Project Background

Auckland Council Healthy Waters is proposing flood resilience works at Blake Road Reserve, Māngere (Figure 1), as part of the Making Space for Water project. The approximate extent of the proposed works is shown on Figure 2. The proposal is currently at the preliminary stage, but would involve the removal of existing dam embankments, constructing replacement wastewater pipes (including pipe bridges) and potential works within the watercourse to improve discharge flows.

A preliminary archaeological assessment of the proposal was commissioned by Leighton Gillespie of Auckland Council Healthy Waters to establish whether the proposed works are likely to impact on archaeological values. Preliminary recommendations have been made in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014).

Assessment Methodology

As part of the preparation of this report, the NZ Archaeological Association ArchSite and Auckland Council Cultural Heritage Inventory (CHI) databases were searched for information on archaeological and other historic heritage sites recorded within close proximity to the proposed area of works. The Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) and the Heritage New Zealand List were consulted to determine if any sites had been scheduled or registered within or close to the proposed areas of works. Relevant archaeological assessments previously undertaken within the area were also consulted (see Bibliography). Historic survey plans held at Land Information NZ (LINZ) and historic aerial photographs were also reviewed for information on past land use.

A site inspection of the project area was undertaken on 25 June 2024. Photographs were taken to record the project area and immediate surrounds.

Constraints and Limitations

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in accordance with accepted best practice. No responsibility is taken for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party.

This report has been carried out based on the information available at the time. Due to the timeframes presented, research for the report was undertaken to an extent that enables the heritage values of the proposed area of works to be adequately evaluated but is potentially not exhaustive.

Field survey was hindered due to the presence of an aggressive roaming dog. However, most areas affected by the proposal were able to be inspected.

This report does not represent the views of tangata whenua regarding the significance of the place to them. Cultural significance of the place to Māori can only be competently assessed by mana whenua.

