



Taumatawhana Pa Heritage Assessment



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Cover Image: Eastern pa at Taumatawhana.

Site Overview

The twin pa known as Taumatawhana are located at the eastern edge of the 375ha Te Ramanuka Conservation Area (Conservation Unit N03006) on the western side of the Aupouri Peninsula. The conservation area is 4km north of Ngataki between Pukenui and Ta Kao (Figure 1). The 375ha un-gazetted Conservation Area is administered by the Kaitaia Area Office of the Department of Conservation. It extends three and half kilometres south west from the Taumatawhana Pa to the Aupouri Forest and includes pockets of pasture amongst regenerating scrub with swamps and dune lakes in the low lying areas.

There is no formed access to the pa but they may be reached by walking south from Onepu Block Road via the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area through mature kanuka scrub. DOC access is currently by agreement with the neighbouring landowner, currently the Ngati Kuri Trust Board. There is currently little or no public visitation to the pa. There is no regular monitoring or maintenance undertaken on the pa at the present time by DOC or other parties.

A map of the Taumatawhana Pa and the neighbouring prehistoric drainage/gardening system has been produced by geo-referencing overlaying archaeological site maps in a Geographic Information System; the location of features is approximate only but provides a picture of the archaeological features in the context of the surrounding landscape (Figure 1). The area covered by the pa is approximately 3.5ha.

History Description

The area around Taumatawhana was settled as early as the 13th century on the basis of pollen cores from the swamps indicating human-induced disturbance to forest vegetation patterns. By the late prehistoric or early protohistoric period an extensive 4ha gardening system had been established, defined by a network of drainage ditches across the valley north of the pa.

According to Rikihana Etana of Te Aupouri, the larger pa at Taumatawhana or Tomoatawhana was the pa of Te Aupouri Chief Te Ihupango Tupuni, whose father Te Ikanui was one of the progenitors of the tribe. Te Ihupango was well travelled, having been to Sydney and returning with muskets, swords and axes (one of the axes remains in the possession of the tribe today, Rikihana pers. comm. to the Department of Lands and Survey). However V. Gregory recorded that Kaumatua N. Conrad was told by his father that it was built by Mokohorea of Ngati Kuri possibly 500-600 years ago and was later taken over and occupied by Te Ihupango (Coster 1984). There is no specific information for the smaller pa although Maingay (1991) notes that the features on the smaller pa are not in as good condition as the larger pa, suggesting that the smaller pa was constructed earlier.

In 1824¹ Te Ihupango Tupuni of Te Aupouri took part in the battle between Te Aupouri and Ngapuhi, Te Rarawa and Ngati Kahu, under Hongi Hika of Ngapuhi and Nopera Panakaraeo of Te Rarawa at Hukatere Hill on 90 Mile Beach. Te Aupouri were outnumbered and retreated east to Houhoura and then north to the centre of their rohe fighting a number of rear-guard actions. Following the defeat of Te Aupouri at Hukatere, Te Ihupango retreated to Taumatawhana where

¹ Crosby (1999: 150-153) puts the battle in this year; Metge (2002) notes tribal experts putting it one to two years later.

he may have committed suicide upon learning his wife had not survived the battle (although it is unknown if any battle was fought over the pa itself). He was originally buried at Taumatawhana but according to Rikihana Etawa his remains were later uplifted and reburied at Te Kao.

Te Aupouri had originally come to the area from further south. They were first known as Ngati Ruanui, having originally landed at the Hokianga on the Mamari canoe to settle on the north shore of the harbour, and ultimately extending to Whangape. After coming into conflict with people already resident at Whangape and Mitimiti, a series of tragic events led to the iwi taking on the name of Te Aupouri and moving north, via Herekino, Ahipara, and Pukepoto, to Te Kao. Here they were given the Pa Tawhitirahi (Te Kao Pa) by their Ngai Takoto relatives, and Te Kao, named after the local process used to dry and preserve kumara, is still the heart of Te Aupouri (Cloher 2002).

