

Tahapa Reserve track works (HNZPTA Authority 2020/77): final report

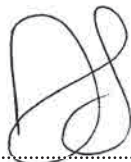
**report to
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
and
Auckland Council**

Danielle Trilford

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Prepared by:



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Reviewed by:



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Matthew Campbell

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Danielle Trilford

Auckland Council have undertaken most of the planned earthworks for new tracks which will feed onto the proposed Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive shared path (the Shared Path) in Tahapa Reserve East (Lot 170 DP 41498) and Tahapa Reserve (Lot 169 DP 39067), and three public tracks feeding into them from the roadside at various locations (Lot 18 DP 38968, Lot 174 DP 41498 and Lot 1 DP 198737) (Figure 1). Works for the proposed path included open excavation for the tracks, silt fencing, replanting and haul roads.

The proposed paths were assessed by Russell Foster (Foster 2017a) and his recommendations were that an archaeological authority be applied for from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (HNZPT). Auckland Council proceeded without applying for an HNZPT authority, and during earthworks at Tahapa Reserve (Lot 170 DP 41498) shell midden was exposed on 26 April 2019 and reported to Auckland Council the same day. Danielle Trilford of CFG Heritage was informed of the site damage Monday 29 April by Rebecca Ramsay of Auckland Council. The deposit is part of an archaeological site recorded as a midden, site R11/2262, in the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) Site Recording Scheme (SRS).

A report documenting the site exposure and a reassessment of the works was undertaken as part of an application for an HNZPT authority. Authority 2020/077 was granted on the 14 September 2019 for the works.

Most of the ground works are now complete, and the outstanding works are comparatively minor (Figure 2). The outstanding works are to connect the cycle paths to the larger Te Ara Ki Uta Ki Tai / Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive shared path ramps. It is expected the works will resume either late 2022 or early 2023. It was agreed between HNZPT, Auckland Council and CFG Heritage Ltd that this report would be completed as a “progress” report, which is ultimately a final report for all works so far and it will either be updated or have an addendum once the outstanding earthworks have been monitored.

Works for the project began early December 2019 and the last stage of works was early December 2020. During the works some areas of previously disturbed ground was exposed. Elsewhere, one previously unrecorded shell midden was exposed, this has been added to the SRS as R11/3251. Since the damage to midden R11/2262 in April 2019 the site was not exposed further.

Background

Pre-European Māori settled the area long before the arrival of Europeans. The area either side of Pūrewa Creek is named Te Pourewa, which means “the elevated platform”, the name of a highpoint with a sentry post on poles on the Ōrākei Block overlooking the Pūrewa Creek (Simmons 1987: 26) (Figure 3). The sentry warned the watchers in other towers by a system of signalling (known as tuhi or tuhituhi). The evidence of pre-European Māori land use is seen around the Ōrākei Basin and up the creek in burials, pā, midden, and similar sites. South west of the path works is an area known as Patutahi, which is a point near St. Johns

