



Archaeology and Earthworks

DEFINITIONS

Archaeological Site

An archaeological site is any place in New Zealand, including any building or structure (or part of a building or structure), that was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900, or is the site of the wreck of any vessel where the wreck occurred before 1900, and provides or may provide, through investigation by archaeological methods, evidence relating to the history of New Zealand.

The site may be of Māori, Pakehā or Chinese origin.

What do they look like?

Māori sites often include:

- charcoal patches
- bones (moa, fish, seal bird)
- shell
- hangi stones
- flake tools made from stone
- taonga/artefacts such as adzes, fish hooks, lures

Artefacts of Pākeha/Chinese sites may include:

- bottles
- crockery
- nails
- timber/bricks
- buildings foundation
- wells, clay pipes, drains.

Koiwi Tangata (burials) are also archaeological sites and in Otago/Southland are most commonly found near coastlines.



Example of a Midden



Gold mining site



Musterers hut

Archaeological Sites are protected:

- Archaeological sites are legally protected under Sections 42(1) of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.
- Pre 1900 buildings are also considered archaeological sites.

Why does it matter?

Historic and archaeological sites are an important part of our history and identity. They connect us to the land by telling us who we were, and how we have become. Sites are spread along our coastlines and waterways, across our plains and hill country and through the mountain passes.

What does this mean?

- **It is your** responsibility to be aware of archaeological sites.
- There can be substantial penalties for unauthorized modification or destruction of archaeological sites.
- Under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014) it is an offence to modify or destroy an archaeological site, without an Authority from Heritage New Zealand irrespective of whether the works are permitted to consent has been issued under the Resource Management Act or Building Act.

What if I find something?

In the event that an unidentified archaeological site is located during works, the following applies:

1. Cease earthworks immediately.
2. Shut down all machinery, secure the area, and advise the Site Manager.
3. The Site Manager should then notify the Heritage New Zealand Otago/Southland Archaeologist (contact details are below).
4. If the site is of Maori origin, the Site Manager should notify the Heritage New Zealand Otago/Southland Archaeologist and the appropriate Iwi groups or kaitiaki representative of the discovery. The Site Manager must ensure there is access to the site for the Heritage New Zealand Otago/Southland Archaeologist (or an independent archaeologist approved by Heritage New Zealand) and the appropriate Iwi groups or kaitiaki representative to enable appropriate cultural procedures and tikanga to be undertaken, so long as the site is not disturbed.
5. If human remains (koiwi tangata) are uncovered the Site Manager should advise the Heritage New Zealand Otago/Southland Archaeologist, NZ Police and the appropriate Iwi groups or kaitiaki representative and the above process under 4 shall apply. **Remains are not to be moved until such time as BOTH Iwi and Heritage New Zealand have responded.**
6. Works affecting the archaeological site and any human remains (koiwi tangata) shall not resume until Heritage New Zealand gives written approval for work to continue. Works affecting the site will likely require an Archaeological Authority applied for under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. Further assessment by an independent archaeologist may be required to make an application for an Archaeological Authority.
7. Where Iwi so request, any information recorded as the result of the find such as a description of location and content, is to be provided for their records.



Who should you contact:

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“Archaeological sites are irreplaceable parts of our heritage.

What we discover from archaeological sites helps us to understand our past and learn from it”.