The area around Taumatawhana was originally reserved for Maori as part of the Muriwhenua South Crown land purchase of approximately 87,000 acres, in 1858. The Houhora Block consisted of 7710 acres and it was subsequently sold in 1866, one year after private land sales started again in 1865. The Muriwhenua Land Report (1997) issued by the Waitangi Tribunal suggests that arrangements to sell the land had been organised in advance as titles were investigated in 1865 and conveyed in 1866. The survey and court costs were probably covered by the traders purchasing the land as Maori generally didn't have the money to investigate title to their own lands. The Houhora Block reserve was sold to the gum traders Ludolph and Henry Subritzky for £550 and the Maori resident at the settlement at Houhora no longer had a legal interest in the land and moved on. The Subritzky and Evans families came to control most aspects of life and industry between Te Kao and Awanui for the next hundred years (Waitangi Tribunal 2007).

A review of historic survey plans provides a series of snapshots of the land use history of the area in the late 19th and early 20th century. The original survey is SO 948 (ca.1858) associated with the Crown purchase and shows nothing of note in the vicinity of Taumatawhana. SO 8508G shows nothing but a rough dray track passing by the vicinity of the pa.

Fabric Description

The Taumatawhana Pa were originally recorded as a single site, N03/1 by S. Bartlett in 1966, based on a two hour site visit and the production of sketch maps from tracing over aerial photography of the site (Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 8, Figure 13). S. Bartlett also provided a detailed written description of the pa and the traditional history as provided by Rikihana Etawa, secretary of the Trust Board at the time. The site was revisited in 1969 by staff and students of the University of Auckland Anthropology Department who mapped the two pa (Figure 9-Figure 14) and undertook a small test excavation on the western pa (Davidson 1982).

The site consists of two pa, separated by approximately 170m. The larger western pa has steep slopes on three sides and curved terraces rising to two tihi or summit platforms, with a three metre scarp between the upper terracing and the tihi; the tihi themselves were originally described as having banks around the edges. Midden and oven stones were visible on the terraces where soil had been disturbed, some of which was still visible when the pa were revisited in 2011 as part of this assessment. To the north of the northern tihi, a ditch cuts off the pa from the ridgeline which runs to the west; during the 2011 visit a possible gun-fighting traverse/rifle

pit was noted in the ditch immediately east of the raised path which provides access over the ditch.

The slightly smaller pa to the east consists of two tihi surrounded by a large terrace on all four sides, with a single pit recorded between the tihi. A shallow ditch runs the length of the terrace on its western edge, while a smaller ditch feature divides the eastern side of the pa from the ridge line to the east. The tops of both tihi are encircled by a low bank.

When the pa were originally recorded they were under grass. Since that time bush has been allowed to regenerate across the site. Both pa are currently in regenerating manuka/kanuka scrub and weeds, with some large wattles also present. The narrow ridgeline between the pa which is in private ownership is in pasture. Access under the manuka canopy is relatively easy across both sites, with the exception of the northern platform and the terrace between it and the southern platform on the western pa, which is in thick exotic weeds.

At the time of original recording the site was owned by the Te Aupouri Maori Trust Board; as the surrounding land of the Onepu Block was being developed for farming the Trust Board asked the Lands and Survey Department to take over management of the pa and protect it from development. It took almost 15 years of lobbying before the Department decided to gazette the pa in 1978. In 1984 Lands and Survey archaeologist J. Coster re-recorded the eastern pa as a second separate site, N03/609.

The pa is associated with a number of sites nearby, including N03/599, a 5ha system of drainage ditches to the north of the pa originally recorded by I. Barber in 1983 and revisited that same year by J. Coster and I. Lawlor. The site was described extensively in Barber's 1984 MA thesis. The system consisted of ditches 0.5-1m wide and 0.2-0.4m deep and up to 100m long, in a grid system dividing the flat valley floor into a series of rectangular plots. When originally recorded the site was in good condition although it had been modified by the construction of three modern drainage ditches, and subject to ongoing stock trampling. J. Maingay, J. Robinson, A., Slocombe and V. Hensley undertook a plane table and alidade survey of the system in 1992. When it was revisited in 2005, A. Dodd noted that most of the site had been destroyed and the remaining intact portion was due to be developed as an avocado orchard.