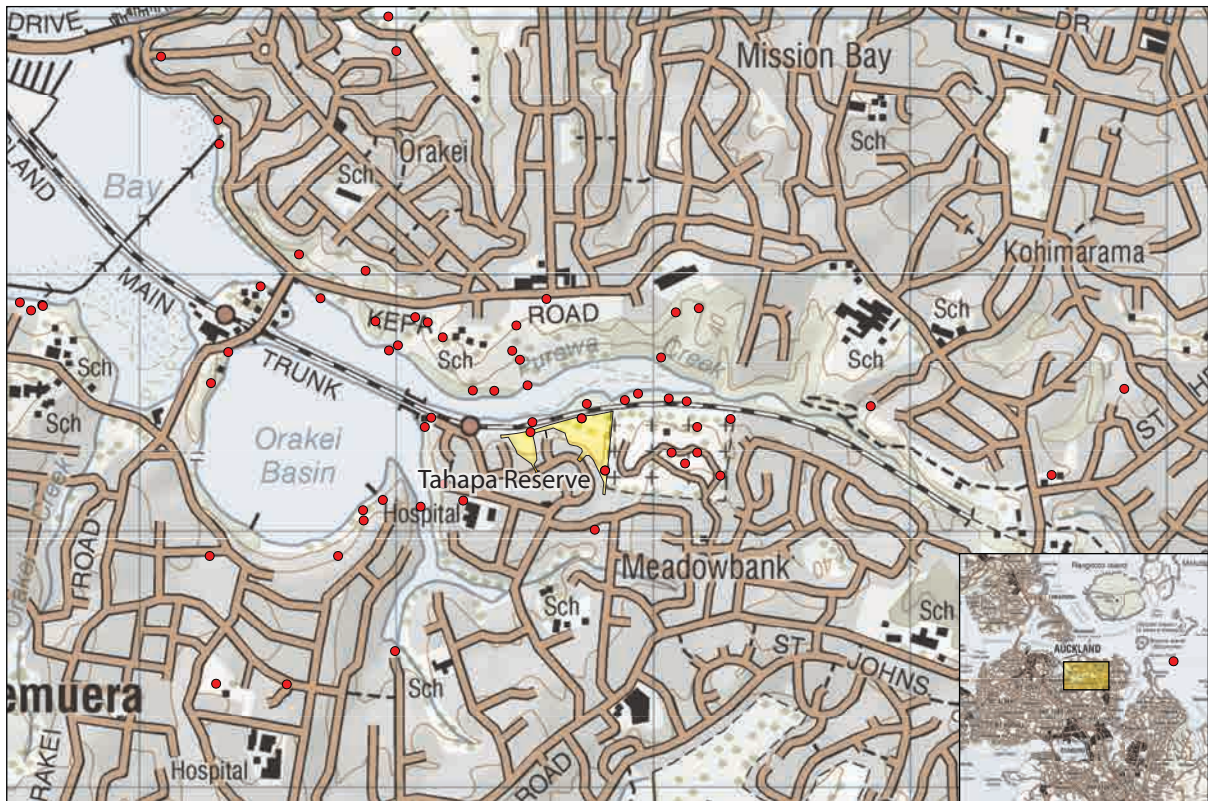


Figure 1. Location of Tahapa Reserve and recorded archaeological sites in the Meadowbank area.



Figure 2. Tahapa Reserve, showing the track route and archaeological sites recored nearby.

College. Here a party of Ngāti Pāoa and Ngāti Whanaunga chiefs on a visit were killed by Waiohua. These killings led to future battles (Simmons 1987: 24).

One of the earliest acquisitions of land in Auckland by the Crown was the Kohimarama block from Ngāti Pāoa on 29th July 1841 (Turton 1887a). After other sales, land that remained in Ngāti Whātua ownership was the Ōrākei Block and the lands between Hobson Bay, Remuera Road and Newmarket. These lands were an area reserved by Ngāti Whātua for their own use and originally were not intended for sale. An exception to this was the Pukapuka block which Apihai Te Kawau had gifted to Ngāti Mahuta chief Kati as “his place of abode.” (Stone 2001: 291).

Most of the allotments in this area were later acquired by Thomas Morrin between 1868 and 1873. He named the block Meadowbank after his family’s farm near Montreal in Canada from where he and his brother Samuel had come to New Zealand in 1865 (Carlyon and Morrow 2011: 114). The Morrin brothers were merchants who acquired numerous properties in Auckland and elsewhere, they were also the founders of the township of Morrinsville in the Waikato. In February 1877 Thomas Morrin sold the Meadowbank land to John Mains, who renamed the area Sunnybank. However, in July 1880, Mains, unable to meet his commitments, returned ownership of the property to Thomas and Samuel Morrin, who re-established the Meadowbank name. Thomas returned to Canada after declaring bankruptcy in the late 1880s (*Auckland Star*, 26 June 1889).

In 1894 ownership of the Meadowbank property formally passed to the Bank of New Zealand. In 1906 the property was subdivided into 32 lots and sold at auction. After WWII there was considerable growth in the eastern suburbs of Auckland and much of the privately owned land developed “marginal agricultural land” into both freehold and leasehold residential lots (Davidson 1993: 212).

