

15. *Historic Resources*

Explanation

Historic resources are any identifiable evidence of human history: historic places, archaeological sites, traditional sites including waahi tapu, and any other objects or artifacts that are associated with or help our understanding of the past. The landscape also provides a record of human culture, and the protection of areas which reflect social change and land use practices are an important component of our heritage [*refer Section 18, p 173*]. The Conservation Act 1987 empowers the Department to manage historic resources on land it administers, and to advocate the conservation of historic resources generally.

The Department's historic resources work on areas it administers has three main elements: Firstly, protection to minimise injurious human actions to all historic resources. Some historic places have been assigned a special protected status, e.g., historic reserves, archaeological sites and registered historic places. Secondly, conservation, using positive actions to minimise the effect of natural processes e.g., corrosion of metals, decay of wood, root damage from vegetation, and fire. Thirdly, interpretation of historic resources to visitors is undertaken where appropriate.

The Department's obligations to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi have a major bearing on its historic resources work, as the land it manages contains many sites of significance to the tangata whenua.

The Department is bound by the Historic Places Act 1993 which regulates the registration of historic places and the protection and modification of archaeological sites. The Department's involvement in historic resources off the land it administers is mainly through its liaison and involvement with the NZ Historic Places Trust (NZHPT), the main advocate for historic resources in New Zealand. The Resource Management Act 1991, provides mechanisms for the protection of historic resources in District Plans. Local authorities therefore have an important role in the conservation of historic resources.

Wellington Conservancy

The Conservancy has a rich land- and water-based Maori and European history. Archaeological sites are concentrated on the coast where the restricted possibilities for human settlement have resulted in the occupation and re-occupation, both in prehistoric times and down to the present of more favoured locations. Areas occupied by 19th century settlements are often found adjacent to or superimposed on prehistoric remains. These and subsequent developments associated with the growth of urban areas around Wellington, Hutt Valley and Porirua have resulted in severe disturbance to archaeological remains in Wellington.

In the Wairarapa, little is known of the distribution and importance of archaeological sites. In a few locations such as Cape Palliser and the south east Wairarapa coast, sites of importance are known to exist. The coast north of Flat Point has not been surveyed for sites.

More recent human activities have produced historic places associated with whaling, shipping, railways, timber milling, goldmining, defence, farming, recreation and nature conservation. Te Kahuoterangi whaling station on Kapiti Island is one of the earliest cultural contact points, where Maori worked, and excelled, in a European industry. The Whare on Kapiti Island is the oldest remaining conservation building in New Zealand and was the home of Richard Henry, our first species conservation ranger. The Rimutaka Incline railway was a major early engineering work, and became a world railway curiosity. The abandoned farms at Otaki Forks are testimony to a lack of understanding of the environment. In the bush behind Otaki Forks is New Zealand's finest extant example of a steam log-hauler. Farther back in the Tararuas, two tramping huts remind us of primitive construction techniques and the early development of outdoor recreation by community groups. Tararua Forest Park was the first forest park to be gazetted and is associated with the first tramping clubs to be formed in New Zealand; the National Wildlife Centre (at Mount Bruce) was the first place in New Zealand where threatened wildlife was successfully bred in captivity.

Of the Conservancy's urban historical heritage, the Department manages only the Government Buildings and Turnbull House in Wellington.

The NZHPT is the main advocate for historic resources in the Conservancy. The Department is represented on the Trust's regional committees, and assists it with historic advocacy and protection if its input is sought. If input is needed, the Department considers its priorities to be coastal and rural historic places.

Management Issues

Information

The Department has an historic resource strategy for places it manages to set goals and provide guidance for the years 1992-1997. Table 8, p 159 outlines the proposed research projects. An archaeological resource statement is being developed to provide guidance on priorities for archaeological research and management.

Priorities

The Department expects to be able to protect from unnecessary change all historic resources on land it administers but does not expect to be able to undertake conservation work on all historic places.

Only places of high historic significance will be actively managed. As a group of places they will provide the best possible balanced representation of the history of areas managed by the Department in the Conservancy. The proposed actively managed sites for 1992-1997 are listed in Table 7, p 158. The list will be reviewed in 1997.

By 1997 the Department should have an archaeological resource statement, and medium- to long-term priorities for archaeological management for sites not identified in Table 7 will be set. Only 75 known archeological sites are located on areas administered by the Department. Most archeological sites in the Conservancy occur on private land, and only a few of these sites are managed with regard being had to the existence of the site.