During the same visit, A. Dodd (2005) also recorded a midden, N03/807 on the boundary between the western side of the western pa and the neighbouring pasture which is part of the avocado orchard, above the large drain. The site consisted of a deflated and largely destroyed midden of pipi shell exposed over a 20 x 5m area during the removal of vegetation prior to planting the boundary with pines. Dodd could not identify any associated subsurface deposit by probing and suggested the site was largely destroyed. The site is probably associated with the use or occupation of the ridgeline between the two pa.

Another site exists on the Conservation Area to the north of the pa at a distance of approximately 700m. N03/824 is a midden recorded by S. Hawkins (2007) during a survey of Onepu Block Road. It consisted of a 30cm long, 5cm thick midden deposit in a cattle track along the ridgeline immediately south of Onepu Block Road. The midden included whole and fragmentary pipi and charcoal, and was associated with a possible 10-15m wide level platform immediately south of the exposure. The remainder of the Conservation Area has not been surveyed but other archaeological sites can be expected to exist in the area.



Figure 1: Taumatawhana Pa and neighbouring gardening system.

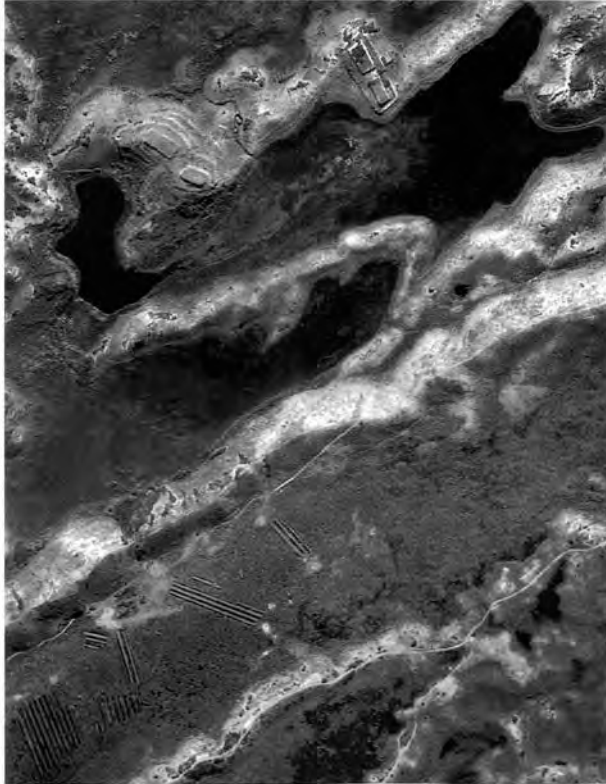


Figure 2. Taumatawhana Pa in 1951. The parallel ditches to the south of the pa are from gum digging.

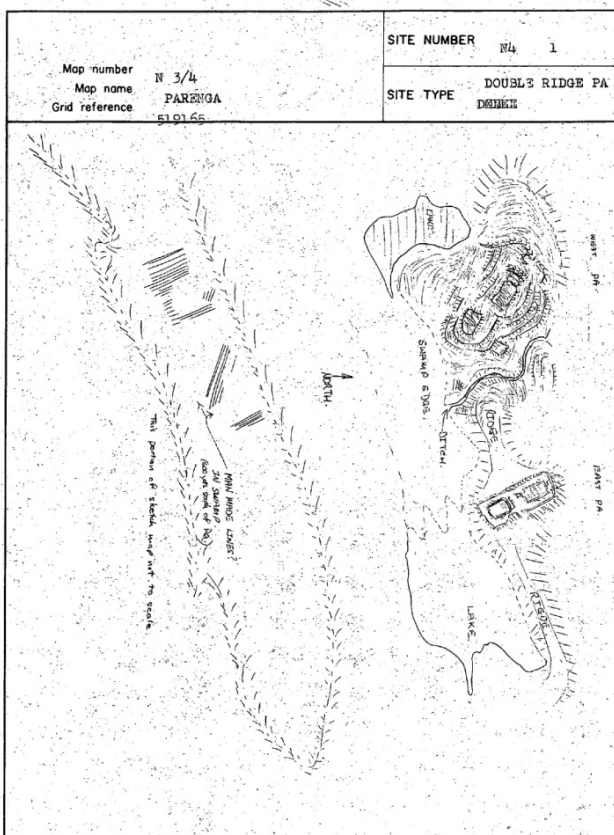


Figure 3: Taumatawhana Pa, based on tracing 1951 aerial (Bartlett 1966).



