

Tauwhare Pa

Ohiwa Harbour lies on the dividing line between Whakatohea and Ngati Awa. Both iwi needed the harbour and the mana that was attached to its resources.

At one time, Whakatohea's influence spread over the islands and they claimed the entire harbour. But high on a headland on the western shore Ngati Awa had asserted their rights by building and occupying a pa, Tauwhare.

A pa was a fortified settlement built by and belonging to a group of related people. Tauwhare is a complex of three separate pa, which were probably occupied by related, extended family groups (whanau). However it is not known if all three pa were occupied at the same time or whether the complex represents separate occupation periods.

The pa provided a focal point for Maori society. It was a place for peaceful ceremonial visits, housed the chief and his war band. It was also a secure dwelling place and food store and also the object of attack and defence. However most people lived in kainga (open settlement sites) around the pa, using the pa as a place of refuge during conflict.

All three pa on this site were damaged by bulldozing in the 1950's during preliminary work for proposed residential development while the land was in private ownership. The bulldozer cut is clearly seen at the entrance to the southern pa.



Artwork by Simone Dick, courtesy of New Zealand Geographic

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE CODE

- Protect plants and animals
- Remove rubbish
- Keep to track (Fortifications can be damaged with people walking over them)
- Consider others
- Respect our cultural heritage

