

# **Matakitaki Pa**

## **Management Plan**

**Adopted May 2002**

**Waipa District Council**

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## Introduction

Matakitaki Pa lies on the northern edge of Pirongia township on the confluence of the Waipa River and Mangapiko Stream, at Grid reference NZMS 260 Sheet S15 - 032 554. It lies between the confluence of these waterways and the Hamilton - Pirongia Road at the bridge over the Mangapiko Stream. Recorded as site 515/2 in the New Zealand Archaeological Associations National site recording scheme.

The name "Matakitaki" is in many ways a misnomer, as the reserve consists of three distinct Pa sites collectively known as Matakitaki - "Puketutu" (sometimes referred to as Puketapu), "Tauranga-Kohia" (sometimes rendered as Tauranga Kohika or Taura Kohia) and the furthest west pa "Matakitaki". It seems likely that the Pa complex was originally the small Matakitaki Pa, and was expanded eastwards to encompass the other two Pa as the population increased.

The Pa complex is extensive and strategic, as it lies between the Waipa River and the Mangapiko Stream over a distance of circa 1000 metres around the edge of the Waipa River, 850 metres in a straight line and circa 1125 metres around the Mangapiko Stream.

The total area encompassed in this site is approximately 13.5 hectares including the river escarpments. The actual land able to be occupied was slightly over nine hectares. Of this total of 13.5 hectares, only 9.5 hectares is included in the Reserve, the balance having been alienated to private ownership or included in the legal road that transects the southern Pa on the site.

The land was formerly Crown land, part of the Waikato Raupatu Confiscations, held by the Department of Lands and Survey. In actual fact the land consists of two separate appellations. Part Allotment 513 Mangapiko Parish, and Part of Allotment 323 Mangapiko Parish.

Allotment 323 was part of the Waikato Raupatu Confiscations, but was "granted" to one "Hone Te One" subsequent to the confiscations. This section was purchased by the Crown in 1931 in accordance with Subsection 2 of Section 39 of the Public Reserves, Domains and National Parks Act 1928, and was added to the Pirongia Domain. The Title to the land was deposited in the Auckland Land Registry as Auckland Deed 4829.

In 1981, the balance of the land was added to the Pirongia Domain by Gazette 1981/346 and 1983/3387, now Pirongia Recreation Reserve. The administering body of Pirongia Recreation Reserve is Waipa District Council, by virtue of Order in Council, Gazette reference 1989/2472.

### **Physical description today:**

The Matakītaki Pa lies between the Waipa River and the Mangapiko Stream west of the Hamilton - Pirongia Road. It consists of two main terraces with steep escarpments lying towards the Waipa River and Mangapiko Stream. The eastern upper terraces consisting of the Tauranga-Kohia Pa and Puketutu Pa, and cover some 5.4 hectares.

This consists of 3.5 ha approx in Puketutu Pa and 1.5ha approx in the Tauranga-Kohia Pa. This is liveable area, lying on the terraces.

### **Puketutu Pa**

There was a ditch and bank at the extreme eastern end of Puketutu Pa which can only be partly seen on the edge of Orchard Lane. Another ditch and bank was located some 230 metres further west marking the end of this Pa.

The Puketutu Pa in total is modified by the presence of the farm and residential buildings on the private land in the north east of the terrace. In addition, on the reserve section there is an old hay barn in poor condition which lies against the Waipa River escarpment.

### **Tauranga Kohia Pa**

Tauranga-Kohia Pa was divided into two sections, approximately 1.2 ha on the upper terrace delineated by another ditch and bank, with a further .25 ha approx of slightly sloping ground between this and another ditch and bank which separated the higher terrace and associated escarpment from the lower riverine terrace. There is evidence of occupation still visible in the northern section of this Pa. This is in the form of pits, which could be whare sites or could be from food storage pits. This cannot be known definitively as no detailed archaeological work has ever been done on any of these sites.

### **Matakītaki Pa**

The riverine terrace is about 3.7 ha in area including a second small riverine terrace alongside the lower reaches of the Mangapiko Stream. This river terrace is subject to flooding, and has a slight depression in the centre which, no doubt, held water at times.

