

2. Land on the move

The earth is constantly moving and changing. By observing the landforms at Turakirae you can learn about earth movements in this area. There have been four major earthquakes in the last 6,000 years. The last one was in 1855.

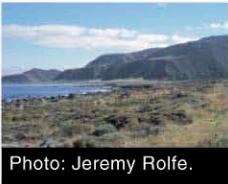


Photo: Jeremy Rolfe.



Photo: Lloyd Homer, IGNS.

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- Look up to the top of the hills and see the coastal beaches (flat tops of the hills west of the Orongorongo River) from times when the oceans were high during the last Ice Age, 600,000 years ago.
- Imagine what the land you are standing on would have been like then—you would be standing on the bottom of the ocean. Predict what changes might occur in the future.
- Locate the raised beaches that can be seen at 6.5, 18, 24 and 27 metres above the present-day beach. The beach from 1460 (two big earthquakes ago) was named Haowhenua (hao = to scoop up, whenua = land). Work out how you could measure how high each beach is above sea level.
- Study the rocks and plants at 2 different beach levels. Write down, or discuss with a partner, any similarities and differences.
- In your group, each take on a different role—a local maori, geologist, seismologist, conservationist or fisherman. Each person can explain to the rest of the group how they value this area.
- Write down or share some personal ideas (with your partner or group) about conserving this area.

The Rimutaka Range is being pushed up by forces caused by movement of the plates that make up the earth's surface.