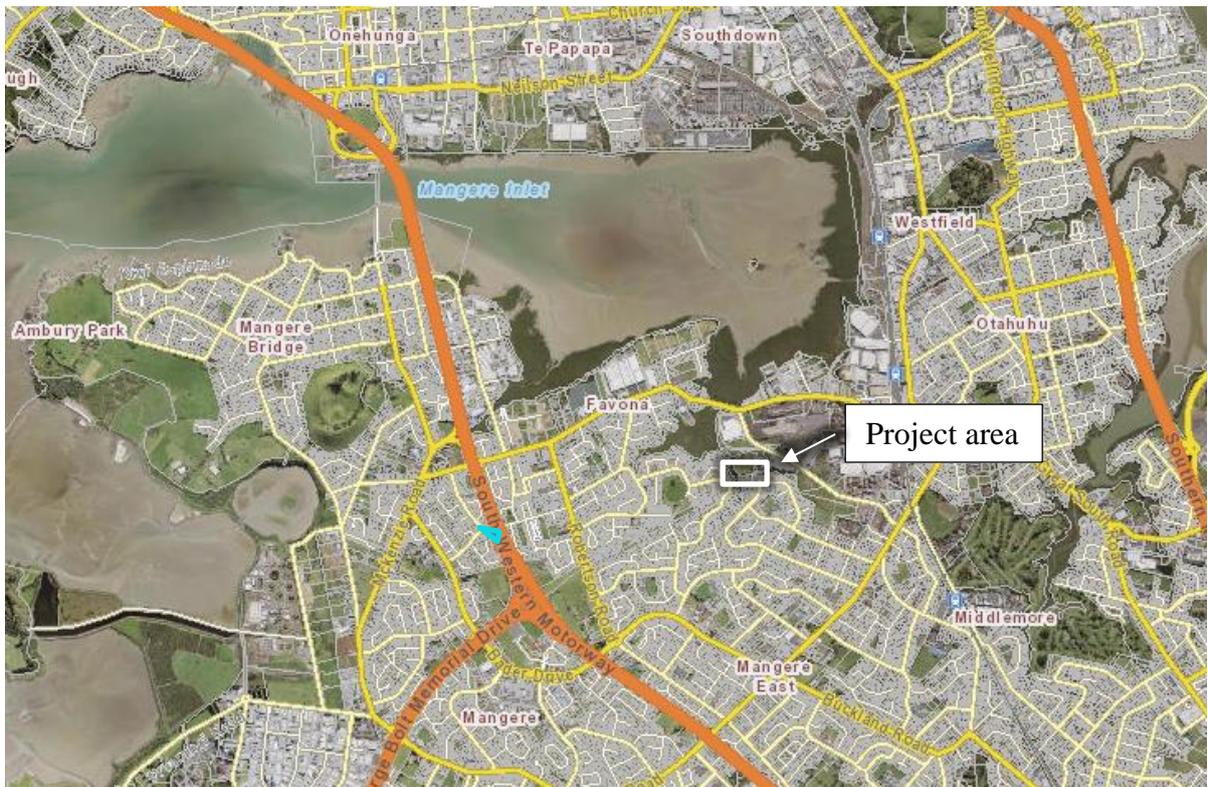


Figure 1. Aerial map showing the location of Boundary Reserve (outlined in blue). Source: Auckland Council Geomaps 2024

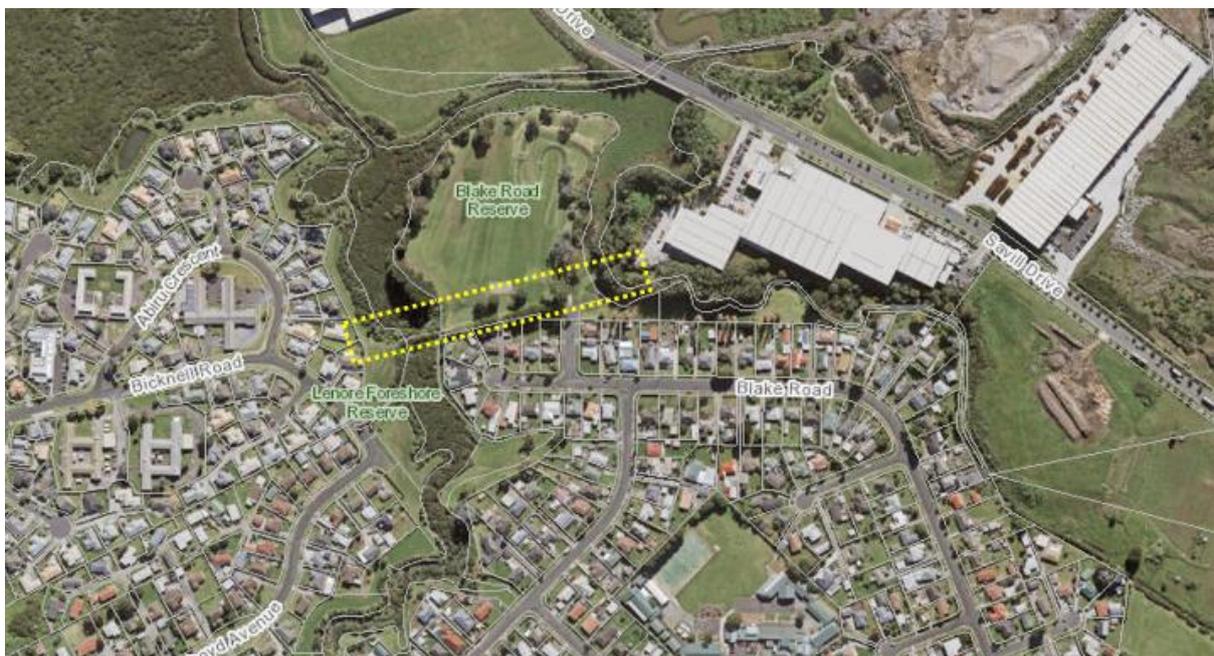


Figure 2. Aerial showing the extent of the project area at Blake Road Reserve (outlined). Aerial source: Auckland Council Geomaps 2024

Background Information

Historical Background

This historical background has been prepared to provide context to the surviving archaeological record and is not intended to be a detailed history of human settlement within the wider area. While based on reliable documentary sources, this information should not be viewed as complete or without other context. There are a large number of iwi historically associated with the Auckland region and many other histories known to tangata whenua.