In the period of occupation of the Pa when most of the forest would still have been on the surrounding country, it is unlikely that the Waipa River would have flooded to the extremes it does today. More likely the river stayed high longer

but did not experience the extremes that occur today following the clearance of most of the forest cover from the river catchment.

The Matakitaki Pa fortifications were located on this lower riverine flat. The northern side of the lower flat was separated from the Mangapiko Stream by a long ridge which ran from the fourth defensive ditch and bank down almost to the confluence of the Mangapiko Stream and the Waipa River. The westerly section of this ridge was in the form of a long raised promontory on which a fortification was constructed. There was a ditch and bank on each end of this promontory. The steep sides of this promontory would have made it a ready fortress once the banks and edges were palisaded.

### **Matakitaki Pa in a strategic context:**

Matakitaki Pa lies in a strategic place on the confluence of the Waipa River and the Mangapiko Stream. It had an important role to play in the overall defence of the surrounding Hapu and, due to its location on the Waipa River, would no doubt have been a point of first contact with other parties, either friendly or otherwise.

The Waipa River was part of the transport for the Maori tribes of the area. It was also a source of food, particularly eels. No doubt mullet would also have made their way up the river at times too. There is no doubt that fixed eel traps would have been located on many of the minor tributaries of the river.

Perhaps the greatest value of the River, however, was as a spiritual resource for the inhabitants of not only Matakitaki Pa, but of the various satellite Pa located in the general vicinity.

### **Modification of the total site:**

Today, unfortunately, there has been significant modification to the site, which reduces the potential for experiencing the full extent of the Pa of the 1820s.

The eastern ditch and bank of the Pa, which lay at an angle of 37<sup>0</sup> East of North at the easterly extreme of the complex have been filled in. The northerly end of this feature has been cut away and destroyed during the construction of the Hamilton - Pirongia Highway bridge over the Mangapiko Stream.

Part of the Puketutu site has been sold for farming and residential purposes, and a legal road (Paper Road) has been located through the Puketutu Pa.

The second and third ditch and bank have both been bulldozed at the north and south edges of the river escarpment to enable fences to be erected along the escarpment edges.

The fourth ditch and bank have suffered even more with the infilling of part of the ditch and bank and the cutting of a farm track by bulldozer to the lower flat.

Matakitaki Pa once had a ditch and bank at the east and west ends of the promontory on which the Pa was constructed. Both have been bulldozed to provide access across the site for stock. Remains of these two features can be seen where the less consolidated fill has been broken open by stock movements.

### **The History of the Pa**

It is necessary to rely on Historic Records to describe the Pa during the time of the monumental events that took place in May 1822, when Ngapuhi from Northland under the Chief Hongi Hika came south with a major war party or Taua.

The events of that period are amply described in historical writings such as those of Pei Te Hurinui (Jones), L G Kelly, and more latterly F L Phillips and R D Crosby (see Bibliography page 17) so I will not recount them in detail here.

In a nutshell, Ngapuhi under Hongi Hika came to the Waikato to avenge earlier participation by a Waikato war party in 1821, in a battle in the Hauraki Area where the Ngapuhi Chiefs, Tete and Pu were killed. A war party of circa 3000 warriors travelled by canoe up the Waikato and Waipa Rivers to approach Matakitaki.

Matakitaki was a strong Pa by Maori standards. Phillips describes it as, "Probably the greatest fortification ever made in the Waipa valley". He continues, "The site had great natural strength, for it was protected on each side by the deeply incised valleys of the two rivers, with almost vertical slopes rising about twelve metres from the deep waters of each".

Phillips also describes the engineering that had gone in to making the Pa almost impregnable in the days of pre-musket warfare. "Deep trenches had been made at the narrowest parts between the two rivers and the whole perimeter and dividing ramparts were palisaded".

Various estimates have been made as to how many people were inside the Matakītaki Pa complex when Ngāpuhi arrived to lay siege to it. Somewhere between 3000 and 10,000 have been claimed by various historians. (This included women and children). The Warriors (Toa) were under the command of the great Chief Te Wherowhero.

Initially the Waikato people were secure in their stronghold, and this was justified when Te Wherowhero led a party of picked men out to attack an outlying party of Ngāpuhi, capturing about 90 muskets which they promptly turned to good use against the attacking party. (*One must wonder at the value of the muskets so captured. They would have been flintlock weapons, slow to load, slow to ignite and requiring significant skill to make them an effective weapon, even in the hands of a trained soldier*). Nevertheless the muskets were used and some were retained by the survivors of the battle which followed.

