

**HISTORY OF HUMAN
OCCUPATION AND
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**AUCKLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL
WHAKANEWHA REGIONAL PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

1996

Pages 32 - 43

**(Please note that this plan has been superseded by the
Auckland Regional Parks Management Plan 2002)**

The foreshore has been modified by roads and tracks, and partial clearing and grassing of the area. Formation of the tracks has caused one depression to pond. To the south, shellbanks have been cleared and flattened and sown with rough pasture. As cattle have had access to the area, all of the back beach has been trampled.

The main shoreline dune is the only unmodified feature of the beach. The dune is colonised by gorse, kikuyu grass, rushes and weeds. The back face of the dune supports patches of glasswort (*Sarcocornia quinqueflora*), while wet areas are dominated by sea rush (*Juncus effusus*, *Juncus gregiflorus*), glasswort and small clumps of *Carex virgata* and *Cyperus ustulatus*.

The rocky intertidal platform on the western headland of the beach shows simple zonation from Neptune's necklace seaweed (*Hormosira banksii*) and occasional coralline turf (*Corallina officinalis*) at low tide mark to pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*), barnacles (*Chamaesipho columna*) and small black mussels (*Xenostrobus pulex*) near the high tide mark. Filter feeders such as catseye snails (*Turbo smaragda*), topshells (*Melagraphia aethiops*) and blue fan worms (*Pomatoceros cariniferus*) are common.

The intertidal protected sand beach is the most diverse feature of the foreshore. Large cockle beds (*Austrovenus stutchburyi*) associated with the thin white bivalve (*Tellina liliana*), and the tiny anenome (*Anthopleura aureoradiata*) occur at the western and eastern ends of the beach. Pipi (*Paphies australis*) and cockles occur in patches across the flats.

Mud snails (*Amphibola crenata*), mud crabs (*Helice crassa*), snapping shrimps (*Alpheus* sp.), the thin white bivalve, tube-building worm (*Owenia fusiformis*) and venus shell (*Dosinia subrosea*), leave characteristic trails, burrows and siphon marks on the sand surface. The sand shrimp (*Pontophilus australis*) lies perfectly camouflaged against the sand in standing sheets of water. The whelks (*Cominella adspersa*, *Cominella glandiformis*) scavenge on cockles and other dead animals. Further offshore, the sand dollar (*Fellaster zelandiae*) occurs, with the heart urchin (*Echinocardium cordatum*) occurring in muddier sediments.

HISTORY OF HUMAN OCCUPATION

The human history of the Whakanewha Regional Park, which spans about one thousand years, falls into three distinct periods:

- * perhaps some eight centuries of exclusive Maori occupation, characterised by intermittent and seasonal settlement, ending in 1839;
- * shared Maori-European occupation from 1839-1878; and
- * European ownership since about 1878, involving pastoral farming.

Obviously, this history is inextricably involved with that of Waiheke Island as a whole, Auckland and Hauraki. The strategic location of Whakanewha, alongside the Tamaki Strait, ensured that whoever settled there would never be immune to events within the wider region.

For this waterway was vitally important to both Maori and early Europeans because of the direct passage it offers between the Hauraki Gulf and the Waitemata Harbour, and also the Tamaki River with its historic portages to the Manukau Harbour.

Pre-European Maori Settlement

The First Settlers

It is likely that Whakanewha was first settled by eastern Polynesian ancestors of the Maori about one thousand years ago. 'Archaic' sites have been excavated by archaeologists on neighbouring Ponui and Motutapu Islands, their age corroborated by radio carbon dating. Very old sites on the northern shores of Waiheke Island will in all probability prove to be contemporaneous with these, once such scientific work has been undertaken there also. The southern shores of the island too were probably settled at this early time, although its beaches of shingle and shell are unlikely to yield comparable sites, their constant movement not conducive to the preservation of the artefactual record. Unfortunately, archaeological work on Waiheke to date has not extended beyond site recording and mapping,¹ with the exception of a limited investigation into a Maori 'made soil' at Rocky Bay.²

Whakanewha in its pristine state was well endowed with the resources needed to sustain Maori society. Large beds of cockles, mussels and pipis must have occupied its shallow foreshore, with abundant fish resources further out in the deep water. The Whakanewha stream fed by springs at the top of the catchment, its upper course known today as the Cascades, was a plentiful source of fresh water. The Poukaraka wetland was home to many species of waders and was a handy source of flax and raupo, while the forest behind the beach supported other bird life in similar profusion. The well-drained beach flats were most suitable for gardening. If large totara and kauri trees suitable for canoe building were not available close to the water at Whakanewha itself, they certainly were only a short distance eastwards, at Awaawaroa or Te Matuku Bays.

