



He mihi



Archaeological management of waahi taonga





A map of New Zealand, showing the North and South Islands. The map is covered with numerous small red dots, which represent recorded archaeological sites. The dots are densely packed in some areas, particularly in the North Island and the central part of the South Island, and more sparse in others.

Ko te mātai whaipara tāngata i Aotearoa

Archaeology in Aotearoa

- There are over 78,500 recorded archaeological sites in Aotearoa, 57,307 of those are of the pre-European Māori or from the contact period
- There is no nationwide investment in site recording – sites are found on an ad hoc basis in response to development
- This means an absence of sites in a project area does not mean there are no sites present

Why is Archaeology in Aotearoa so special?



- Aotearoa is the last major landmass to be settled in the world
- Aotearoa boasts pā – defended fortifications - these are poorly researched but unique site types. We have 10s of thousands of these sites and they formed in less than 500 years – they are not seen anywhere else in the world
- For comparison, Iron Age forts in East Europe are structurally and functionally similar features, where less than a quarter of those in Aotearoa emerge in over 2000 years (i.e. - less sites but more time)
- Aotearoa had a collapse of megafauna which required a sharp pivot in lifeways and food gathering
- Māori are the first people of Aotearoa. There was no population which replaced or competed them, they were in effect in a cultural petri dish where their Māoritanga emerged – no external influence like most of the world's population.
- Archaeology in Aotearoa can be difficult because all typical analytical tools are built for long time spans, e.g., radiocarbon can have an error of ± 400 years (over half of our human settlement), so NZ archaeologists are often at the leading edge of science to finetune the accuracy of methods and techniques.
- ... You don't need to go to Europe or Egypt to work as an archaeologist.

Ko te mātai whaipara tangata me
ngā whenua keri

Archaeology and ground disturbance

Archaeology in Aotearoa is shallow –
directly beneath the topsoil

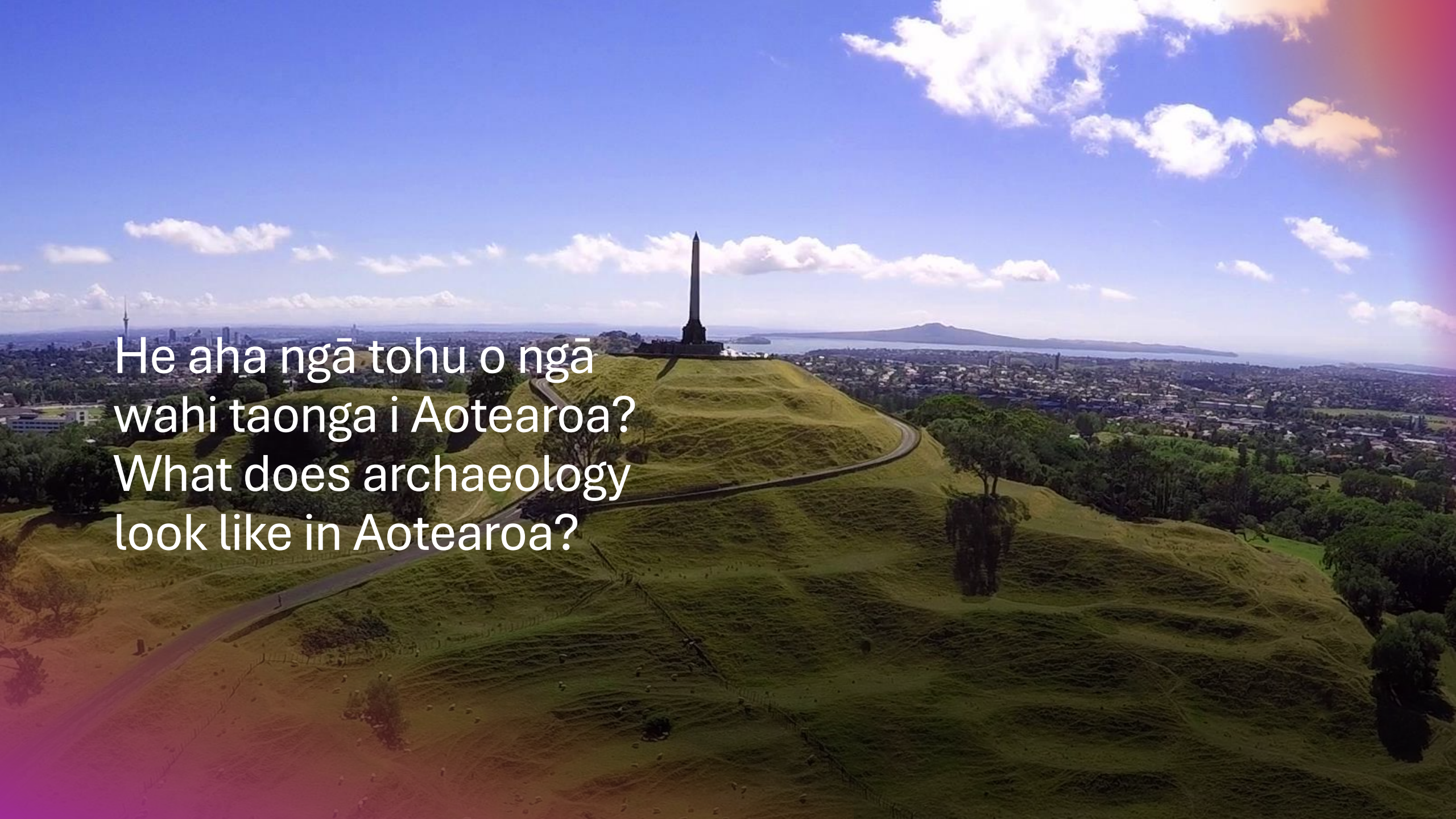
Usually, all ground disturbance
poses a risk to archaeological sites