Iwi Liaison

Many of the historic resources on land managed by the Department are of cultural and spiritual significance to Maori. Liaison with tangata whenua will

be essential at sites of interest to Maori to determine appropriate strategies for conservation, and any visitor facilities and interpretation.

Public Awareness

Visitors to areas managed by the Department are often unaware of the significance of historic resources in the Conservancy, due to limited on-site information and published materials. The historic resources strategy identifies some interpretation projects that will improve this situation. Opportunities for community involvement in the protection and restoration of historic resources will be identified and promoted.

Objectives

- 1 Protection of historic resources on land managed by the Department from any injurious human actions.
- 2 Attainment of sufficient understanding of historic resources to enable effective management.
- 3 Conservation of historic places on land managed by the Department which are of high historic significance, and which collectively provide the best balanced representation of the history and are of most significance to tangata whenua.
- 4 Raising of public awareness of highly significant historic resources, where this does not conflict with the protection of the place or wishes of tangata whenua, and identification of and provision for community involvement in protection and restoration.
- 5 A co-operative working relationship with tangata whenua in the identification, conservation and interpretation of historic resources.
- 6 A co-operative working relationship with NZHPT in the identification, conservation and interpretation of historic resources.

Implementation

- 1 Develop and keep up to date an inventory of historic resources on lands administered by the Department. Develop and keep under review a protection plan for historic resources on such lands, including appropriate levels of legal protection.
- 2 Review and update the historic resources strategy for the period after 1997, incorporating the archaeological resource statement.
- 3 By 1997, prepare an archaeological resource statement which states the archaeological character of the Conservancy and describe current knowledge of specified archaeological themes, sites and areas.
- 4 Undertake surveys identified in historic resources strategy to find gaps and deficiencies in survey information.
- 5 Any known historic place over 30 years old in areas managed by the Department will be managed to prevent, or at least minimise, degradation or deterioration of that place from human activities.
- 6 Approval to modify any historic place on land managed by the Department will be subject to an internal modification approval procedure. Approval will be sought from NZHPT for any alteration of an archaeological site or any site with an NZHPT registration.
- 7 Historic values will be assessed using Historic Places Act criteria, and will include tangata whenua input on Maori values. NZHPT registration proposals will be prepared as required for actively managed places.
- 8 Decisions to actively manage historic resources will be based on the following criteria:

- Emergency: historic places of high (or apparent high) significance which are under dire threat and face substantial loss of integrity if delayed another year.
 - Significance: projects on historic places of highest significance, considering both individual importance and role in the history of the Conservancy. Where applicable assessment criteria provided by NZHPT will be used.
 - Threat: projects on historic places suffering the greatest loss of integrity if delayed a year.
 - Balance: projects for which the funding levels are realistic in terms of the Conservancy budget and which will not diminish the potential to operate a balanced historic programme overall.
 - Community: projects which can involve the community.
 - Visitor: projects that provide a satisfying visitor experience or enhance public awareness of conservation values.
- 9 A conservation plan will be prepared for each historic place to be actively managed, guided by International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) principles and meeting ICOMOS standards.
 - 10 Remedial work required by such conservation plans and regular maintenance work will be scheduled in business plans as required.
 - 11 Urgent remedial work in response to threats may be carried out without the normal process of planning if an historic structure of apparent high significance is under threat of collapse.
 - 12 Consult with tangata whenua on protection and conservation and interpretation of any historic resource of significance to them.
 - 13 Provide interpretation of actively managed historic places with good public access either on or near the site or by published material. The decision to provide visitor services is discretionary and must not conflict with protection of the place or wishes of the tangata whenua.
 - 14 Undertake thematic studies, area surveys and site appraisals indicated in Table 8.
 - 15 As resources allow, write a concise but comprehensive history for each major land area managed by the Department. Existing bibliographic sources will be used if possible, rather than the Department duplicating the work that others have done.
 - 16 Provide staff training in protection and conservation of historic resources as appropriate.
 - 17 Liaise with the NZHPT and assist its work to conserve historic resources, especially in coastal and rural areas.
 - 18 Liaise with local authorities and other organisations with an interest in protecting historic resources on land administered by the Department.

Table 7:
Historic Sites to be
Actively Managed

Rimutaka Incline	Mana Island Woolshed
Cone Hut, Tararua Forest Park	Beach Sites, Mana Island
Field Hut, Tararua Forest Park	Te Kahuoterangi, Kapiti Island
Sheridan Creek Log Hauler	The Whare, Kapiti Island
Mill Site, Otaki Forks	Trypots, Kapiti Island
Whitireia Park	Government Buildings
Mana Island Lighthouse Site	Turnbull House