Notwithstanding the strength of the Pa, the terror inflicted on the population of the Pa by the use of muskets by Ngāpuhi resulted in a stampede that turned into a disastrous rout for the Waikato people who had relied on the Pa to protect them.

The strong point of the Pa at the eastern end was a deep ditch, and probably an associated bank, all of which would have been palisaded. This ditch, described as 'deep with steep sides', was able to be crossed by a narrow log bridge, but only one or two at a time could do so. This then became the nemesis for the escaping Waikato people, men, women and children, who fell into or were forced into the ditch by the escaping hoard of people. Hundreds died in the trench, not of warfare, but trampled or suffocated by the weight of humanity desperately trying to escape their fate at the hands of Ngāpuhi.

Te Wherowhero, meanwhile, had carried out some amazing defensive manoeuvres within the Pa and associated areas. The bravery, skill and mana of the Chief were by no means decreased by the ultimate necessity to abandon the Pa to Hongi Hika and the Ngāpuhi who had themselves lost a considerable number of warriors to the defenders.

A large number of Waikato people died in this attack, but a perhaps even larger number survived to live and lick their wounds against the day when they could revenge the destruction imposed on the tribes.

Matakītaki would never have been occupied again. The land would have been tapu, due to the spilling of blood. It is likely that the eastern ditch would have remained the burial site for the hundreds who perished there.





# Objectives and Policies of Management:

## Objective 1.

To protect and maintain the Archaeological and historical values of Matakitaki Pa “in perpetuity”, for the use, understanding and enjoyment of future generations of New Zealanders as required under section 18 Reserves Act 1977 and to enable *tangata whenua* to exercise their role as *Kaitiaki* within this legislative framework.

### 1.1 Management Policies.

- 1.1.1 Matakitaki Pa is part of the Pirongia Recreation Reserve, under the Reserves Act 1977 and classified as a Recreation Reserve. Management of the Reserve is vested in Waipa District Council.
- 1.1.2 Management of the site will be undertaken as at present as a partnership between *tangata whenua* and the Council representing the wider community.
- 1.1.3 The Council is committed to allocating sufficient funds annually to ensure the Reserve is maintained and developed in accordance with Section 18 (2) Reserves Act 1977.
- 1.1.4 The present status of the Pa site as Part of the Pirongia Recreation Reserve should be reviewed with a view to reclassifying this part as “Historic Reserve”.

### *Explanation:*

*The Pa site is at present part of Pirongia Recreation Reserve, a Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. Management of the Reserve is vested in Waipa District Council. The Council, as Managers, have a policy of maintaining a relationship with Iwi / Tangata Whenua, through a group called “Ngā Iwi Tōpū O Waipā, for the purpose of ensuring the views of the Iwi are heard and respected. For the purpose of maintaining this relationship, it is desirable to formalise this partnership under this management plan, thus ensuring the views of the Iwi are always respected.*

*Because the site is part of the Pirongia Recreation Reserve, it is not being managed in a way that facilitates the appreciation of the significance of the site. Separation of the historic part from the Pirongia Recreation Reserve, and gazetted as Historic Reserve, would be a first step in returning the mana of the site to that which Iwi expect.*

## 1.2 Protection Policy.

1.2.1 The Archaeological and Historic features of this Reserve will be protected as provided in Section 18 (1) Reserves Act 1977 and under the Historic Places Act 1993.

### 1.2.2 Application:

1.2.2.1 *No act will be done on, in, or near the Reserve that would compromise the archaeological or historic values of the Reserve's features (the archaeological remnants, spiritual integrity or mana of the site).*

### Explanation:

#### *Archaeological and Historic evidence:*

*The two largely undamaged ditch and banks, separating the two higher level Pa, although damaged by the bulldozing at the edges of the escarpments to facilitate access are otherwise fenced from stock. They do tend to grow weeds such as gorse, blackberry and hawthorn, which appear to be intermittently controlled by chemical spraying. The evidence of the ditch and palisaded area above the lower riverine terraces has all but disappeared under the farming regime of the past.*

