

# What are some of the options ?

## The Options

Different types of responses may be appropriate for different types of heritage. We need to identify what are the most important heritage sites, and what is the appropriate level of protection for these, bearing in mind our obligations under existing legislation. This may include a mix of the different types of responses.

Existing responses that could continue...

- **District Plans** currently deal well with the heritage sites that are listed in the plans, especially built heritage. This could continue and possibly be strengthened with the addition of more sites, particularly archaeological sites, as they are identified as important.
- Identification of, and advocacy for, protection of sites by the **Historic Places Trust**
- Ongoing **information gathering** currently being undertaken by Iwi authorities and NZAA

### Continue to identify the location and importance of historic sites.

More work could be done to verify and more accurately locate recorded sites. Local Iwi have currently started this process, and NZAA have a nationwide program that works with the help of local authorities to improve the accuracy of their information.

When sites have been identified then we must decide what level of protection is most appropriate for each site, and which sites require the highest level of protection.

- **Education** programmes with landowners, schools and professionals to raise community appreciation and knowledge of heritage
- Developing knowledge of our heritage as a **recreation and tourism opportunity**. Appropriate sites could be identified and included on a coastal heritage trail. The Wairarapa coastline was a coastal highway between Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) and Ahuriri (Napier) and was used also by the first European settlers, missionaries and run-holders.
- If more people are aware of, and have an appreciation for heritage, it is more likely to be protected for the future.
- Encourage **consultation** between Iwi and people seeking consents. Consultation prior to application can help identify and resolve any potential areas of concern before the consent is lodged.
- **Financial incentives** such as rate and consent fee rebates if historic sites are protected, and financial assistance and advice to assist protection.

### Protection of sites

Once historic sites are identified, we must then decide what level of protection is appropriate.

- All archaeological sites are currently protected by HPAct, however other historic sites, such as buildings or significant areas are not automatically protected.
- District Plans can protect heritage sites that are listed in the Plan. Rules can restrict earthworks, subdivision, or building on or near the sites, or allow them to occur with suitable conditions.
- Historic sites can be protected informally by landowners who choose to, this can be done in consultation with local Iwi and councils.

# Heritage

Theme sheet



The Wairarapa Coast is noted for its rugged beauty and isolation and is largely undeveloped; but it may not stay this way forever. You may have noticed that coastal sections are becoming sought after and property values are soaring. This development may have some positive spin-offs for the Wairarapa but could equally have negative implications for the character of our coast and how we enjoy it if not managed well.

The development of a Wairarapa Coastal Strategy will enable the community to come up with a management approach to retain the special qualities of the coast we value.

This theme sheet contains information on some of the issues facing our coast, and outlines some of the options for dealing with those issues. The issues and options are a mixture of technical information and views of the community. We want to know what you think the major issues are, and how you think they should be managed.

Your comments will be used to help develop a draft strategy that will be released for further comment mid-year.

This theme sheet contains a summary of some of the information contained in the 'Heritage' technical report.

If you are interested in finding out more information about heritage on the Wairarapa Coast, this report can be read at all Wairarapa councils, Iwi offices and libraries.

### A Rich Heritage

The Wairarapa Coast has a rich history, both Maori and New Zealand European and has had some form of occupation, albeit discontinuously for the past 1000 years.



Kupe's Sail,  
Palliser Bay

The southern coastline is referred to in mythology as a significant settlement of Kupe, recognised as the first Maori to journey to Aotearoa. Archaeological investigations recognise sites along the southern coastline as being some of the oldest in New Zealand.

The New Zealand Archaeological Association records 295 archaeological sites along the coast, however the lack of recorded sites in some areas is more likely to be an "absence of information as opposed to information of absence". European heritage sites are more limited, comprising a few homesteads, shipwrecks and lighthouses.

Locations which were settled in the past are still desirable for settlement today, which means that the most important historical areas are most at risk from land use changes.

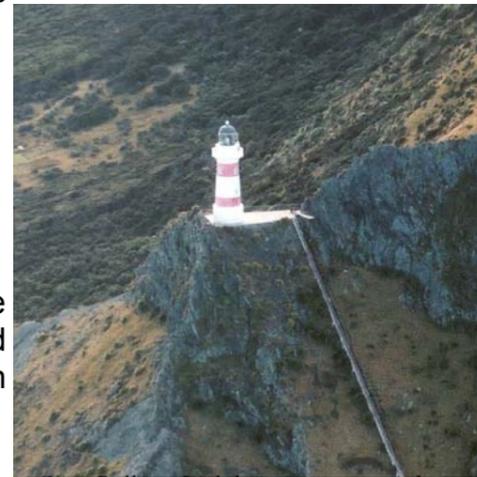
# What is coastal heritage and why is it important?