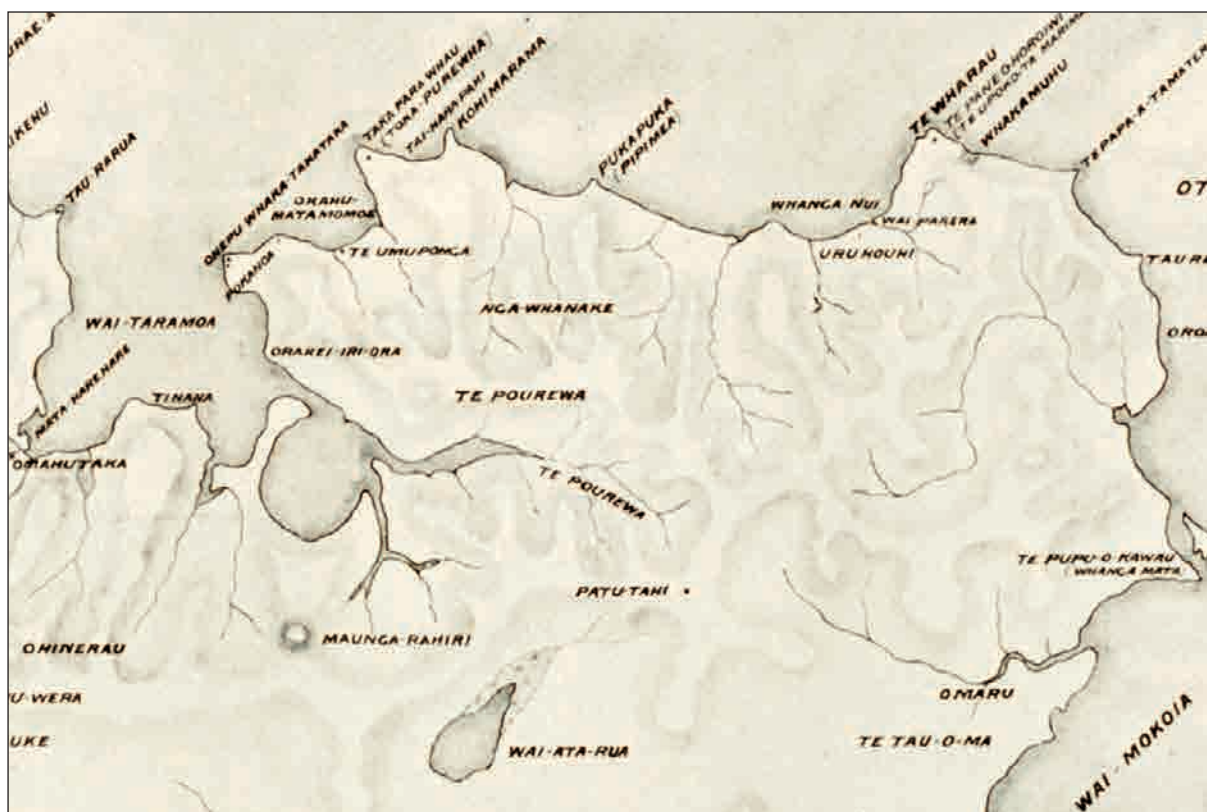


Figure 3. Detail of Leslie Kelley’s Map of the Tamaki Isthmus with Māori place names (Auckland Institute and Museum Library G9083).