*All the identified ditch and banks on the site continue down the edge of the escarpment towards either the Mangapiko Stream or the Waipa River. It is difficult to know how close to the water's edge they would have originally extended, as the soft riverine banks would not hold such structures indefinitely.*

*Where the ditch and banks extend to the rivers and are fenced out, they are also protected from artificial damage by stock, although they are of course subject to damage from slipping or other earth movements during periods of extraordinary natural events.*

*There are several remains of pits on the northern side of Tauranga Kohia Pa. These are probably old whare sites and should be noted and identified.*

*Management of the Reserve should seek to maintain these remains in as near their existing state as possible.*

- 1.2.2.2 Any application for permission to carry out archaeological investigations on the Reserve will only be considered after consultation with the Historic Places Trust and its agreement having been obtained (Historic Places Act 1987).*
- 1.2.2.3 No archaeological investigation that involves destruction of the historic features will be permitted unless there are compelling reasons to do so and there are no alternatives to obtain the same goal.*
- 1.2.2.4 Any proposal to reconstruct any part of the Pa site will be considered under the provisions of this policy. Such proposals will be prepared by an archaeologist with experience in the reconstruction of archaeological and/or historic sites and in consultation with Iwi.*

***Discussion/Explanation:***

*Archaeological investigations on the site or restoration of the site can be considered legitimate activity on the Reserve. However, such investigations should only occur on this site if the information to be gained cannot be obtained in any other way. Applications to carry out archaeological investigations should take cognisance of the fact that the soils on which the Pa was established are now very fragile and easily eroded.*

**1.3. Maintenance Policy:**

1.3.1 The reserve should at all times be maintained in a tidy condition.

**1.3.2 Application:**

1.3.2.1 *Grass should be maintained by selective grazing. The goal of this maintenance is to have well cared for grass that can be walked over by visitors in street shoes. The Reserve should not at any time be used for making of hay or silage.*

*Explanation:*

*The Pa area, which is part of the Pirongia Recreation Reserve, is grazed under licence. The higher escarpments have been fenced off to prevent stock access. The lower riverine flats have not been fenced and stock graze right to the water's edge. A review of the grazing regime should be part of any future management of the Reserve. Grazing should always be subservient to the need to protect the archaeological and historic values of the Reserve and the need for public access.*

*1.3.2.2 Noxious weeds should be progressively cleared and the Reserve maintained free of these weeds at all times.*

*Explanation:*

*Noxious plants occur in many places on this Reserve. Blackberry, gorse, hawthorn, privet, convolvulus, Wandering Jew, Japanese honeysuckle, and a wide range of minor plants are also present. Control of these plants within the farmed area should be the responsibility of the tenant unless there are specific exemptions in the tenancy documents.*

*1.3.2.3 The river and stream escarpment should be progressively planted in low maintenance ground cover and other appropriate native species and be maintained in this condition. Stock should not be allowed access to the escarpment face. Fencing should be erected as necessary to protect such plantings.*

*Explanation:*

*There are extensive growths of exotic trees and shrubs, plus climbers, located on the Pa escarpments which obstruct the vision from the Pa site. These are all mainly noxious plants and should be removed and replaced with appropriate native species. This would save considerable effort and funds in long term maintenance. Species such as ground cover Coprosma, Hebe, Native Blueberry, Prostrate Manuka and Flax would be appropriate, even if some of these are cultivars of the original native species. Maintaining the fencing to ensure stock does not gain access to these escarpment faces is essential.*

1.3.2.4 *Interpretive signs, diorama, paths, or structures of any kind erected or placed on the Reserve shall at all times be maintained in a neat and tidy condition.*

1.3.2.5 *Any vandalism occurring shall be removed or cleaned up at the first opportunity on its coming to the attention of the Reserve managers.*

*Discussion/explanation:*

*The site will need to be maintained on a regular basis. Depending on the amount of interpretive development that is agreed on, this should be a variable commitment.*

*The most effective way to discourage vandalism is to maintain all susceptible structures, signs, etc., in as near perfect condition as possible. Vandalised signs or other structures just encourage further vandalism.*