Figure 4: Eastern pa.



Figure 5: Defensive bank and scarp with lower terrace on the southern side of the south platform.



Figure 6: Western terrace below southern platform.

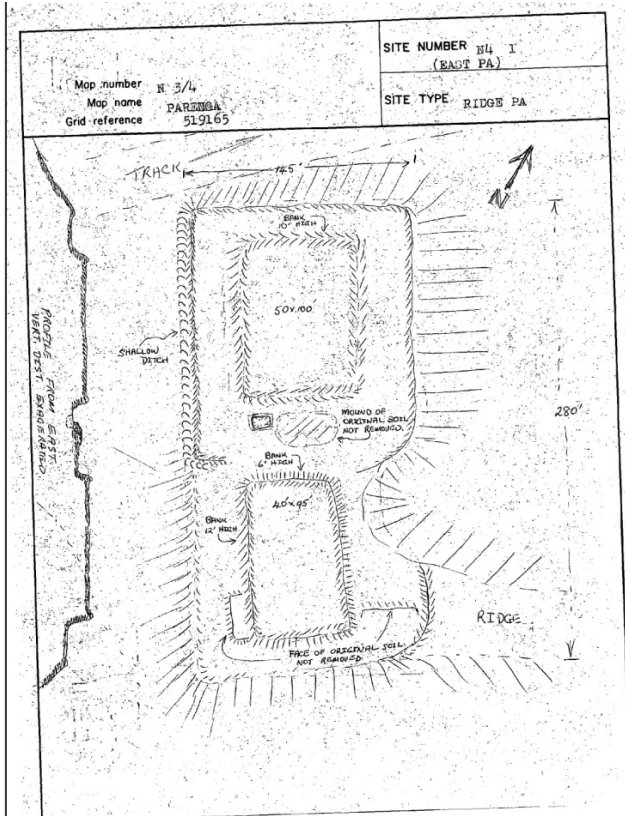


Figure 7: Sketch of Eastern Pa (Bartlett 1966).

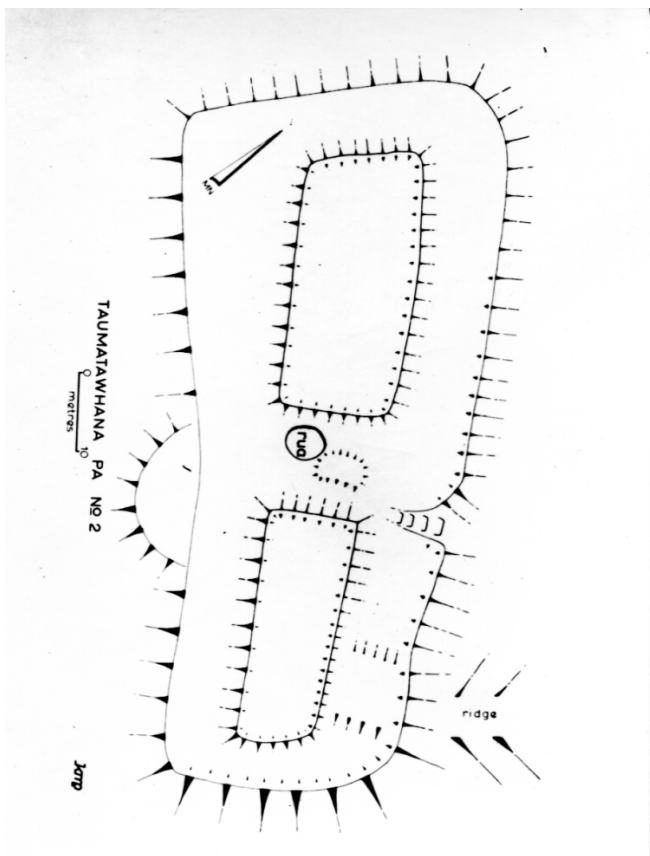


Figure 8: Plane table map of pa (Irwin 1969).



Figure 9: Western pa.