E.g. – this horticultural site in the
Waikato is capped in 120 mm of
topsoil and perfect condition.

There is a misconception that
archaeology is deep and “around
other places, but not here where i’m
digging” (presumably a similar
narrative with HAIL sites)

Some of the most important sites in
the Pacific are here in Aotearoa and
almost always found accidentally



An aerial photograph of a large, grassy hill. At the peak of the hill stands a tall, dark obelisk monument. A paved road winds around the base of the hill. In the background, a city skyline is visible across a body of water, with mountains in the distance. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds. A pinkish-purple gradient is visible on the right side of the image.

He aha ngā tohu o ngā
wahi taonga i Aotearoa?
What does archaeology
look like in Aotearoa?



ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES

- Archaeological features are found in all sorts of environments, including places that have previously been built over or modified.
- Features are generally found cutting into the subsoil, directly under the topsoil.
- When they first appear they can look like dark smudges, changes in soil, or scatters of shell, but once they are cleaned back you can see much more detail.



Tomoana Pā, topsoil stripped vs. excavated.

Under paddocks

Archaeology is often found in paddocks, including where farm building, path construction, or ploughing have occurred.

Under Power lines

It is often assumed any archaeology would have been destroyed during tower installation but features and artefacts may still be present.





Under backyards...

Archaeology is even found under residential yards or gardens. In this case, dark stained smudges cutting into the subsoils turned out to be fire places.



Under driveways



**In Peat...
Kō (digging stick) found by digger
operator under ADP**

Artefacts, including preserved wood, can be found in wetlands and peat. In this case an operator saw an unusual piece of wood sticking out from his bucket and stopped to check.

TAONGA

- Adzes (toki)
- Fishhooks (matau)
- Pendant (tautau)
- Obsidian (tuhua/mataa)





Ko te inaki o te ao māori me te mātai whaipara tāngata The overlap between te ao māori and archaeology

- We care about the same sites, but often for different reasons. Archaeologists are not qualified to comment on cultural values, i.e. – it's not up to us what sites/areas matter to iwi Māori.
- Archaeologists focus on the physical evidence of sites, and while iwi Māori care for those too, they also care about the non-tangible aspects of a landscape which archaeologists cannot represent or replace the kōrero
- The data archaeologists make often supports iwi Māori and their hononga ki te hītori
- In short – archaeologists can support iwi māori for their kaitiakitanga, but not replace them.

The legislation – te ture

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014) and RMA are the two key pieces of legislation regulating archaeological site damage.

HNZPT Act (2014) - it is unlawful to modify or destroy an archaeological site without an authority from HNZPT. Unlawful modification could result in fines and a criminal conviction.

An authority from HNZPT is legally required where there is cause to suspect a recorded or unrecorded archaeological site, regardless of:

- reserve status,
- whether you own the land the site is on,
- whether it is on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero,
- or if resource / building consent has been granted

The authority regulates the recovery of information from that site and has conditions to be followed.

An archaeological site is defined in the HNZPT Act as:

any place in New Zealand, including any building or structure (or part of a building or structure) was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900

RMA Act requires all Councils to manage resources in a way that provides for the wellbeing of today's communities while safeguarding options of future generations. The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development is identified as a matter of national importance (Section 6f).

“Historic heritage” includes archaeological sites and sites of significance to Māori - these categories are not mutually exclusive - some arch sites may also be places that are of significance to Māori.

Where resource consent is required for any activity the assessment report is required to address cultural and historic heritage matters.