Early Māori Settlement

The current project area is located on the Harania Creek which flows into the southern shores of the Māngere Inlet and in turn, out to the Manukau Harbour. The Māngere Inlet is the western accessway to the Te Tō Waka (‘the dragging place for canoes’) Ōtāhuhu Portage (Figure 3). The portage provided a vital thoroughfare, allowing travel between the Waitematā and the Manukau harbours, located on the east and west coasts respectively.

The Māngere area on the southern side of the harbour was highly prized for its rich volcanic soils, extensively used by Māori for crop cultivation since the early periods of Polynesian settlement. The harbour also provided an abundance of shellfish, fish, marine birds and marine mammals which were harvested as part of a seasonal cycle of resource gathering and crop cultivation.

The strategic importance, economic and geographic benefits of the area were widely recognised by early Māori and hence the fringes of the harbour and the rich fields of volcanic soils were intensively occupied until the 1820s when the beginning of the ‘musket wars’ saw the tribes of the area retreat to safety. Māori began to return to the Manukau during the mid-1830s once peace had been restored.



Figure 3. Detail of ‘Tamaki-Makau-Rau’ map originally drawn by Leslie Kelly in c.1938 with place names by George Graham. Redrawn by Jan Kelly and Jonette SurrIDGE, Department of Geography, University of Auckland 1990. Showing the location of the Otahuhu portage (marked with arrow) and the approximate current proposed area of works (marked with star). Map source: Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections Map 9502.

19th and 20th Century History

European settlement in the area initially developed around the timber trade in the mid-19th century. Onehunga was quickly developed into a trading port, which supplied the wider Isthmus with timber as well as wheat and oats produced by the significantly larger local Māori population. Although relations between Māori and the newly arrived European settlers were relatively harmonious, the relationship soon became strained with the increasing arrival of more settlers and the undertaking of controversial land purchases. As Māori discontent grew, the people of the Manukau and Waikato areas united in a tribal confederation under their king Te Wherowhero (King Potatau) in 1858 and made a stand against further land sales to Europeans. Governor Grey responded by demanding that all Manukau Māori surrender their weapons and sign a formal declaration of allegiance to the Queen or retire to the Waikato (ibid.). Almost all Manukau Māori retired to the Waikato before the government's subsequent invasion of the Waikato (Matthews & Matthews 2013).

Following the Waikato wars, the government confiscated most of the Māori land in the Māngere area because of perceived Māori disloyalty, and the land was claimed for the Crown. This land was then divided and sold to European settlers, who ploughed it and turned it to pasture (Murdoch 1994).

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, small holding farms predominantly utilised for wheat production and dairying dominated the area. Chinese market gardening became established from around 1915. Māngere East began to be developed for suburban housing during the 1920s with the opening of the Otahuhu Railway Workshops (Matthews & Matthews 2013).

Historic Survey Plans and Aerial Photographs

A review of historic survey plans and aerial photographs has provided valuable information regarding the past land use of the project area.

A survey plan dated to 1936 shows the residential subdivision of the immediate area with road alignments surveyed and natural stream alignments shown (Figure 4). The subdivision did not immediately take place however as an early aerial photograph dated to 1948 shows the area which would become Blake Road Reserve and the surrounding residential area as part of an extensive farm grazing landscape (Figure 5).

A later aerial dated to 1958 shows earthworks for the construction of the Eastern Interceptor wastewater pipe which runs from Auckland's Okahu Bay to the Māngere Wastewater Treatment Plant, is clearly being undertaken along the southern edge of Blake Road Reserve – along the alignment of the current project area (Figure 6). This section of pipe appears to have been installed through a cut and cover methodology which would have required substantial earthworks for the installation of the 2.5m wide concrete pipe.

A slightly later plan dating to 1960 shows the surrounding area subdivided for residential housing and the Blake Road alignment and access to the reserve are evident (Figure 7). Earthworks are also evident across the eastern side of the reserve, presumably undertaken as part of the construction of the Eastern Interceptor.