Figure 10: Looking south towards southern platform from northern platform on the western pa.



Figure 11: Defensive ditch with possible gun fighting modifications, north side of western pa.

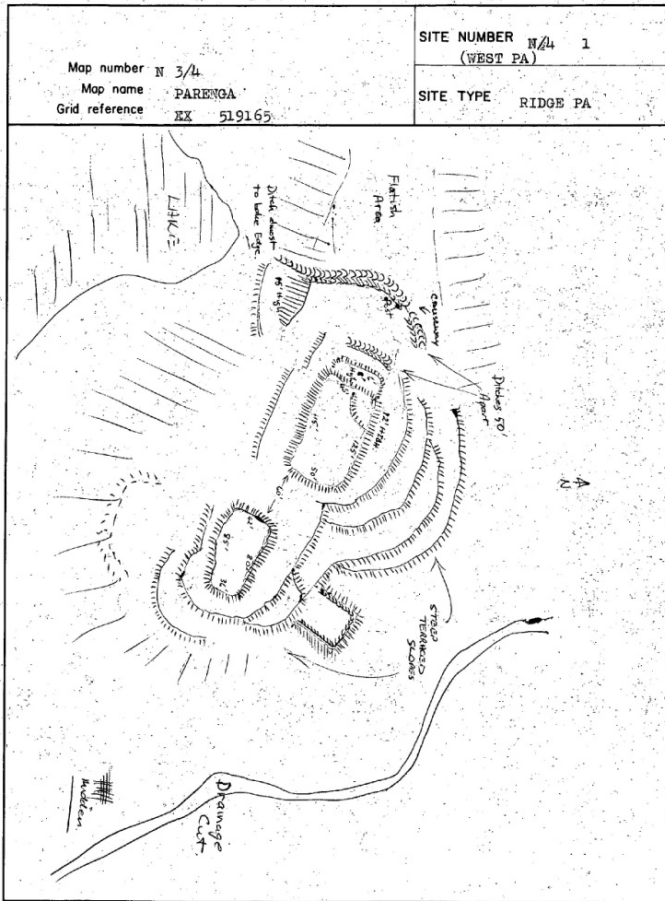


Figure 12: Sketch of western pa (Bartlett 1965).

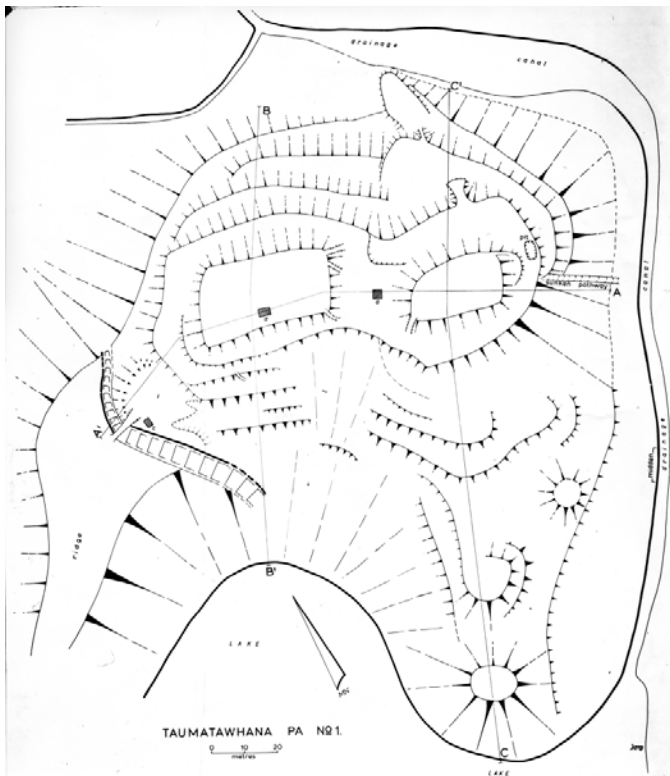


Figure 13: Plane table and alidade map of pa (Irwin 1969).



Figure 14: Possible remnant of gardening system to the north of the pa (upper middle of frame between swampy ground and modern drain).

Cultural Connections

The site is associated with the Te Aupouri and Ngati Kuri Iwi.