*Waikekeno Stonewall complex, Wairarapa Coast. Kevin Jones, Department of Conservation, 2000*

Coastal heritage includes areas associated with Maori mythology, Maori settlement and occupation, and European settlement sites, homesteads, lighthouses and shipwrecks. The Wairarapa Coast contains some of the oldest known archaeological sites in the country.

Heritage in New Zealand is primarily protected by the New Zealand Historic Places Act (1993) (HPAct). The Act recognises that historic places have lasting value and provide evidence of the origins of New Zealand society. Permission is required for any activity that may modify, damage or destroy an archaeological site, whether that site was previously recorded or not.



*Cape Palliser Lighthouse, commenced operating in 1897 and significantly reduced ship wrecks in Palliser Bay*

The Resource Management Act also requires us to have regard to the protection of the heritage value of sites and buildings, and to provide for the relationship of Maori with waahi tapu and other taonga.

Heritage, whether it be an early archaeological site, or historic homestead or lighthouse, has the ability to teach us about our past.

## Not all heritage is the same...

There are many different types of historical sites. Two examples are shown in the photographs on this page. Some have archaeological value, for example middens tell us how people lived many years ago. Some sites have a historical or cultural importance, for example a historic homestead or the site of significant birth or burial.

In some cases it may be adequate to investigate and record a site before it makes way for land use change. In other cases it may be most appropriate for the historic place or object to remain unchanged and protected. We must decide what is most important, and what is the best way to protect it.

## Heritage in District Plans

It is through District Plans that most people have dealings with controls on activities which affect heritage. It is also at this level that there is the greatest potential for guiding heritage protection.

The New Zealand Archaeological Association identifies over 200 archaeological sites on the Wairarapa Coast. Most of these sites are not identified or protected in the District Plans, but are protected by the HPAct.

# What are the issues affecting heritage?

## *The Issues*

### Lack of complete information

The lack of identified heritage sites in an area is often a reflection of a lack of investigation in those areas rather than an actual lack of sites. This threat is compounded when a lack of information leads to inadequate protection of heritage from land use changes.

Another concern is if people assume that an identified site indicates that there are no sites nearby. In reality the location of one site often implies that related sites are in the vicinity. All known sites should be treated as an alert to other possible sites in the area.

If key heritage sites are to be protected, then good information on its location, importance and type is essential.

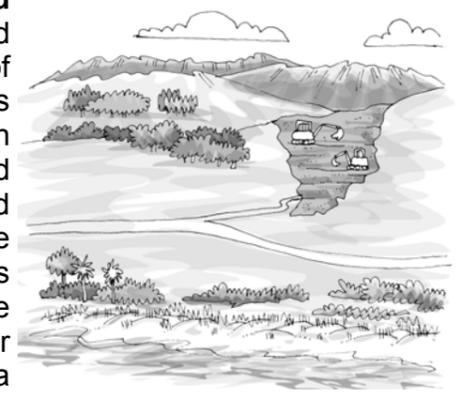
**Subdivision and development** pose a major threat to loss of cultural heritage. In the recent past subdivisions have begun to appear in an ad hoc and sporadic manner along the Wairarapa Coast outside of traditional community settlements. Subdivision of coastal properties and subsequent erection of dwellings may destroy cultural or archaeological sites.

The nature of the change in land use from agricultural to housing and development results in permanent structural damage to the landscape and possible archaeological sites beneath.

The likelihood of disturbance is increased because early Maori settlements were based around the same features which are desirable for development today, such as; flat land, access inland, access to good fishing grounds, locations near freshwater, and scenic/strategic views.

This threat is compounded by the lack of good information on the location and importance of sites, meaning that often new historical investigations or a precautionary approach are the best options.

**Earthworks and modification** to coastal land can result in destruction of cultural heritage. Earthworks on private land are often permitted activities, and because of the lack of good information on heritage, the loss or modification goes unnoticed. In other cases the change is more obvious, for example earthworks on a pallsided hill.



In the future there may also be the threat of quarries along the coastal area. They have the potential to destroy or modify archaeological sites.

The **loss of historic buildings** due to a downturn in use and the higher cost of maintenance are a real threat to built heritage.

This issue has been at the forefront of late with the sale of prominent homesteads in the Wairarapa and their relocation to other places within and out of the district. This threat results in the loss of historic buildings.

While this is not a large issue on the Wairarapa Coast due to the limited number of historic buildings, should even one or two buildings be lost this would represent a significant proportion of the existing built heritage.