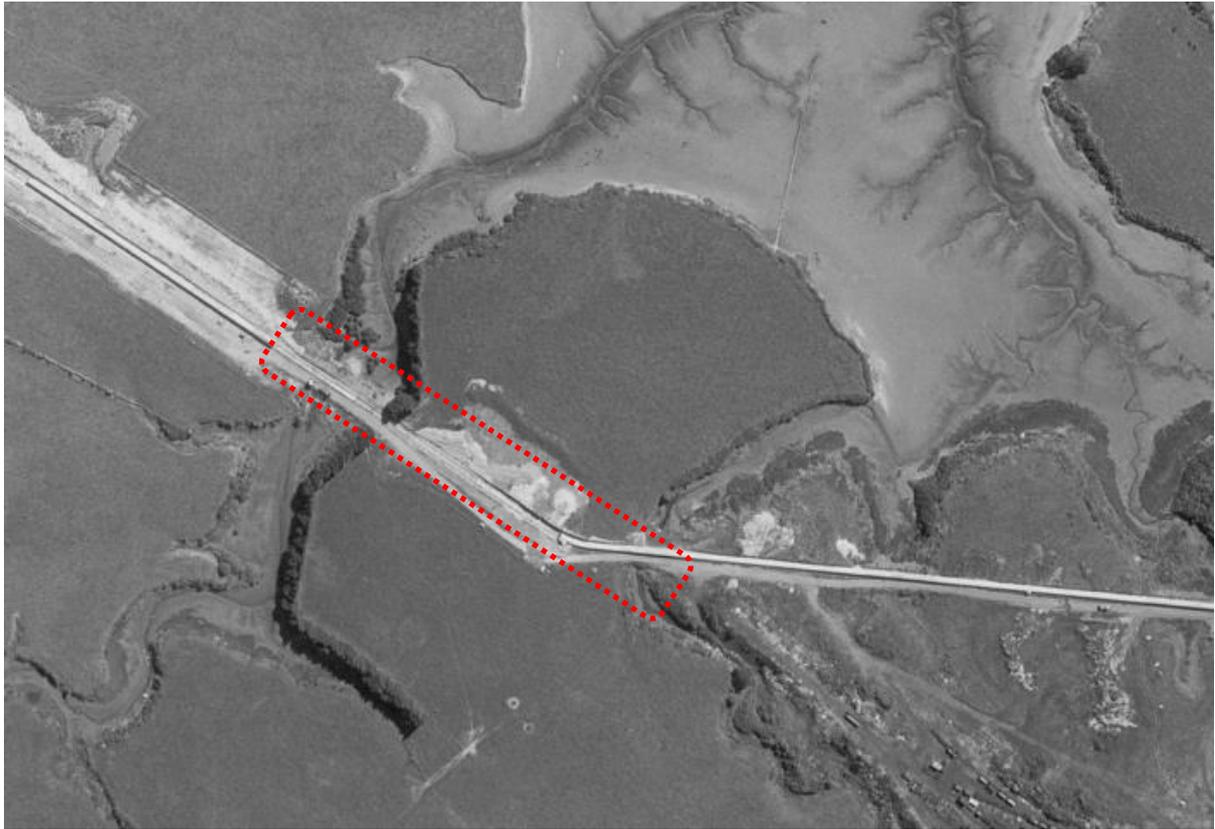


Figure 6. Detail of 1958 aerial photograph showing earthworks undertaken for the construction of the Eastern Interceptor, with the general current project area (outlined). Source: Crown-1052-S-2



Figure 7. Detail of 1960 aerial photograph showing the general current project area (outlined). Source: Retrolens ref. Crown-583-1922-30

Archaeological Background

Previous Works

In 2004, Russell Foster undertook an archaeological assessment of the former railways workshop site at Savill Drive, Otahuhu (Foster 2004) located immediately to the east of the current project area. No archaeological evidence was identified – although much of the site had been substantially modified. In 2013, the author undertook an assessment of proposed planting along the harbour margin of Norana Reserve (located 1km+ to the NNE) at which point multiple shell midden deposits were identified and recorded (R11/2857-R11/2860) (Judge 2013).

In 2015, Clough & Associates undertook the assessment of a proposed watercourse along the edge of Blake Road Reserve (Baquié & Bickler 2015; Figure 8), including the eastern end of the current proposed works. No archaeological sites were identified.