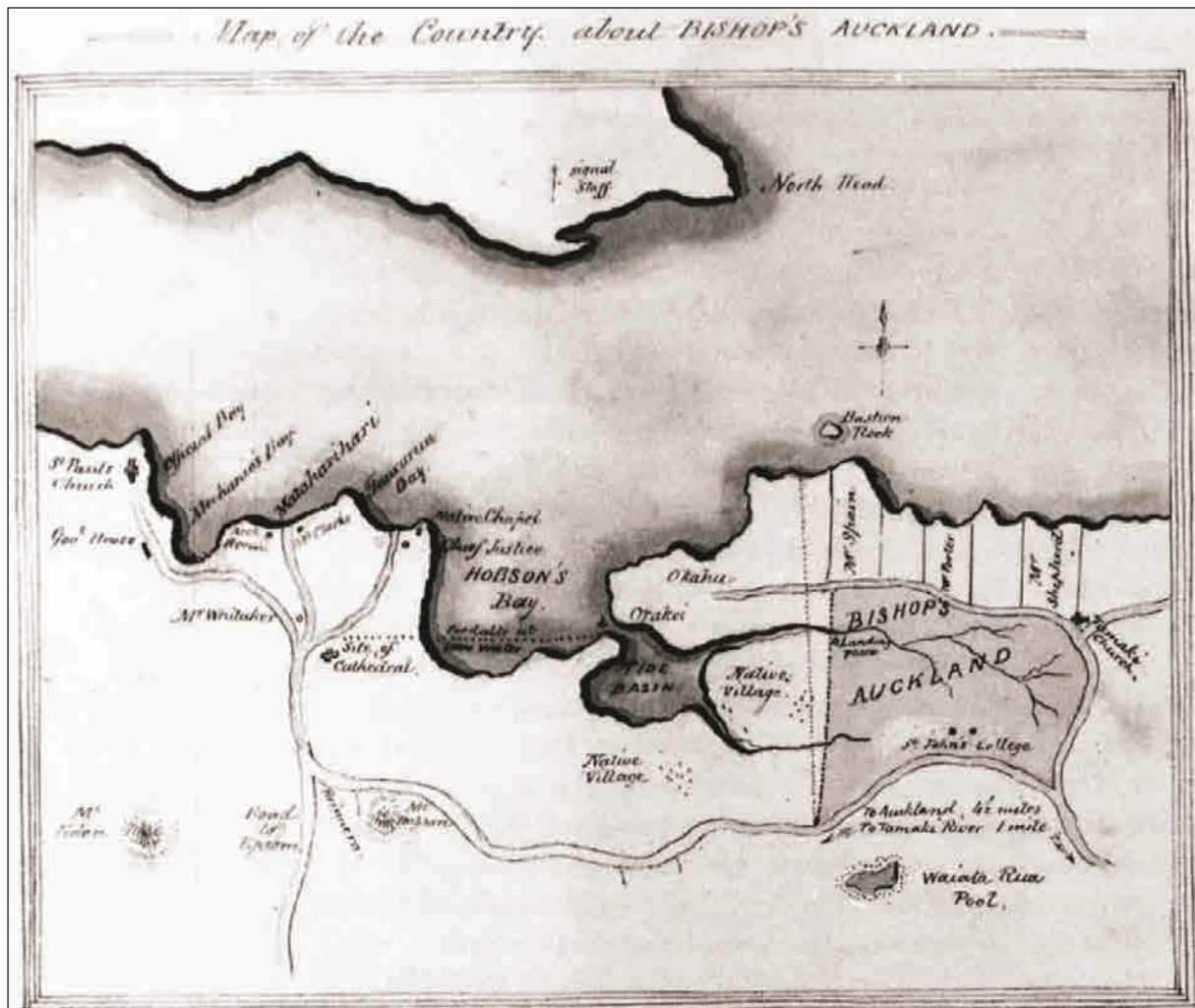


Figure 6. Map marking the 'Landing Place' at the boundary of allotments 38A and 33 (Cotton Journals, Dixon Library, State Library of New South Wales).

The next major change in the area was the creation of the railway across the Ōrākei Basin and along Pūrewa Creek in the 1920s. In 1920 land on the southern side of Pūrewa Creek was acquired to build the railway.

Bishop Selwyn's landing

Bishop Selwyn's landing place is near the Pūrewa Creek. Selwyn originally set up a training establishment at the Church Missionary Station at Te Waimate in the Bay of Islands. This proved untenable and he transferred his interest to Auckland to build a new establishment. The site he chose was the high point of the land he purchased from Whittaker around 1844 with views over the harbour, where St John's College still stands. Before this, he set up a temporary site at his landing in Pūrewa Creek (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

The settlement consisted of tents, raupō huts and a large wooden barn used as a school room and chapel. Some 100 people lived there for some two years before permanent buildings were constructed at the St John's site. After the move some of the buildings were used as overflow accommodation and some were leased out (Bulmer 1982). Rev. William Cotton

also produced a sketch showing the layout of the temporary settlement at the creek (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Another sketch by Gardner (1987) shows the landing is probably between the cemetery and the south bank of the creek. Although not yet tested, it is possible the boundary feature at archaeological site R11/2260 is part of Bishop Selwyn's Landing (SRS).

The archaeological record around Pūrewa Creek

Site R11/2262 was recorded in 2003 by Don Prince as scattered cockle shell fragments in a 6 x 2 m area of the reserve. The site was at that stage damaged by “bioturbation from trees, cemetery development, and contouring of the reserve” (site record form). The site was revisited in 2017 by Russell Foster as part of an assessment for the works undertaken in this report. He described the site as a visible shell scatter around 20 m south of the grid reference point, and visible in a recent tree throw (Foster 2017a). At this visit Foster observed “small (10–2 cm), milky-white pebbles also noted. These are a type of pebble often used for grave decoration” (site record form).

There are several recorded archaeological sites surrounding the project, most are pre-European Māori sites. The landscape was favourable for settlement and is it very likely there are more archaeological sites present than those currently recorded in the SRS. The Waitematā Harbour and the waterways that feed into the Pūrewa Creek were a vital marine resource for Māori, both as a food source and a major transport hub. Within the coastlines of the Waitematā Harbour are several portages that enabled Māori to access the Manukau Harbour which saved people travelling around Northland (Hooker 1997). The closest recorded large-scale portage to the paths is the Karetu Portage, which linked Anns Creek with Karetu, south of Panmure Basin.