Early Migrations

The Maori history of Whakanewha is obviously interrelated with that of the entire Hauraki Gulf, and at key times even with developments in regions well beyond. It is a history dominated by successive migrations, conquests and occupations over many centuries.

Sadly, there is no information on its early phases, beyond that supplied to pioneer ethnographer George Graham by Ngati Paoa elders in the 1920s - which qualifies more as tribal legend than as historical fact.³ Te Uri Karaka were the first human inhabitants of Waiheke and presumably of Whakanewha, according to their account. Yet it seems that these informants had simply projected the origins on Waiheke of their own sub-tribe, Te Uri Karaka, back to 'archaic' times - when in fact these extend only back to the eighteenth century. To continue their narrative, then the people of Toi, arrived in the Gulf, at first to have peaceful relations with Te Uri Karaka, until the latter killed one of their chiefs, Maeaea. Taking their revenge, the people of Toi fitted Te Uri Karaka, then when they were off their guard ensnared them with a fishing net, spearing them in great number. This event took place at the bay adjacent to Whakanewha (Woodside Bay), conferring upon it the name, Rore Amaeaea, 'The trap of Maeaea'. Toi's people then became dominant on Waiheke.

The Arawa (Ngati Huarere) Period

Waiheke features in the stories of the Tainui and Arawa canoes, on their almost simultaneous arrival in Aotearoa from the legendary Hawaiki, probably in the fourteenth century. The Tainui made landfall a short distance away at Gannet Rock, off the north eastern tip of the island, to perform the uruuruwhenua ritual whereby its crew laid claim to the Gulf. At about the same time the Arawa made landfall on the island itself, at the Putiki inlet, directly to the north of Whakanewha, to make much needed repairs after the long voyage. After effecting these repairs, the Arawa continued around Cape Colville into the Bay of Plenty, making final landfall at Maketu. However, Kahu Matamamoe and Kura returned to settle at Putiki, so favourable had been the first impressions. They conferred their own names to geographical features of the area, as signatures of ownership: Rangihoua to the inlet and surrounding block, meaning 'The Day of Relashing'; Putiki o Kahu to the conical hill which Kahu fortified as his pa, meaning 'The topknot of Kahu'; and likewise Oakura and Okahuiti, respectively, to a bay and a wetland. So began several centuries of Arawa dominance on Waiheke, and presumably at Whakanewha (as well as on the Coromandel peninsula), that small vanguard having soon been joined by other kin, to become known in Hauraki as Ngati Huarere.

Kapetaua and the coming of the Hauraki Tribes

The only explicit reference to Whakanewha in the recorded traditional history is in connection with the attack on Putiki o Kahu (Rangihoua) by Kapetaua in about 1700. Pita Taurua, a Patukirikiri chief of Coromandel, recounted the story to the Native Land Court in 1865, in the course of asserting his claim to Rangihoua.⁴ Kapetaua, when a boy, was marooned on Te Tokaokapetaua (Bean Rock) in the Waitemata Harbour by his brother-in-law Tarakumukumu of Waiohua for stealing food from him. He was rescued by his sister and vowed to avenge this insult. When grown to manhood, he set about doing so, attacking and destroying the pa of his brother-in-law on the Auckland isthmus. The flight of some survivors to Putiki o Kahu, seeking refuge among relations of Ngati Huarere, then directed Kapetaua's attention to Waiheke. After landing at Whakanewha with 60 warriors, he proceeded alone to the summit pa where he found all the people assembled in the meeting house discussing the imminent danger he posed them. Announcing his presence by peering in and saying, 'Kapetaua is perhaps like me', he promptly barred the door and set fire to the building. All those inside perished. Kapetaua then settled at Putiki.