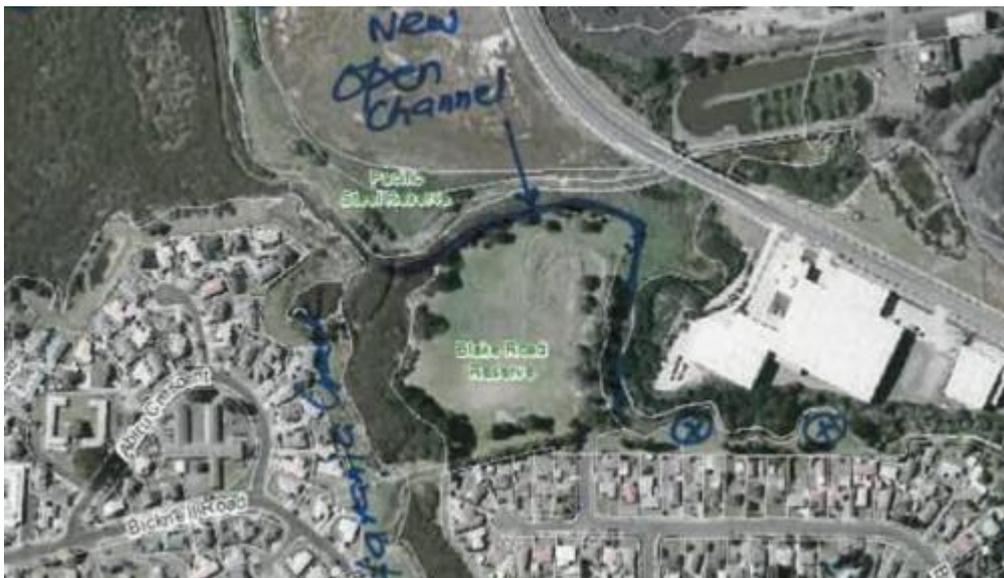


Figure 8. Area surveyed for a new open channel (as marked) and potential additional excavation areas (marked with x's). Source: Baquié & Bickler 2015

Archaeological Landscape of the Project Area

Archaeological sites recorded within the wider area tend to be focussed along the coastal harbour margins, along navigable waterways and across the rich volcanic soils surrounding the volcanic cones. There are currently no archaeological sites recorded within or close to the proposed area of works at Blake Road Reserve (Figure 9). The closest recorded archaeological sites comprise a series of shell midden deposits located along the northern harbour edge of Norana Avenue Reserve, over 1km NNW of the current proposed area of works (Figure 9).

The Auckland Council Cultural Heritage Inventory (CHI) also records the location of a WWII defensive pillbox (CHI 13691) within Lolim Place Reserve, c.0.8km NNW of the current proposed area of works and a WWII military camp known as Camp Ewart (CHI 15945), located around what is now known as Ewart Road, approximately 1km south-east of the current project area (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Aerial map showing the distribution of recorded archaeological (red) and other 20th century historic heritage (blue) sites within the wider project area. Note that Blake Road Reserve is outlined in yellow. Aerial source: Auckland Council Geomaps

Results of Field Survey

Field survey of the proposed area of works was undertaken on 25 June 2024. At the time of survey, the project area was under short mown grass, with moderate density vegetation around the waterways and embankments at the eastern and western ends (Figure 10–Figure 12). While the extent of the project area was inspected, detailed inspection of the western end was hindered due to the presence of an aggressive roaming dog.

The proposed area of works runs along the alignment of the existing Eastern Interceptor pipeline. Substantial earthworks were undertaken in the 1950s for this section of the pipeline and the area has clearly been extensively modified with test pitting showing a pale mixed clay soil across much of the proposed area of works (Figure 13).

No archaeological sites were identified within the proposed area of works as a result of the current assessment.



Figure 10. View looking west along the southern edge of Blake Road Reserve with the alignment of the Eastern Interceptor along the elevated land.