Apart from Foster's (2015, 2017a, 2017b) surveys for the Shared Path, there have been very few recorded archaeological investigations or systematic surveys of land surrounding the paths. In 1997 Jeff Mosen of Bioreserches surveyed land nearby as a preliminary guide for Eastern Corridor Transport Options (Mosen 1997). Another survey near the project was by Barry Baquié in 2005 to look archaeological deposits along the proposed Ōrākei Basin Walkway.

Further afield around the Ōrākei Basin area, previous archaeological investigations and recording has shown there was a high amount of pre-European Māori occupation. Significant sites nearby include Ōrākei Pa, R11/87 which oversees the basin from the north and Hobson Bay from the south. A little closer to the project, a settlement known as Pukapuka (R11/88) is located on the headland between Ōrākei Creek and Pūrewa Creek. The site location is approximate and surrounding midden sites are suggested to be associated with the settlement (site record form). R11/533 is a “Maori village” based on notes of a pre-1900s journal, which is probably associated with R11/1455, a nearby stratified midden on Lucerne Road. There are also several terraces and midden along the inner crater slopes between Kepa Road and Pūrewa Creek.

Before the path works were undertaken, there were four recorded archaeological sites near R11/2262, these are midden and 19th century ditch R11/2260, and middens R11/3051, R11/2259, and R11/1605. Midden R11/1605 is a crushed tuangi (*Austrovenus stutchburyi*) and pipi (*Paphies australis*) midden under vegetation at Tahapa Reserve and the Railway Reserve area, the site was first recorded in 1987 by Brenda Sewell, who described it as a “midden scatter visible in the grass... 20–30 cm deep... almost totally small cockles and some pipi... could represent a 19th century Maori village” (site record form). The site was revisited in 1996 by Sarah Ross, in 2003 by Don Prince, and in 2010 and 2016 by Russell Foster. No significant information was added to the record during any of those subsequent updates. The site was revisited in 2019 by Danielle Trilford to relocate the midden as part of an assessment for the

Shared Path. The survey determined the true location was 30 m north west of the recorded point, and away from the proposed shared path. The midden was visible under leaf litter on the ground surface, exposed in tree throws, and detected by probing for 15 m east–west and 8 m north–south. The midden appears to be mostly tuangi with occasional pipi in a charcoal-stained organic matrix. The surface shell is mostly crushed.

R11/2260 is a shell midden with a pre-1900 European ditch marking a Crown Allotment boundary. The site was first recorded in 2003 by Don Prince and revisited by Russell Foster in 2015 and 2017. Don Prince noted when he first recorded the site that it is possibly Bishop Selwyn’s Landing site. The scatters of midden are primarily tuangi, with lesser amounts of oyster (*Saccostrea glomerata*), mud snail (*Amphibola crenata*) and pipi, and fire cracked rock within a blackened matrix (site record form). Prince recorded a track to the creek exposing clay field pipes. The site is probably the area of Bishop Selwyn’s Landing, this likelihood is proposed by both Prince in his 2003 site record update, and Foster (2017b). Under an exploratory authority Russell Foster determined that “...Evidence for the site is identifiable over the whole headland at this point with numerous patches of surface and subsurface shell identifiable. There is also visible evidence of European occupation with a field-tile cut through an old track and what appears to be the boundary ditch between two of the original Crown allotments. Since the end of the settlement at Selwyn’s Landing there has only been farming undertaken in this area and it assumed that the European-period evidence that has been noted relates to that (Selwyn’s) 19th century occupation.”

R11/2259 is a shell midden north of the railway. It was first added to the SRS by Don Prince in 2003, described as “15 m north of the railway cutting, opposite the Purewa Cemetery”. Unlike some of the other midden which were mostly subsurface, this midden was recorded as a dense surface scatter of shell midden. There were no associated features detected but is noted to be on a fairly flat surface (R11/2259 site record form). R11/2259 was also inspected in the exploratory authority 2017/400. The work determined the site is much less distinct than the other middens, recorded as a 90 mm thick sparse and very fragments midden of tuangi that is barely detectable by probing. The extent was marked as a 13 x 12 m area.

R11/3051 is a shell midden first recorded by Russell Foster in 2015 during the preliminary stages of the Shared Path project. The shell midden is exposed at the edge of Pūrewa Creek and is detected below the surface southward as far as the edge of the railway construction. The midden extent was mapped by Foster during his exploratory works for the Shared Path. The midden is a dense deposit of cockle shell midden with some occasional pipi. The site extent runs and unknown length north–south up to the railway and up to approximately 25 m east–west. Test pitting at the survey found the site to be mostly intact tuangi valves. In late 2020 the site was investigated by Danielle Trilford and Brendan Kneebone of CFG Heritage as part of works under authority 2020/402. A thick midden deposit of tuangi and other shell-fish species was investigated and sampled. This material is still being analysed.