Meanwhile, at this time the Marutuahu (Hauraki) tribes were challenging and extinguishing the mana whenua of Ngati Huarere elsewhere on Waiheke and indeed throughout the Coromandel Peninsula. Then taking place was the great transition from Arawa to Tainui dominion in Hauraki, its origins in the decisions of Hotunui and later his son Marutuahu, descendants of Hoturoa of the Tainui canoe, to move from the Waikato to the Firth of Thames after about 1650. In the eighteenth century all of the Marutuahu tribes competed for interests on Waiheke, with Ngati Maru achieving a degree of overall ascendancy - judging from a reading of the Waiheke Land Court minute books of a century or so later. It was they, Ngati Maru, who then took up occupation of Whakanewha, although in all likelihood on a seasonal rather than a continuous basis. Hoterene Taipari of Ngati Maru was to trace, in the Land Court in 1866, his ancestral claim to Whakanewha back six generations, that is, to about 1700.

Archaeology of Whakanewha

Whakanewha contains many archaeological sites. The principal one is the bluff (headland) pa, fortified with a single transverse ditch. This pa would have been extremely difficult to defend, its long, easily-climbed lateral slopes requiring massive palisading to provide defence of any sort. One speculates that it was built principally to meet the exigencies of internal threats, that is, conflicts between hapu: the large summit pa, Putiki o Kahu, close-by, providing refuge in the event of threats from further afield. The Kapetaua story seems to bear this out, the people of Whakanewha and the other small coastal pa along this stretch of coast apparently moving there, once warned of his approach. There are three clusters of kumara pits on the bluff, two within the pa's defences. There is another cluster close to the south-eastern limit of the Regional Park. All of these testify to extensive cultivation of the adjacent flats.

For most of the time, when peace prevailed, the people of Whakanewha would have lived on the beach foreshore itself. Such a house site is to the north of the bluff and several large areas of midden on the flats to the south of the bluff and along the edge of the foreshore signify further temporary beach encampments. Over the years, Whakanewha has yielded many artefacts, including a greenstone tiki and much Mayor Island obsidian, convincing proof of inter-regional trading. Greywacke flakes associated with adze making may still be found on the beach.

Obvious questions are: From what period do these sites and artefacts date? To whose occupation are they testimony? Unfortunately, for the reasons already given, no more than tentative answers to these questions are presently possible. The pa probably dates from the time of Ngati Huarere occupation, 1500-1700, thereafter undergoing reconstruction by Ngati Maru in the eighteenth century. It was probably fortified for the last time shortly before 1821, the year of Hongi Hika's raids on Tamaki and Waiheke. It is unlikely to have been reoccupied when Ngati Paoa returned to Waiheke in the early 1830s, the need for such fortifications fast disappearing with the passing of inter-tribal warfare and the coming of Europeans. Much of the foreshore midden is probably the product of early and mid-nineteenth century occupation.

First European-Maori Contacts and Tribal Upheaval

The earliest hard evidence of European contact on Waiheke is the visit to Man O' War Bay in 1801 of a ship's boat from the Royal Admiral, a barque then loading kauri spars in the Firth. However, we do not know when Europeans first visited the Ngati Maru occupants of Whakanewha. The presence, from June 1820 to May 1821, of H.M.S. Coromandel off Waiau (Coromandel), where she was loading kauri spars, generated much European traffic in the Gulf, including visits to Waiheke and perhaps Whakanewha by the ship's timber purveyor. Also at this time, the colonial schooner Prince Regent sailed through the Tamaki Strait several times, twice bearing the Reverend Samuel Marsden as its special passenger.

In about 1815 relations between Ngati Maru and Ngati Paoa, on Waiheke and in the Firth, took a disastrous turn for the worse with the drowning off Manaia of the Ngati Paoa chief Rongomaurikura, whose body Ngati Maru were accused of eating. Subsequent warfare between the two tribes de-stabilised life on Waiheke and the Coromandel Peninsula for two

years before peace returned, assisted by the mediation of Marsden. Then in 1821-22, Nga Puhī under Hongi Hika descended upon Ngati Paoa at Tamaki and Ngati Maru at Te Totara (Thames), plus their communities on Waiheke, killing and enslaving great numbers of them and sending their survivors fleeing to refuges in the middle Waikato. The fires of occupation went out all over Waiheke, including Whakanewha. The entire Hauraki Gulf, along with the Auckland isthmus, was left virtually depopulated.

