

Best Management Practice

Working within sites of significance

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If you have any questions about this procedures sheet contact Auckland Council on 09 301 0101.

1. When should I use this sheet?

As it is sometimes difficult to determine and plan when archaeological, historic or geological sites of significance may be uncovered; this BMP applies to all sites regardless of site size or duration of works.

How would I know what an archaeological or historic site is?

An archaeological site is created through human activity that occurred prior to 1900.

If you uncover anything that looks out of place or like it has been there a long time, it could be an archaeological site.

Things often found in archaeological and historic sites include: shell midden and charcoal, fire cracked rock or oven stones, bone, stone or bone artefacts, glass bottles and ceramics, old building foundations, walls or bricks, evidence of ditches, banks, pits, old bullets, or artillery shells.

How would I know what a geological feature is?

A geological feature can be in the form of volcanic rock formations (scoria, lava flows, obsidian [black glass]), lava caves, sandstone cliffs or rock faces that are stratified (lines of different coloured rock). Basically any rocks or rock faces that look interesting or out of the ordinary may be considered a geological feature.

2. What's the aim?

To make sure sites of significance are not damaged or destroyed by site works.

3. Why protect sites of significance?

Sites of significance and special geological landforms are irreplaceable. Once they are damaged or destroyed, we cannot get them back. Historical and geological sites give us a better understanding and appreciation of our history and national identity.

All archaeological sites are protected by Heritage New Zealand which makes it illegal to knowingly damage, modify or destroy them without the written permission of Heritage New Zealand.

4. Site management and environmental controls

Forward planning – before you start works

- When a project is being scoped, assessments will be carried out to identify whether works could affect a known archaeological, historic, or geological site.
- If an archaeological site is going to be affected by proposed works, an Archaeological Authority from Heritage New Zealand must be obtained prior to works commencing.
- If you are unsure of the area you are working in, seek advice from the Stormwater Unit's Resource Management Team and council's Project Manager/ Representative.
- However, the location of every site of significance is not known and even an archaeological assessment may not identify the presence of a site, which means it is possible that you will need to be prepared to stop work immediately if you come across a site of significance.



- Where applicable, various consent conditions, Heritage New Zealand archaeological authority conditions and specialist reports related to sites of significance will be contained in the Compliance Management Plan.
- Complete an Environmental Task Analysis Form to identify potential environmental risks and define how environmental risks can be mitigated or reduced through site practices or environmental controls. Remember your activities will need to be in accordance with the legal requirements defined in the Compliance Management Plan.
- If this is the case, you will need to understand the conditions of consent and ensure that these are followed at all times.
- Make sure the person responsible (identified in Task Analysis) for ensuring environmental practices and controls has followed/implemented these prior to starting works.

Environmental practices and controls

Preventing the problem

By keeping your excavation or works sites to a manageable area you will be able to more easily identify sites of significance that maybe uncovered. However, if any sites of significance are uncovered during works the contractor must immediately:

- Stop all work or stop any work within 30m of the uncovered feature if the work site is large.
- Shut down all affected machinery.
- Block off access to the site – tape around the perimeter.
- Notify the Stormwater Unit's Resource Management Team and council's Project Manager/Representative.
- Ensure all operational staff are aware of the discovery and its location.
- Await further instructions from the Stormwater Unit's Resource Management Team and council's Project Manager/Representative before recommencing work in the area.

Monitoring and maintenance

- Continually monitor works, especially excavations or earthworks, for any indication of a site of significance.
- Regularly check where site or perimeter controls are in place for known sites of significance.
- Ensure that all conditions of resource consent are being complied with.

5. Tips

- If you uncover anything that looks out of place or like it has been there a long time, it could be an archaeological or historic site.
- Ensure all operational staff are aware of the possibility of the project being located near or on an archaeological, historic, or geological site.

6. Useful links and information

- Go to aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and search for 'pollution', here you will find a range of helpful information and links to the range of pollution related resources and educational materials.
- Refer to the following Stormwater Unit BMPs
 - Dewatering
 - Trenching
 - Potentially Contaminated sites
 - Dust and sediments
 - Spills and emergency management
 - Trees.

If a discharge occurs that has the potential to, or has entered the stormwater system or natural receiving environments, contact the Auckland Council 24 HOUR POLLUTION HOTLINE on 09 377 3107 immediately.

Find out more:

For access to this BMP and to find the other BMP information sheets, visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/stormwater