R11/2276 was recorded in 2003 by David Gardiner as a “Maori Rimless Pit.” The site was hand excavated by Russell Foster and Brett Druskovich. The stratigraphy of the site indicated the depression was not archaeological, and probably a tree-throw (Foster 2017b: 15) and is therefore not at risk of damage from the proposed testing works.

Around 900 m west of the earthworks under authority 2012/686 investigated site R11/2701 (Judge et al. 2014). The site exposed pits, kōiwi tāngata (human bone), firescoops and midden. Charcoal samples demonstrated that the likely local vegetation was mainly bracken fern with some pūriri trees. Midden included typical shell species including tuangi, pipi, cat’s eye, horn shells as well as fish (snapper, *Chrysophrys auratus*). The midden dated to AD 1670–1808. The kōiwi were of a middle-aged woman, a probable adult woman and fragments of a third person. The dental wear in the two women suggested a very coarse and

fibrous diet, probably from gritty seafood and fibrous starches, and other dental wear shows they used their teeth in tasks, possibly including flax working.

R11/1455 is around 1 km west of the project and was investigated in 1995 by Leigh Johnson. The works found midden mostly made up of estuarine species. The midden was interpreted to represent discarded waste shell from settlement established in the crater. The site was not dated, but Johnson (1995: 6) estimates “the limited depth at which this section of midden is buried on the debris slope and the absence of any diagnostic artefacts, suggests late pre-historic settlement on the crater rim, possibly in the late 17th or early 18th century.”

These sites are surrounding the Pūrewa Creek and part of a wider area of pre-European Māori land use. While a number of the archaeological sites on the north side of the creek, away from the project, are in areas of limited development (e.g., Pourewa Reserve and Kepa Bush) where sub-surface archaeological evidence of the known sites could still be present, the generally steeper slopes above Pūrewa Creek limit the opportunity for pre-1900 occupation.

In contrast on the southern side of the creek, where the paths works were undertaken, there is comparatively flatter contours suitable for occupation close to the creek. On the southern side of the creek, the recorded sites away from the water's edge (largely recorded in Pūrewa Cemetery) are mostly remnant patches of midden that have survived the extensive modification of the cemetery over the years (R11/1135, R11/1136 and R11/1156).

Site damage at R12/2262

Foster (2017a) recommended applying for an archaeological authority for the project but Auckland Council proceeded without one. Shell midden was exposed on 26 April 2019 and reported to Auckland Council the same day. The midden had been previously recorded as R11/2262.

The site was inspected by Danielle Trilford 30 April, accompanied by Claire Bodmin of Stellar Projects who are managing the project on site on behalf of Auckland Council. A site damage report was prepared and sent to Auckland Council. The midden that was observed was a previously disturbed deposit over 20 x 6 m, and no in situ deposits could be seen. Intact midden may remain in situ below the exposed damaged midden, but this was not detected through probing. The exposed midden was not sampled.

Methodology

Archaeological monitoring of the site was undertaken by Danielle Trilford, Hayley Glover, and Ella Ussher of CFG Heritage between 2 December 2019 and ending late-December 2020. Works were undertaken under archaeological supervision, and any archaeological features exposed were inspected and sampled using standard archaeological practice. All spatial information was uploaded to the project GIS.

Results

A 5 x 2 m x 250 mm deep midden deposit was exposed and recorded as R11/3251 (Figure 7 to Figure 12). The midden is a crushed tuangi deposit in a dark brown loamy matrix on yellow subsoil. It is a single layer deposit. The recorded extent is in the walkway adjacent to 23A and 25 Tahapa Reserve, but it likely extends into these properties. Parts of the site were left in situ and covered with geotechnical cloth to ensure it is protected (Figure 11). The works only required to strip the topsoil and lay a single 300 mm wide trench down the centre of the path for a service cable. Two 10 litre bulk samples were collected for analysis.



Figure 7. Exposed midden R11/3251 facing east.



Figure 8. Exposed midden R11/3251 facing west.



Figure 9. Investigation trench of R11/3251, facing west.



Figure 10. Profile of the midden deposit R11/3251, facing south.



Figure 11. Service trench with geotechnical cloth covering R11/3251 for protection.