Ten years later in 1831 the Marutuahu tribes, pressured to leave the middle Waikato by Ngati Haua, returned to their ancestral lands in Hauraki. However, Ngati Maru hesitated to reoccupy Waiheke, reluctant to rekindle the old troubles arising from the death of Rongomaurikura. These circumstances were capitalised upon by Ngati Paoa who in the course of the 1830s established dominion on the island through occupation. It may even be said that they effected a land grab there. Mohi Te Harare of Ngati Paoa chose to live at Whakanewha. Whether only he and his people made use of Whakanewha from this time on, to the total exclusion of Ngati Maru, is unclear (Ngati Maru asserting to the contrary in the Land Court in 1866).

Maori-European Occupation 1839-1878

A Pre-Treaty Land Purchase

Waiheke Island became a busy stopover for European shipping long before the Treaty of Waitangi, on account of its location alongside northern waterways and supplies of kauri spars, fresh water and Maori-produced food. A substantial European presence was established ashore by the late 1830s, based on the trading, boatbuilding and timber activities of Thomas Maxwell at Man O' War Bay. Consequently, when Europeans looked to purchasing Maori land in advance of official settlement, Waiheke fell into the bracket of most favoured real-estate. Many of these purchases, to be known as 'old land claims', took place on Waiheke over the months straddling the Treaty, as land jobbers (speculators) from Sydney descended upon the Hauraki Gulf in the hope of buying land cheaply to on-sell at a great profit once British sovereignty was introduced.

One such purchase involved land at Whakanewha.⁶ On 14 December 1839 the chief Kote Huhu (spelling unreliable) of Ngati Maru sold Poukaraka, a part of Whakanewha estimated to be 400 acres in size, to John Foster of Sydney in return for 20 pairs of blankets, one 210lb cask of tobacco, four 25lb kegs of gunpowder, two single barrelled guns, plus a considerable quantity of iron tools and clothing. But a forboding oversight was the failure of Kote Huhu and Foster to acknowledge in the transaction the interests Ngati Paoa had in Whakanewha, which derived from their recent occupation. Poukaraka is a fine example of the type of block favoured by the first European land buyers on the island: one with an ample beach frontage, backed by flats suitable for cultivation, a permanent stream and a catchment clad with valuable timber. Meaning 'The Karaka Post', this name perhaps derives from a long-forgotten traditional story involving an ancient pou whenua (boundary post) or a whare post.

Mohi Te Harare of Ngati Paoa promptly took retaliatory action in the Maori accredited manner, burning to the ground the house (probably amounting to little more than a raupo hut) built by Foster, as muru or formal plunder, and expelling Te Huhu.⁷ He then took possession of the land, setting about occupying and gardening it at least seasonally.

Maori Agriculture into the Colonial Era

Later in the 1840s, Mohi's tenure at Whakanewha was formalised by his tribe, when Hori Te Ruinga Pokai, holder of supreme mana on Waiheke, partitioned the island among his fellow Ngati Paoa chiefs at their insistence. Two versions of how he did this, at a special gathering convened for the purpose at Te Huruhi, have come down to us. One has him holding up a piece of wood shaped like a fish, approximating that of Waiheke, and inviting the chiefs to choose their portions. The other has him holding up a blade of flax, off which he tore strands inviting them to name their respective strands. Mohi Te Harare chose Whakanewha.⁸

It is likely that he is the same 'Mohi' who features in the reminiscences of Lady Martin, wife of New Zealand's first Chief Justice, Sir William Martin. From her cottage at Judges Bay, she saw much of Waiheke's Maori traders, particularly Wiremu Hoete and his people from Putiki. After landing their produce at the Queen Street wharf, they often spent a night at Judges Bay, before continuing their return journey to Waiheke. Of Mohi she writes: '[For a time in the 1840s] he came to live altogether on our ground, only going now and then to cultivate on his own island On all fine days he rowed his boat to and from town.'⁹