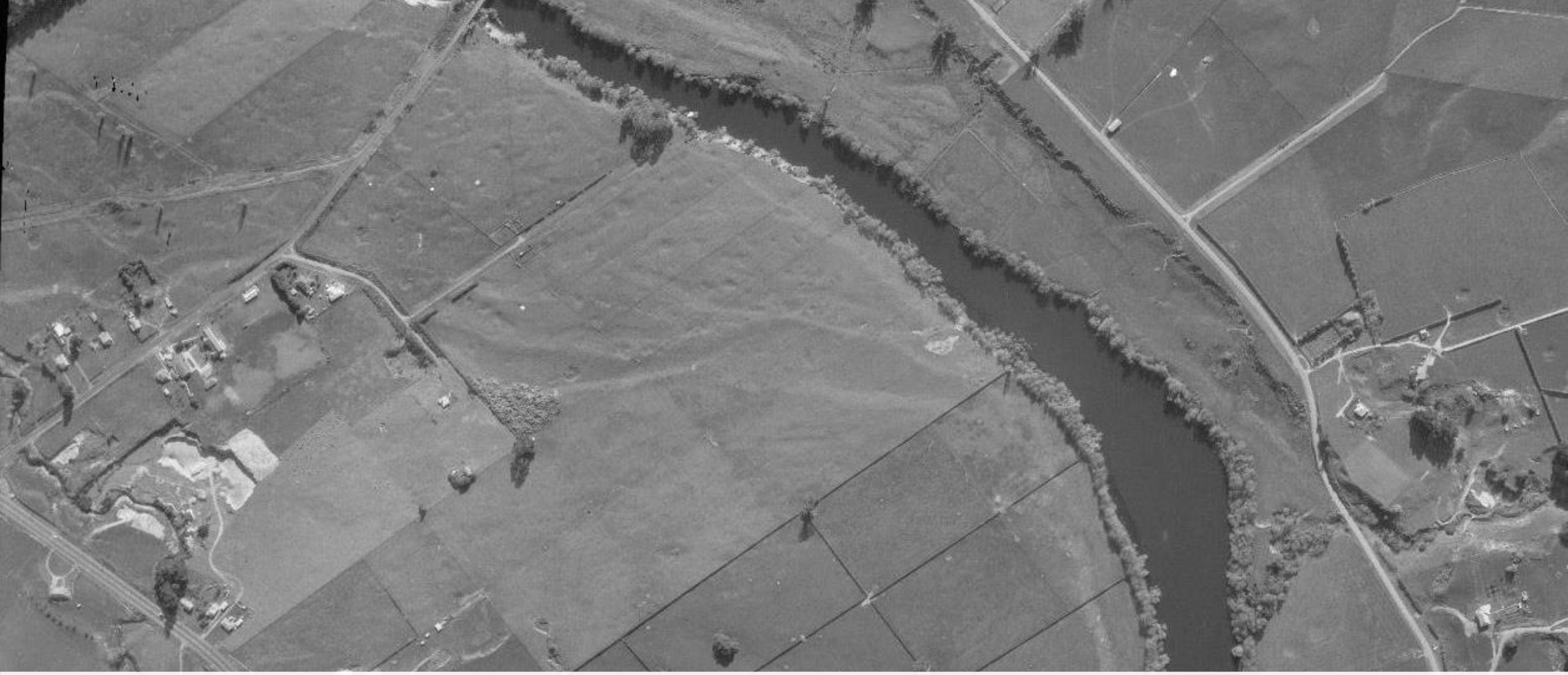


He aha ai te hāngai ki a koutou? Why does this matter to you guys?

- During your prelim site investigations, archaeology should be considered
- It's appropriate to alert your client if you see any info during your work that suggests a site is there / could be there (anything pre1900 is a site in NZ)
- An archaeological assessment could early on before the PSI and can comprehensively guide the site history of the contamination of the site
- Our triggers are the same – we should also be engaged whenever ground disturbance is proposed like you contam land practitioners
- Similar to you all, we are often rolled in at the last min and an after-thought
- The HAIL registers does not have comprehensive record of contamination, similarly, the NZAA archaeology site recording scheme does not have all of NZs sites and is recorded in an ad hoc fashion in response to developments

Ko te maara Māori i te Waikato
Example: Māori garden systems in the Waikato and the 20th century rubbish in them





Ngā rua

Borrow pits – large hand dug quarries dug by Māori who were harvesting deep alluvial gravels to import onto gardens













The background image shows an archaeological excavation site. Several workers in orange high-visibility clothing and hats are working in a large, rectangular pit. A woman in a white shirt, shorts, and a straw hat stands in the foreground on the right, looking towards the excavation. The site is surrounded by a grassy area and a fence in the background.

Summary

Archaeology is rarely recorded before a project starts

Archaeological sites have legal protections in Aotearoa, recorded or not

Archaeology tells us a lot about our human past which is otherwise not known – the archaeology of our country is poorly researched or understood and often dismissed

There are seemingly overlaps between archaeology is managed and the HALL registers

Archaeologists can support soil contam technicians in understanding the history and landuse of an area through archaeological assessments and checks

Aku mihi ki ngā mana whenua ki konei, ngā mana whenua ki ngā waahi taonga i tēnei kauhau, ki Mary O’Keeffee, Leela Moses, Kim Wepasnick.