**1.4 Access Policy:**

1.4.1 Public access to the Reserve will as far as possible be maintained at all times.

**1.4.2 Application:**

1.4.2.1 *Road access is available from Orchard Lane. Consideration should be given to upgrading this so that the entrance to the Reserve is attractive and inviting.*

1.4.2.2 *Where the existing road formation ends, the remainder of the legal road alongside the Reserve should be closed and added to the Reserve.*

1.4.2.3 *Gates on the formed road should be removed and allowed only at the entrance to the Reserve at the end of the formation.*

*Discussion Explanation:*

*There is a paper road that allows access from the Pirongia - Hamilton Highway alongside two residences. However, this is partly fenced and has gates across it that further discourage members of the public from gaining access to the Pa site. This road was laid off during the original subdivision following the confiscations in 1863. It was then called Great South Road. It*

*is doubtful if the surveyors/draughtsmen doing the original subdivisional work ever visited the site as this road is in a straight line that was unlikely to ever have been constructed due to the nature of the Mangapiko Stream. Once past the point where this road provides access to the privately owned properties, it should be closed and added to the Historic Reserve, as it is part of the archaeological and historic site.*

*1.4.2.4 Naming of the Public Road should be reviewed. "Orchard Lane", the present name, is inappropriate.*

*1.4.2.5 The public will have access to the Reserve at all times except under certain conditions appropriate when archaeological or historic investigations are being carried out as provided for in Policy 1.2*

*Discussion/Explanation:*

*Archaeological investigations are important in tracking and recording the events of the past. During these investigations or during earthwork reconstruction, it is important that unauthorised personnel are kept clear so that no evidence is destroyed or contaminated either deliberately or accidentally. Appropriate steps would therefore need to be taken to ensure the integrity of any archaeological works taking place. Possibilities include temporary fencing or other barricades.*

*1.4.2.6 A link track should be designed and constructed around the edge of the Waipa River to allow public access to the Reserve from the Waipa River walkway or vice versa. It should reflect best practice in track construction and will conform generally to the requirements of the Department of Conservation "Track Construction requirements".*

*Discussion/explanation:*

*Under the prompting of the Pirongia Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, Waipa District Council has prepared concept plans to create a public walkway around the edge of the Waipa River from McClure Street to Matakītaki Pa. This walkway proposal should be acknowledged in the management of the Pa Site and be included as a formal method of accessing the Reserve.*

*1.4.2.7 Car parking should be provided on the roadside adjacent to the Pirongia - Hamilton Highway well outside the formation of the outer ditch and bank.*

1.4.2.8 *Picnicking facilities should likewise be located outside the outer ditch and bank in conjunction with the car parking.*

*Explanation:*

*Car parking should be provided on the eastern extremities of the Reserve, on the Reserve land alongside the Pirongia - Hamilton Highway, so that motor vehicles do not unnecessarily access the Reserve and destroy the uniqueness of the spiritual experience such a major site offers.*

*Picnicking facilities should also be considered in this area, as the taking of food onto a Pa which has had blood shed on it is contrary to Maori custom.*

*[Water access from the Waipa River to the site has been suggested by Iwi and consideration may need to be given to this proposal. This was once the front door to the Pa, via the Matakītaki Pa, at the confluence of the Mangapiko Stream. Difficulties with this proposal include where access to the river might take place apart from the entry to the Pa. It is doubtful if this proposal would be an attractive form of access for most people].*

## **Objective 2.**

To interpret the Reserve in such a way as to foster in the public an appreciation of the events which took place at Matakītaki and the devastating effects of the musket in Maori warfare, and to increase the understanding of cultural and spiritual values that Iwi have for this special site.

*Explanation:*

*There is almost no indication of the existence of the Pa site, nor of the extent of this, apart from the Historic Places Trust plaque on the adjacent highway. Identification of the site and suitably designed interpretive material is essential if the public at large are to be able to appreciate this part of Aotearoa (New Zealand's) history. This should be designed and produced in conjunction with local Iwi.*

### **2.1 Interpretation Policy:**

- 2.1.1 Interpretation of the site will be a priority for development work on this Reserve. All interpretive work will be adequately researched to ensure it is accurate and representative. Interpretive actions should at all times be executed to reflect best practice in interpretive processes.