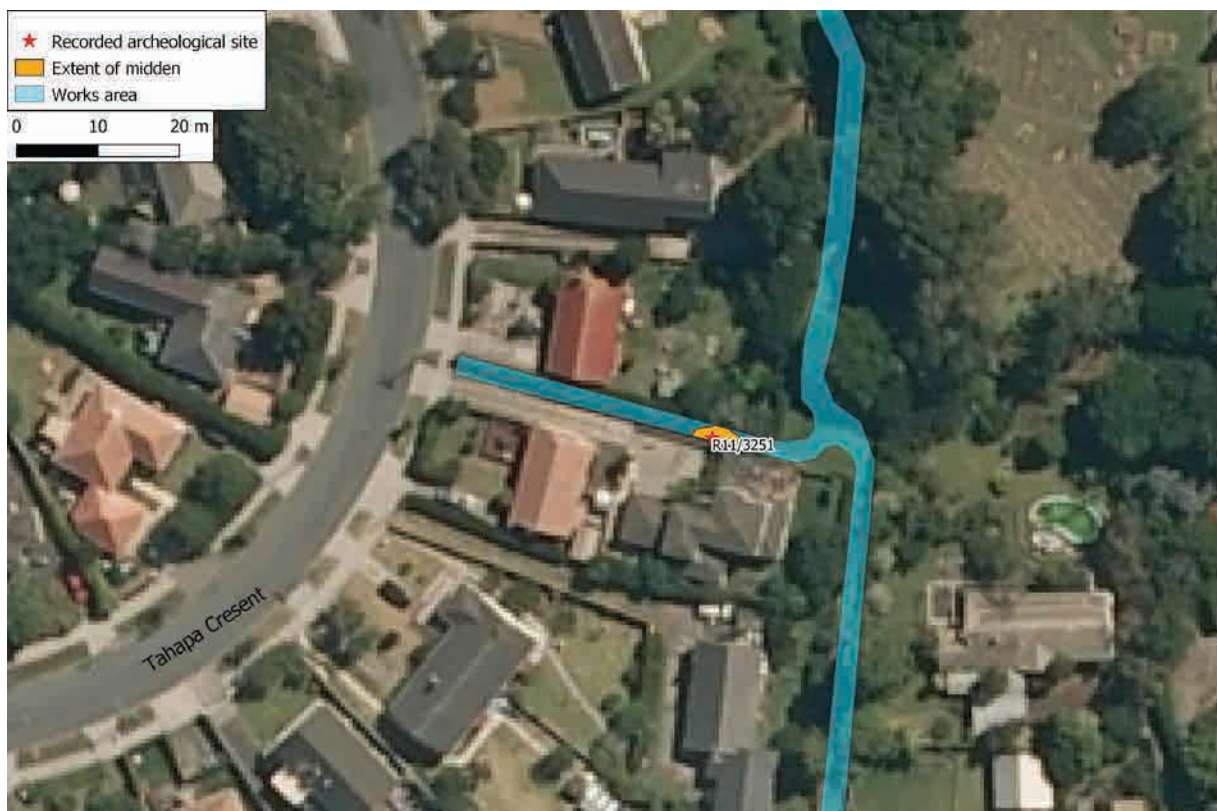


Figure 12. Location of exposed midden R11/3251.

Chronology

A sample of tuangi (*Austrovenus stutchburyi*) from R11/3251 was submitted to the Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory at the University of Waikato for dating. The result indicates shellfish collection occurred at some stage between the 15th and early 19th centuries, most likely during the mid-16th to early 18th centuries (Table 1).

Feature	Lab no.	CRA BP	cal AD 68%	cal AD 95%
Site	Wk 52228	689 ± 24 BP	1539–1707	1487–1814

Midden analysis

Two 10 litre bulks were taken and analysed – these are reported as a single assemblage as no distinct differences were observed. The midden was washed in a 3.2 mm wet sieve and analysed using conventional methods (Somerville et al. 2017: 219; Campbell 2017) with species identification based on Morley (2004). The total Number of Identified Specimens (NISP) was counted for bivalves using hinges only. The NISP for bivalves were counted and divided by two to obtain the MNI of shellfish. Gastropods were counted as one individual for the MNI count, based on the presence of either the apex, aperture, or opercula of the species. The primary material was entirely shellfish, there was no bone, fire-cracked rock, or charcoal present.

Table 1 shows the deposit was dominated by tuangi (*Austrovenus stutchburyi*) by both MNI and weight. Tuangi is collected from soft shores like harbours and muddy sheltered areas. There were also pipi (*Paphies australis*) which is collected in a similar environment, although pipi can favour a slightly sandier shore than tuangi. Other species found in small numbers also indicate soft shore environments, with the exception of a single white rock shell (*Dicathais orbita*) which may have been collected on a rocky outcrop. All of the species identified in the assemblage are able to be collected within the Waitematā Harbour, around 400 m from the site.