Figure 11. View looking west over the pipe/embankment stream crossing towards the western end of the project area

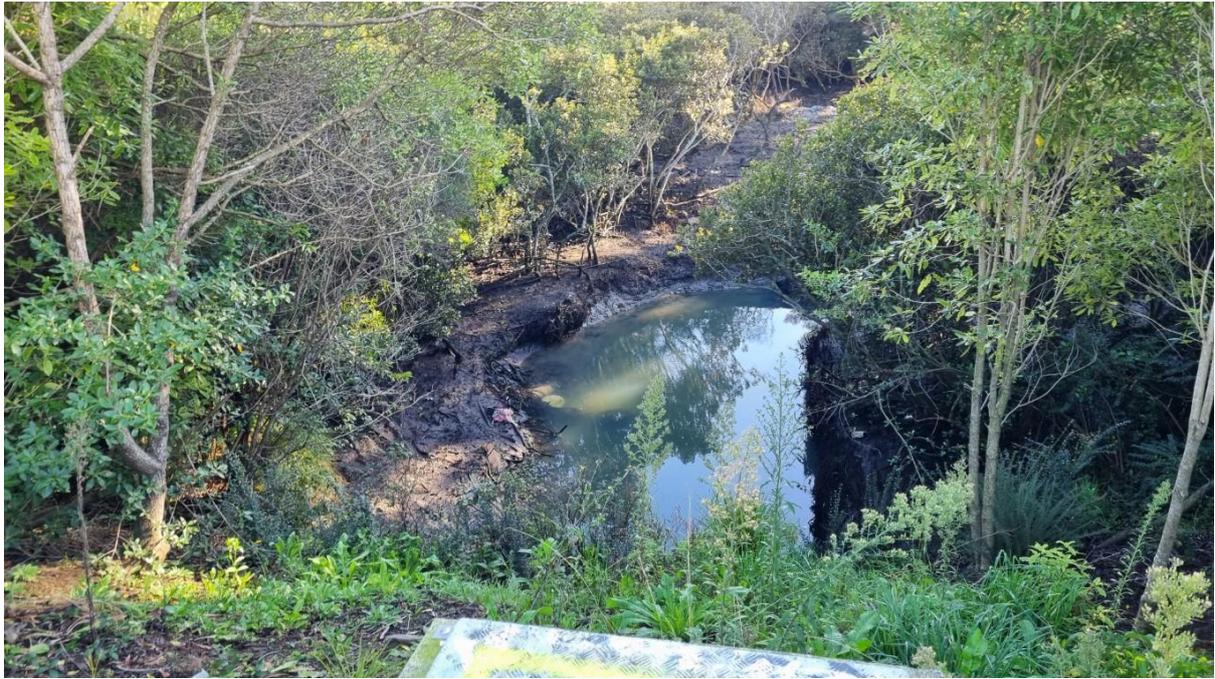


Figure 12. View looking north from the western pipe crossing/embankment down the stream



Figure 13. Typical results of test pitting showing a mixed pale brown/orange clay

Discussion and Conclusions

Summary

No archaeological sites have previously been identified within or close to the proposed area of works at Blake Road Reserve, and none were able to be identified as a result of the current survey. The proposed area of works is within an area that has been substantially modified in the past for the construction of the Eastern Interceptor pipeline.

Archaeological Values and Effects of Proposed Works

No archaeological sites have previously been identified within or close to the proposed area of works and none were identified as a result of the current survey. As such, the project area has no current identified archaeological value.

In any area where archaeological sites have been recorded in the vicinity, it is possible that unrecorded subsurface archaeological remains may be exposed during works. While there is considered to be limited potential for previously unrecorded in-situ archaeological remains to be exposed/affected as a result of the proposed works within the area assessed (due to previous modifications and the results of the current assessment), the possibility cannot be discounted and is provided for under the AUP Accidental Discovery Rule (Section E12.6.1).

Archaeological features and remains can take the form of burnt and fire cracked stones, charcoal, rubbish heaps including shell, bone and/or 19th century glass, crockery, metal etc., ditches, banks, pits, terraces, old building/structural foundations, artefacts of Māori and early European origin or human burials.

Legislation and Policy

There are two main pieces of legislation in New Zealand that control work affecting archaeological and significant historic heritage sites. These are the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014).

Resource Management Act 1991

Section 6 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) recognises as matters of national importance: *‘the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga’* (S6(e)); and *‘the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development’* (S6(f)).