*Discussion/explanation:*

*Interpretation is the term commonly used to describe the way in which a site is demonstrated to the public so that they can have some understanding of why it is historically and archaeologically important. It includes all the signage and other means of identification of the site.*

*A supportive public is vital if the Reserve is to be maintained in perpetuity. Interpretation of the site and the events that lead to its establishment are vital if public support is to be maintained.*

*There are a variety of options for interpretation of the site. Iwi should have a major input into the form, content and design of any interpretive material proposed for the site.*

*Poorly researched and executed interpretation is actually worse than none. All facts should be verifiable or be left off the interpretation material.*

2.1.2 *Application:*

- 2.1.3 *A carved gateway and "pouwhenua" should be designed and erected on Orchard Lane entrance of the Reserve, thus making it obvious to the general public. Design and construction shall as far as possible be the prerogative of Iwi.*

*Discussion/explanation:*

*A carved gateway or "pouwhenua" (posts indicating the mana of the Tangata Whenua) to signify the "wairuatangata" (spirituality) of the past present and future, inviting visitors to appreciate the "Mauri" (specialness) of Matakītaki should be the minimum consideration for the entrance to this historically important site.*

- 2.1.4 *The historic events that led to the defence, abandonment and tapu of Matakītaki may be interpreted for the public by the construction/creation of a diorama showing the topography and construction of the Pa, plus explanatory material to explain the*



*complicated series of events which led to the invasion of Waikato by Ngapuhi.*

*This display could be housed in a purpose built open sided structure providing protection from the elements and to allow the public ample opportunity to reflect on these events. This structure should as far as practical reflect the Maori style of the period.*

*Discussion/explanation:*

*One option to consider is an interpretive panel with a plan of the Pa and perhaps some indication of its location from a strategic point of view. This option has advantages, as it can be as simple as a series of maps to full information on the events that led to the events of 1822.*

*A second and more imaginative option is the construction of a diorama of the extended site to be placed in an appropriately designed open sided building. This option has much to commend it, but does have the disadvantage of the likelihood of vandalism. There could in fact be a compromise, using dioramic paintings of the site as has been done for several sites in the Auckland Regional Council area, and housing these as in the first option above.*

*2.1.5 The Historic Places Trust sign located on the Pirongia - Hamilton Highway should be reviewed. Historic Places Trust should be asked to expedite this.*

*Explanation:*

*Historic Places Trust should be consulted about the wording of the existing plaque, as this "does not sit easily" with the local Iwi. This structure may not be in the most appropriate place.*

*2.1.6 Consideration should be given to the construction of a "tūwatawata" or sentry's lookout on Matakītaki Pa.*

*Explanation/Discussion:*

*This proposal was suggested by the Purekireki Marae Committee. It has much merit but would necessitate consideration of design standards to ensure it conformed to appropriate public safety standards.*

### **Objective 3.**

To acquire areas of the original Pa site alienated to private ownership following the land confiscations of 1863.

#### ***Explanation:***

##### ***Historic Land in Private ownership:***

*A section of the site was alienated to private ownership, probably at the same time the road was surveyed through. These sections have now been in private ownership for many years and as a result the total Pa site is not now able to be appreciated fully by visitors. Waipa District Council should keep open the possibility of repurchase of these properties if they should ever become available for acquisition. This would be perhaps one of the most strategic management actions that could take place, as the most tapu part of the Pa is the eastern ditch and bank where so many of the defenders of the Pa perished. This is partly in private land and partly destroyed by the construction of the road abutments to the Mangapiko Stream bridge.*

#### **3.1.1 Acquisition Policies:**

- 3.1.2 As and when the properties adjacent to the Reserve and between it and the Pirongia Hamilton Highway become available for purchase, the Council should consider making these strategic purchases to complete the Reservation and Protection of the Matakītaki Pa site.

#### **Summary:**

The Matakītaki Pa Site is an extremely important one to Iwi from a spiritual and historic point of view, and to Tau Iwi from a purely historic point of view.

Appropriate management of this site by the partnership of Iwi with Tau Iwi will enable both peoples to have a greater understanding of the tragic and earthshaking events experienced by the early Maori.

The aim of this is greater understanding of both the Maori and non Maori population of the district of the special place historic sites and events have in Maori Culture and in shaping New Zealand's future.

**Bibliography:**

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