Taxon	MNI	Weight (g)	Environment
Tuangi (<i>Austrovenus stutchburyi</i>)	462	247	Soft shore
Pipi (<i>Paphies australis</i>)	8	5	Soft/sandy shore
Cat's eye (pūpū, <i>Lunella smaragda</i>) (operculum)	7	5	Various
Lined whelk (huamutu, <i>Buccinulum vittatum vittatum</i>)	1	2	Various
Speckled whelk (kawari, <i>Cominella adspersa</i>)	1	2	Various
White rock shell (Hopetea, <i>Dicathais orbita</i>)	1	2	Rocky
Mudsnail (tītiko, <i>Amphibola crenata</i>)	1	2	Soft shore
Small ostrich foot (takai, <i>Pellicaria vermis</i>)	2	5	Various
Scallop (kuakua, <i>Pecten novaezelandiae</i>)	1	11	Various
Residue		253	
Total	484	534	

Material culture

In and below the topsoil were isolated, single fragments or small handfuls of glass and ceramics. All the material exposed within these works areas are confirmed to be redeposited – based either on their isolated and fragmented nature, the nature of soil stratigraphy, or the presence of modern material such as plastic within the same layer. Some of the glass and ceramics exposed appears to be pre-1900 material. The evidence exists as bottle fragments with bubbles, in some bottle fragments this indicates early hand manufacture before the 1900s (Tasker 1989: 28).

Discussion and conclusion

Middens are often (but not always) easily identifiable and visible markers for a wider archaeological site with associated features. If other features are present, they are likely to be storage pits, fire scoops, and post holes or other evidence of semi-permanent or permanent occupation. There is a noticeable absence of recorded sites around the project area considering the favourable conditions for pre-European Māori occupation. The exposure of midden during projects such as these footpath works, like new midden R11/3251, supports the likelihood that while the area is a densely populated residential area, there remains pre-European Māori sites with archaeological value present. The true extent of new site R11/3251 is not known as it probably extends into both neighbouring properties, though this cannot be confirmed without additional archaeological investigation.

The presence of redeposited probable 19th century material such as glass and ceramic fragments exposed in isolated patches across the project footprint may indicate there are potential currently unrecorded pre-1900 European deposits in the area, however this cannot be investigated further within the scope of this project.

The presence of harbour caught shellfish in midden R11/3251 which was caught at some stage between the mid-1500s and the early 1700s matches other archaeological information of the area. Dates from R11/2701 were similar (Judge et al 2014: 39). No other recorded investigations nearby have dates available to expand on this discussion, but so far it seems that settlement from the mid-1500s through to the early 1800s is typical of the area. Based on results at R11/2701 (Judge et al. 2104), settlement was semi-permeant because storage pits and post-holes were exposed. While no evidence of permanence was exposed at R11/3251 it is possible this could be because only a small portion of the site was investigated while the rest was capped and preserved. An alternative is the site is simply a food processing area where other activities and occupation occurred elsewhere.

The outstanding earthworks in this project as part of authority 2020/077 will be monitored and reported on once complete, either as an update to this report or as an addendum.

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**Tahapa Reserve path works, Meadowbank, HNZPT authority 2020/77:
addendum to final report**

Earthworks for the build of feeder paths to Section 2 of the Glen Innes to Tamaki Drive Shared Path, Te Ara ki Uta ki Tai were undertaken between December 2019 and late November 2022. The majority of the ground disturbance works were completed in December 2020 and it was agreed between the authority holder and HNZPT that a final report would be prepared and the minor outstanding ground disturbance works would be recorded and noted in an addendum (Trilford 2021) (Figure A1).



Figure A1. Map showing where outstanding path works were completed in purple.

Summary of works and results

The proposed works were monitored and no archaeological deposits were exposed. The haul road connecting the new path to the west access to the Reserve was reinstated and regrassed (Figures A1 and A3).



Figure A2. View of where the haul road was installed, facing west from the new feeder track.



Figure A3. View of the new feeder path facing south.

Conclusion

This addendum documents the outstanding works that were required to be monitored as part of HNZPTA authority 2022/77. No further archaeological finds were made and works as part of the project are now complete.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and curves, positioned to the left of the signature text.

Danielle Trilford
Senior Archaeologist
19 January 2021