All persons exercising functions and powers under the RMA are required under Section 6 to recognise and provide for these matters of national importance when *‘managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources’*. There is a duty to avoid,

remedy, or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment arising from an activity (S17), including historic heritage.

Historic heritage is defined (S2) 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*’.

Regional, district and local plans contain sections that help to identify, protect and manage archaeological and other heritage sites. The plans are prepared under the rules of the RMA. The Auckland Unitary Plan – Operative in Part (AUP) is relevant to the project area.

There are no scheduled historic heritage places within the proposed areas of works. This assessment has established that the proposed works will have no identified effects on recorded archaeological/historic heritage sites, and there is limited potential for previously unrecorded subsurface archaeological remains to be exposed/affected during works. If resource consent is granted, consent conditions relating to archaeological monitoring or protection would therefore not be required. However, if suspected archaeological remains area exposed during development works, the Accidental Discovery Rule (E12.6.1) set out in the AUP must be complied with. Under the ADR, works must cease within 20m of the discovery and the Council, Heritage NZ, mana whenua and (in the case of human remains) NZ Police must be informed. The ADR would no longer apply in respect to archaeological sites (pre-1900) if an Authority from Heritage NZ was in place.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

In addition to any requirements under the RMA, the HNZPTA protects all archaeological sites whether recorded or not, and they may not be damaged or destroyed unless an Authority to modify an archaeological site has been issued by Heritage NZ (Section 42).

An archaeological site is defined by the HNZPTA Section 6 as follows:

‘archaeological site means, subject to section 42(3), –

(a) 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; and

(b) includes a site for which a declaration is made under section 43(1)’

Authorities to modify archaeological sites can be applied for either in respect to archaeological sites within a specified area of land (Section 44(a)), or to modify a specific archaeological site where the effects will be no more than minor (Section 44(b)), or for the purpose of conducting a scientific investigation (Section 44(c)). Applications that relate to sites of Māori interest

require consultation with (and in the case of scientific investigations the consent of) the appropriate iwi or hapu and are subject to the recommendations of the Māori Heritage Council of Heritage NZ. In addition, an application may be made to carry out an exploratory investigation of any site or locality under Section 56, to confirm the presence, extent and nature of a site or suspected site.

Conclusions

No archaeological sites have previously been recorded within the proposed area of works and none were identified as a result of the current assessment. A review of historic aerial photographs showed that substantial earthworks were undertaken within the current project area in the late 1950s for the construction of the Eastern Interceptor pipeline, including the pipe embankments crossing the streams. These works would likely have modified or destroyed archaeological sites that may have been present in this location.

There is considered to be limited potential for previously unrecorded in-situ archaeological remains to be exposed as a result of the proposed works. If archaeological remains are encountered, the provisions of the Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 and the AUP Accidental Discovery Rule must be complied with.

Preliminary Recommendations

- That there are no major constraints on the proposed flood resilience works at Blake Street Reserve, Māngere on archaeological grounds, as no known archaeological sites will be affected and there is considered to be limited potential for previously unrecorded in-situ archaeological sites to be exposed as a result of the proposal.
- If subsurface in-situ archaeological evidence should be unearthed during the proposed works (e.g. intact shell midden, fire scoops, storage pits, cobbled floors, brick or stone foundation, and rubbish pits relating to pre-1900 human activity), or if human remains should be discovered, the Accidental Discovery Rule (section E.12.6.1 of the AUP OP) must be followed. This requires that work ceases within 20m of the discovery and that the Auckland Council, Heritage NZ, Mana Whenua and (in the case of human remains) the NZ Police are notified. The relevant authorities will then determine the actions required.
- If modification of an archaeological site does become necessary, an Authority must be applied for under Section 44(a) of the HNZPTA and granted prior to any further work being carried out that will affect the site. (Note that this is a legal requirement).
- Alternatively, consideration could be given to applying for an Authority under Section 44(a) of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 in advance of works as a

precaution, to minimise delays if archaeological remains are exposed once works are under way.

Note that this is an assessment of archaeological and heritage values and does not include an assessment of Māori cultural values. Such assessments should only be made by tangata whenua. Māori cultural concerns may encompass a wider range of values than those associated with archaeological sites.

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