Whakanewha of the 1840s and 50s presents a good example of an inner-Gulf Maori community engaged in the market economy of infant Auckland. A sketch map of Maori agriculture flanking the Tamaki Strait, drawn by Charles Heaphy in about 1860, shows four large areas under cultivation between Kaukarau (Rocky Bay) and Whakanewha, totalling perhaps some 20 acres (8 hectares).¹⁰ Potatoes, corn, pumpkins and melons were the principal crops. Wheat was also grown there, as elsewhere on Waiheke, probably to supply the flour mill owned and operated by Ngati Paoa at Rotopiro (south of Clevedon) in the 1850s. Grapes too were grown - a fact that makes Waiheke Maori of the 1840s and 1850s truly the founders of the island's modern grape growing industry.¹¹

It is clear from Anglican Church records that Whakanewha was home to a substantial Maori community at this time - along with Te Huruhi, Putiki, Man O' War Bay, Rarohara (Pie Melon Bay) and Owhanake. At least 20 Maori were baptised at Whakanewha either by the Reverend L. Kipling or the Reverend J.A. Wilson, between 1844 and 1859.¹² In his annual report for 1854 Wilson makes special reference to Whakanewha: 'It may be stated, that there has been a gradual improvement in a few of the native villages, and I may here mention Wakanewa, the East Huruhi [Man O' War Bay] and Rarawara [Pie Melon Bay].'¹³ Along with births and baptisms at Whakanewha, so too were there deaths and burials. 'My fire is burning on the land, my dead are buried there', Mohi asserted in the Land Court in 1866.

Settling the Pre-Treaty Purchase

Meanwhile Foster, dismayed by Mohi's actions in December 1839, had promptly sold his land at Poukaraka to Francis Hodgkinson and Michael Murnin, also of Sydney, who in turn sold to Samuel Wood. None of these subsequent owners, however, actually occupied the land. Consequently, these transactions conducted from afar in no way disturbed Maori life at Whakanewha. Indeed, Maori occupation of land long since alienated to absentee European owners was widespread on Waiheke in the 1840s to the 1860s. This situation worked against the Maori gaining a full appreciation of alienation, that it involved the complete loss of land for all time.

The Poukaraka 'old land claim' was heard twice by the Land Claims Commission, the judicial authority set up to investigate these pre-Treaty purchases. In 1843 Commissioner Edward Godfrey awarded the European claimants 400 acres. But this judgement was subsequently revoked by Governor Grey. In 1858 Commissioner Dillon Bell awarded S. A. Wood 187 acres (which after surveyed proved to be only 173 acres). Bell's task had been greatly simplified by the decision of Mohi Te Harare to withdraw his opposition to Wood's claim. But it would appear that still no European owner was prepared set foot on the land. Thereby Mohi's people were able to remain in undisturbed occupation of Whakanewha until the outbreak of the Waikato war in 1863, when they shifted to Hauraki (Thames).

Whakanewha and the Native Land Court

The era of the Native Land Court opened early on Waiheke Island. This Court was established in 1865 to convert customary Maori title into individualised English title as a means of settling Maori land disputes and of expediting the alienation of Maori land to Europeans. Prompted by settler clamour for the release of lands close to Auckland, the Court came directly to Waiheke and other Ngati Paoa lands at Orere and Kawakawa Bay. Te Hoterene Taipari of Ngati Maru lodged a claim to Whakanewha with the Court and had the block surveyed, as regulations required. The survey was not obstructed by Ngati Paoa, a sure indication that they were no longer in occupation.¹⁴ However, once Mohi Te Harare became aware of Taipari's actions, he lodged a counter-claim on behalf of Ngati Paoa. Taipari's claim was based on ancestry dating back six generations, as well as on occupation, while Mohi's was based on occupation since the 1830s.¹⁵ The judge was James Mackay, a man who had already acquired immense influence in Hauraki since his recent arrival from the South Island in early 1864. In characteristically decisive style, he persuaded the opposing claimants to agree out of Court to share the Crown grant for the 1510 acres of Whakanewha. This judgement was subsequently brought down by the Court on 13 December 1866.

