

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

The significance of the archaeological landscape on Motutapu has long been recognised, but often the driving focus for management has been on other competing values. A loosely defined farming concession has resulted in management decisions being made in response to the needs of the farm, rather than the farming concession used as tool to manage the island's intrinsic resources. The 1992 working plan provoked serious concern for the cultural and historic landscape, and the resulting restoration plan achieved a much greater balance. Since that time there has been considerable heritage work carried out relating to both built heritage and archaeological sites. The work of the Auckland University in the mid-1990s, and the upgrade and significance assessment funded by the Auckland City Council in 2003 have both sought to provide GIS quality data for site management, but the complexity of the archaeological landscape and problems with consistency of data have meant that management still remains largely reactionary in response to pressures of restoration planting and farm management.

Areas that have no sites or low density of features should be selected for revegetation rather than attempting to exclude large areas from planting, as this creates later problems with weed colonisation, and naturalising vegetation after they are closed off from grazing. Some re-fencing of the island will likely be required to demarcate areas for planting while leaving practical areas for grazing and access. Planting also requires areas to be left to grow to rank pasture to provide a suitable environment for planting. Prompt action will provide the greatest benefit.

Future farming concessions will need to be explicit in terms of their objectives, as well as clearly stipulate responsibilities for both the concessionaire and the Department, and constraints relating to stocking density need to be provided in detail to allow improved management of the archaeological resource and better transparency for the concessionaire. The concession is due for renewal in 2010.

The current classification is Recreation Reserve which is effectively the least restrictive and most enabling available classification. Consideration should be given to reclassify the island as Historic Reserve to reflect its primary values.

While this assessment goes some way towards addressing the need for a formal conservation plan, this should be given serious consideration. The complexity of the archaeological landscape, numerous and diverse management pressures, and reactionary nature of present advice are all good reasons for having a conservation plan in place. The preparation of a formal conservation plan would also provide opportunity for input from Ngai Tai and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. This assessment compiles most of the existing sources of information and site data, but there is still a need for additional field work to ensure its accuracy, and to update information on site condition. Data consistency remains particularly important.

It is noted that interpretation of the island's features is already planned by refitting the Reid homestead as a Visitor Centre; the existing concept plan; and production of a DVD focusing on it's history.

12. WORK VISION SUMMARY

- » Complete the resurvey and assessment of pre-European archaeological sites (CMS 19.5.2).
- » Prepare a detailed conservation plan for the Motutapu archaeological landscape (CMS 27.1.6).
- » Prepare and implement an interpretation plan for historic features on the island.
- » Maintain sites under pasture or shallow rooting vegetation (CMS 19.5.3).
- » Control stock levels to minimise deterioration (CMS 19.5.3).
- » Manage weed growth on sites that are excluded from planting.
- » Minimise impact of fencing on sites (CMS 19.5.7).
- » Consult with Ngai Tai to identify, protect and manage significant sites (CMS 19.4.1-2).
- » Conserve vegetation survivals (CMS 19.5.4).
- » Transfer existing site data into GIS.
- » Proactively identify areas for planting that have minimal impact on archaeological sites.

13. SOURCES & REPORTS

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