



## **PART 2**

# **Human Heritage**



## 2 HUMAN HERITAGE

*The WRHA Act identifies several features in Section 7 'National significance and Heritage features of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area' that relate to local history and community and are applicable to the coastal villages. These are:*

- *Section 7(2)(j): the historical, traditional, and cultural relationships of people, communities, and tangata whenua with the area and their exercise of kaitiakitanga and stewardship.*
- *Section 7(2)(k): the evidence of past human activities in the area, including those in relation to timber extraction, gum-digging, flax milling, mineral extraction, quarrying, extensive farming, and water impoundment and supply.*

The West Coast Plan goal three - 'Communities' is:

*'Communities that are strongly connected to their natural environment and are unique and diverse'.*

Target Seventeen under this goal is:

*'The history and cultures of the area are recognised and valued'.*

The following sections on Maori history and place names, European history, cultural heritage sites and the local community of Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley, addresses these heritage features in the study area.

## 2.1 HISTORY - MAORI

### *Mihi*

*Ko Puketotara te maunga  
Ko Waitakere te awa  
Ko te Wao nui a Tiriwha te ngahere  
Ko nga Tai Whakatu a Kupe te moana  
Ko Te Au o Te Whenua te tangata  
Ko Te Kawerau a Maki te iwi*

*Tihe mauri ora!*

*Puketotara is the mountain  
Waitakere is the river  
The great Forest of Tiriwha is the forest  
The raised seas of Kupe is the ocean  
Te Au o Te Whenua is the person  
Te Kawerau a Maki is the tribe*



*A view looking north across the Waitakere River to Puketotara, the ancient Kawerau Pa.  
Source: G. Murdoch (1990)*

Te Kawerau a Maki are acknowledged tangata whenua of the Bethells/ Te Henga area.

This account of the long history of Te Kawerau a Maki in the Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley area is mostly taken from the following sources:

- The Te Kawerau a Maki statement in the Waitakere District Plan 2003<sup>1</sup>
- The chapter by Te Warena Taua '*He kohikohinga korero mo Hikurangi*' in Macdonald and Kerr (2009)<sup>2</sup>, and
- An essay by Graeme Murdoch in Northcote-Bade (1990) '*West Auckland Remembers*'<sup>3</sup>.
- The chapter by Graeme Murdoch '*Te Wao Nui a Tiriwha - The Great Forest of Tiriwa*', in '*Waitakere Ranges, Ranges of Inspiration*'<sup>4</sup>.

### 2.1.1 A Long and Intimate Association with the Land

The Te Henga area and Waitakere River Valley are of great importance to Te Kawerau a Maki, and in pre-European times were among the most intensively settled areas in the region, being a strategic location midway between the Manukau and Kaipara Harbours with abundant food resources and in particular, excellent potential for the cultivation of kumara, taro and gourds. The historical abundance of seafood is evident in the numerous shell middens scattered around the coastal edge. The long occupation of the area is reflected in the numerous prehistoric archaeological sites found in the Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley area, with 18 *pa* or fortification sites, at least 10 *kainga* or village sites and numerous *maara* or cultivations. These are set out in the heritage section (Section 2.1.3).

Te Kawerau conquered and settled the wider area of the Tamaki isthmus and as far north as the Kaipara Harbour in the 1600s. They claim ancestral descent from, in particular, the Moekakara canoe which landed near Leigh. Through their famous ancestor Maki the Kawerau people could also claim descent from five further ancestral *waka* that gave them genealogical ties with the tribal groups of the Waikato and Taranaki. Through prior ancestral links and subsequent intermarriage with those they conquered, they have genealogical links that extend back to all the preceding tribal groups that occupied the Waitakere valley. The great grandson of Maki, Te Au o Te Whenua controlled all the land between Muriwai and the Manukau Harbour. One of his main homes was *Puketotara*, the *pa* near the Wairere Stream valley on the northern side of the Te Henga Wetland, and it was from his occupation of the area that the Kawerau people claimed and were awarded Certificate of Title to the Waitakere and Puketotara Blocks in the Native Land Court hearings of the 1860s.

#### Mosaic of Place Names

The Maori place names of the area provide an insight into the close relationship that Te Kawerau a Maki have held with their ancestral home over many centuries, describing the topography, the once richer biodiversity and natural resources of the area, and their usage, and commemorating specific ancestors, events and traditions. To those familiar with them and their historical associations, these names are landmarks that act as a reminder of the past.

The place names described in this section are shown on the map at Figure 3.

---

<sup>1</sup> Waitakere City Council (2003): *Waitakere District Plan Policy 4.1 'Statement by Te Kawerau a Maki'*.

<sup>2</sup> Finlay Macdonald and Ruth Kerr (ed), (2009), *West – The History Of Waitakere*. Random House.