National Context Sources

There is no national context source available in order to provide a comprehensive basis for assessing the national (representative) significance of this site. However general references for pa include Davidson (1982, 1984) and area studies of pa in the upper North Island including Irwin (1985) and Sutton (1993, 1994) and Sutton, Furey and Marshall (2003). While more than 6000 pa are recorded in New Zealand with the largest number recorded in Northland, Taumatawhana is a very rare example of both a double pa following the same general design, and of a ‘sand pa’.

I. Barber describes the Taumatawhana drains in detail in his 1984 thesis along with other similar systems including the Motutangi system south of Pukenui where he undertook detailed study. Furey (2006) provides an overview of prehistoric Maori gardening, and notes that:

“The large complexes of parallel and intersecting ditches on flat, poorly drained soils, such as at Oruru, Awanui, Motutangi and Taumatawhana, are uncommon elsewhere in the country. Similar systems are reported from the Dargaville area and possibly at Waipu. The system at Motutangi covered 47 ha, and that at Awanui c. 125 ha, representing many kilometres of ditch length (Barber 1982, 1989a). The latter has been largely destroyed.”

Historic Significance

Taumatawhana is somewhat rare for a pa site in having a known history and strong associations with a particular ancestor, Chief Te Ihupango Tupuni of Te Aupouri. The history of the pa is intimately tied to the growing power of Ngapuhi of the Bay of Islands in the early 19th century and the intertribal conflict as that iwi sought revenge against neighbouring iwi for historic grievances. In this case the site is particularly associated with the battle at Hukatere Hill between Te Aupouri and Hongi Hika of Ngapuhi and Nopera Panaekoro of Te Rarawa.

Fabric Significance

Taumatawhana is a rare example of a double pa. The pa is also one of the few examples of a 'sand pa', the only others recorded being Muiata Pa, two others in the Motutangi swamp south of Pukenui, and another near the Waipu River south of Whangarei. The pa are in relatively good condition, having been fenced and retired from grazing for more than thirty years and with little or no visitation by members of the public. Substantial natural re-vegetation has occurred across the sites, no doubt damaging subsurface features but the pa are relatively stable under a maturing canopy and the gross morphology of the pa will remain. The same cannot be said for the surrounding archaeological landscape. The midden site between the pa is largely destroyed by land management practices in that area, as is all or most of the neighbouring prehistoric drainage system. to the north of the pa.

Cultural Significance

Taumatawhana is of cultural significance to Te Aupouri and Ngati Kuri.

Management Recommendations

Taumatawhana does not require much in the way of active management. It has been retired from grazing and is fully fenced and receives few visitors.

Monitoring

Yearly monitoring visits should be paid to the site to check the fencing is in good order and stock or other pests are not impacting on the site, and to check vegetation.

Vegetation Management

Wattles and other weed species should be removed from the pa sites, with the quick growing and large wattles being the greatest threat. It may be possible to clear the weeds on the northern platform and the terrace between it and the southern platform and keep this remnant clear as there is no native canopy established in that area yet. The manuka on the pa is unlikely to get much larger or cause much damage by way of tree fall as dead trees tend to be caught by their neighbours and then rot down. It is possible that larger species on the edge of scarps may cause more damage but alternatively they may hold the sandy soil together; this should be monitored and specimens in these areas removed if they become a problem.

Landscape Management/Access/Advocacy

A land swap, boundary adjustment, easement or similar should be investigated with the new owners of the neighbouring private land, the Ngati Kuri Trust Board, with the aim of providing legal/public access to the eastern pa. Ideally this should include the top of the ridgeline as it is likely that occupation extended over this area based on reported finds in 1969 and 2005, although the simplest solution would be via the narrow strip of private land between the eastern pa and the Conservation Area.

The Trust Board should also be made aware of the possible remnant gardening system immediately north of the pa and its high level of significance. To facilitate this, the plane table and alidade survey of the drains should be finalised, perhaps by large-format scanning of the original pencil and mylar map and geo-referencing in a GIS system over current aerial/cadastral/other data. This should then be ground checked to see what features, if any, remain

A track could be marked from Onepu Block Road and DOC may consider making this tractor/atv accessible in the case of access over the private land being prevented in the future.