Delivery of the Crown grant to Taipari and Te Harare was withheld until they had paid the survey costs of £75 to surveyor Edwin Davy, which they managed to do only on 30 April 1867. Then Taipari wasted no time selling off portions of Whakanewha. On 6 March 1868, he sold 130 acres at the north-western end (next to Rocky Bay) to Laughlin O'Brien, a member through marriage of the de Witte family of Putiki;¹⁶ and on 21 August 1868, 125 acres at the other end, Kauaroa Bay, to Joseph Hodgson, a squatter there since the 1850s.¹⁷ As absentee owners of Whakanewha, Te Harare and Taipari preferred to live at Thames, then a booming gold town since its founding in 1867. They were making no use of their 1255 acres

at Whakanewha. On the death of Mohi Te Harare in 1873, Pita Te Hangi succeeded to his interests in Whakanewha.

Squatting and the Careys

Meanwhile, the 173 acres of Poukaraka were also standing idle, the Crown grant holder, S.A. Wood, yet to take up occupation. It was one of many such blocks on Waiheke in the mid-nineteenth century, which forest covered and under transitional title or absentee ownership invited squatting. Single and even married men accompanied by their families simply landed on the beach fronting such a block, built a slab hut, then proceeded to cut firewood or better quality timber, arranging for its removal by cutter. All was done quite without authorisation. This is what happened at Whakanewha in the late 1860s. Arriving in Auckland in 1866, the Carey family squatted there for several years before taking possession in 1871 of land they had bought at Wairua (Carey Bay) on the north side of Waiheke.¹⁸ They were a large family: William, his wife Margaret and their six children - three sons and three daughters. There was no shortage of firewood (kanuka and manuka) at Whakanewha for William and his three sons to cut. The pioneer house site discovered on the Poukaraka flats by the Park's ranger, Andy Spence, in 1995 is almost certainly theirs.¹⁹ Sadly, all that remains of it today are scattered fragments of home-fired bricks, pottery, glass and china. (The location of this site needs to be secured and identified with signage). It is likely that the original hut of Foster, burned down in 1839, stood in the vicinity.

Much of Whakanewha was ready for pastoral useage by the late 1870s, already substantially cleared of timber. William Henry Kissling, cattle and sheep farmer of neighbouring Woodside Bay, was looking to expand. He bought from Taipari and Pita Te Hangi their remaining 1255 acres at Whakanewha, on 29 June 1878. He went on to purchase the 173 acres of Poukaraka on 15 August 1878. Whakanewha could now be systematically farmed, at last under unified title and with a resident owner.

The Rise and Fall of Pastoral Farming 1878-1995

The Ascendancy of Sheep Farming

By 1880 the era of sheep farming was already well underway on Waiheke, the wider Whakanewha area playing its full part. J. Hodgson was running 195 sheep at neighbouring Kauaroa Bay and C. Kissling 476 at Omaru (Woodside Bay) and Whakanewha.²⁰ By 1885 these numbers had increased to 251 for Hodgson, 1400 for Kissling (and B.G. Hotham his recently acquired business partner) and 560 for L. O'Brien at Wharetana. But they were small flocks compared with the 3,280 sheep run by Captain J.B. Kennedy of Putiki, who however had a much larger holding of some 5,000 acres.²¹ Impressive as these numbers may seem, the stocking rate per acre was not high, only about one sheep per acre, with the exception of the Hodgson (after 1897 the Watson) farm, of only 125 acres, which was achieving an impressive rate for Waiheke of close to two sheep per acre. Therefore the high reputation soon gained by Waiheke fleeces at the Auckland wool sales belied the no more than marginal pastoral land that was producing them. Peaking as early as 1885, sheep numbers on the island remained about constant until the 1930s when they began to decline.

ARCHAEOLOGY

(Detailed archaeological site records are available from the New Zealand Archaeological Association on file keeper, C/- Department of Conservation).

Seven archaeological sites have been recorded on the park, including shell scatters, midden, a hangi and a preform for an adze made of basalt. The pits and terraces recorded on the park were probably associated with a large pa recorded just north of the park boundary. The Whakanewha foreshore would have been extensively used by the Maori people of the pa to gather pipi, scallops and cockles.

Two houses once stood in the vicinity of the Poukaraka wetland. The first was built by John Foster in 1839 and lasted only a few months. The second was built in 1866 by the Carey family. A few bricks and china remain on the site.