Information

There is no detailed information about Taumatawhana available on the internet. This Heritage Assessment and other public documents should be made available on the DOC website.

Management Chronology

- 1961 Onepu Block taken over by Department of Lands and Survey for farm development
- 1960s Ditch between pa deepened to drain lake; human remains found in nearby sand hills during development work.
- 1965 Te Aupouri Trust Board asks the Maori Affairs Department and NZHPT for support in their request to the Department of Lands and Survey to protect the pa.
- 1966 Taumatawhana is recorded as an archaeological site.
- 1969 More modifications to the drain and occupation evidence in the form of obsidian flakes and other material exposed on the ridge between the pa, and wooden artefacts recovered from the drain. Eastern pa is mapped by staff and students from University of Auckland led by K. Peters. Test excavations are undertaken on the western pa, with three squares opened up. Findings included pits, postholes and multiple stages of occupation/changes to the defences. Western pa is mapped by G. Irwin. D. Ogle, NZ Forest Service, notes gardening system to the north of the pa. This work is assisted by the Mangonui County Archaeological Society.
- 1970 J. Davidson visits site and recommends both pa and the lake edge be included within one historic reserve.
- 1978 Lands and Survey decide to declare the site a historic reserve.

- 1981 The pa are surveyed separately with no provision for public access and Lands and Survey Department archaeologist J. Coster visits the pa with S. and D. Bartlett and notes problems with boundaries. A decision is made to link them with a Right of Way. Neighbouring farm is settled by D. and S. Wells.
- 1983 Right of Way agreed to; gardening system recorded by J. Coster and I. Lawlor and studied by I. Barber for post-graduate research.
- 1984 J. Coster produces *Taumatawhana Paa Historic Reserve - Preliminary Management Assessment* report as part of Onepu Study Area Management Plan. Coster emphasised the relocation of boundaries to include the known features, including the gardening system. The management plan was never authorised or implemented however D. Wells the farm manager largely followed Coster's recommendations and avoided heavy stocking of the garden system.
- 1987 Management of the pa passes over to the newly established Department of Conservation.
- 1991 J. Maingay prepares *Proposals for a Historic Reserve at Onepu* report.
- 1992 J. Maingay, J. Robinson, A. Slocombe and V. Hensley undertake plane table and alidade survey of the garden system.
- ~1995 Boundary around the eastern pa is re-surveyed so as to include the entire pa.
- ~2000 HAMS costed maintenance and upgrade schedule produced for Taumatawhana.
- 2005 Farm to the north and east of the pa is converted to avocado orchard
- 2005 Concerns expressed about the effects on Taumatawhana and surrounding feature by lowering lake water levels due to water take for neighbouring orchards.
- ~2006 Last remnant of drainage system under cultivation to the north of the pa.

Management Documentation

Key management documents are Coster (1984), Maingay (1981), and the HAMS document (DOC Staff 2000), copies of which are held in the Kaitaia Area Office.

Sources

Files (Closed)

Maori land and survey liens - Onepu Development Scheme. Archives NZ. Agency ZACC Series 1109 Box 1788a Record 20/1286

Taumatawhana Historic Reserve (Onepu). 1969-1986. Archives NZ, Auckland. Archives NZ reference Agency BBEE Series 15336 Box 258 / d Record 8/4/38

Lands and Survey Files 4/1003, 4/1003/4, 8/4/289. Possibly held by DOC Northland Conservancy or Whangarei Area Office.

Files (Open)

Te Ramanuka. PAA-01-04-08. DOC Kaitaia Area Office (Missing.)

Taumatawhana Drains map, 1992. Un-inked draft plane table and alidade map (pencil on mylar) of N03/599 surveyed by J. Maingay, J. Robinson, A. Slocombe, and V. Hensley. Historic maps store, DOC Whangarei Area Office.

Taumatawhana. Historic Technical Support Officer files, DOC Whangarei Area Office.

Site Records

N03/1 (N3 and 4/1). NZAA Northland Site Record File, DOC Northland Conservancy Office².

N03/4. NZAA Northland Site Record File, DOC Northland Conservancy Office.

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² The original SRF in the Northland file contains much more information than the ArchSite version.

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