<sup>3</sup> Graeme Murdoch (1990) *Nga Tohu O Waitakere: The Maori Place Names of the Waitakere River Valley and its Environs; their Background History and an Explanation of their Meaning* in James Northcote-Bade (ed) (1990) *West Auckland Remembers*. West Auckland Historical Society

<sup>4</sup> Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc (2006), *Waitakere Ranges, Nature, History, Culture*.

Figure 3: Maori Place names of the Waitakere River Valley and its Environs



Source: Graeme Murdoch (1990), *Nga Tohu O Waitakere*. In James Northcote Bade (ed) *West Auckland Remembers*

The *Kahui Tipua* were the many guardian *taniwha* (mythical creatures) who came from an earlier age, and are credited with modifying the land and the coastal environment. These *taniwha* included *Te Mokoroa* whose many lairs are found in the vicinity of Bethells/Te Henga, including in the Mokoroa Arm of the Wetland.

*Erangi Point* was named for the chieftainess Erangi, who lived at Te Ihumoana in the fourteenth century. She was in love with a young man from the inland pa of Puketotara, and after secret meetings with him had given birth to his child. Her family disapproved of the match and forbade Erangi from meeting with her lover, keeping a close eye on her. In desperation she tied her baby onto her shoulders and swam north up the coastline, then heading inland to Puketotara.



*Te Ihumoana Island* Photo: J Macdonald

The point known as Erangi, where she dived into the water, commemorates her name. The bay across which she swam is known as 'Te Awa kau waha ia' or the channel across which she swam with the back burden. This name, shortened to '*Kauwahaia*' is the name for O'Neil's Beach and the small island pa at the southern end of it.



'*Kauwahaia*' or O'Neils Beach Photo: J Macdonald

An important pathway between Muriwai and Te Henga was known as *Te Ara Kanohi*; literally 'the pathway of the eye'. It took its name from the extensive views which are still afforded from the public walkway that extends along this cliff top route. Below Raetahinga Point north of Te Henga is *Te Mutu*, the point where the coastal walkway comes to an 'abrupt end'.

The high country to the south of the Waitakere River is known as *Paeoterangi* which is translated by Te Kawerau a Maki as the 'footstool of the sky'. *Raumati*, a former settlement and cultivation beside the Waitakere River denotes that the area was an important 'summer' *kainga* or occupation site.

A pa above the lower reaches of the Waitakere River is named *Te Tauhiwi o te Rangi* after the Milky Way constellation of stars. At the head of Lake Wainamu is a well-preserved little pa named *Poututerangi*, a name associated with the separation of the primal parents *Ranginui* and *Papatuanuku*, and in this case, specifically with the rising of the star Altair. To the Te Kawerau a Maki people of Te Henga, this celestial event signalled that it was time to harvest the kumera crop which was stored within this ridge top pa.



Raetahinga Point Photo: J Macdonald

The sea cave that cuts through Raetahinga Point north of Te Henga is known as *Te Poka* as it is likened to 'the hole' drilled through a pendant. *Te Ihumoana* Island at the mouth of the Waitakere River is likened to a 'nose jutting out into the ocean'. *Te Henga* (Bethells Beach) takes its name from the foredunes whose shape was likened to 'the gunwhale' of an upturned canoe hull. *Momore*, the headland south of Te Henga, is so named because of the 'smooth' or barren nature of its prominent rocky summit.

The region's highest waterfall (100m) now the site of the Waitakere Dam, was known as *Te Awa Kotuku*, so named because it was likened to the tail feathers of the kotuku or white heron as its plume stood out against the green background of the surrounding forest. The slow-flowing lower reaches of the Waitakere River are known as *Turingoi*, literally the 'crawling waters'. *Waitipu*, a stream in the upper Waitakere Valley, was so named because it 'rose extremely quickly' after heavy rain. *Roto Wainamu* (Lake Wainamu) was so named because of the 'swarms of mosquitoes and sandflies' found in that locality.

Some place names provide a reminder of the food resources that were gathered, for example, *Pihariki*, a locality beside the lower Te Henga wetland, was a place where a delicacy known as the pihariki or lamprey was caught. Other areas were named for plants. For example, at the head of Lake Wainamu was a locality named *Toetoeroa* for its 'profusion of toetoe', now absent from the area. *Waitoru*, the stream and the reserve beside Bethells Road, is named after the toru tree which is still found in the area.

The *whau* tree, valued as a source of buoyant timber used to fashion floats for fishing nets, is still found beside *Waitewhau*, the stream draining from Lake Kawaupaku to the coast at Te Henga. *Waiti*, the old Te Kawerau a Maki settlement at Te Henga, took its name from the adjoining 'stream of the cabbage tree'. Of particular interest is *Te Aute* ridge, where, in the vicinity of Koropotiki Pa, a grove of *aute* (paper mulberry) trees was carefully nurtured above the frost line. These trees were used for a variety of purposes and were particularly treasured as they had been brought from Hawaiki, the Pacific ancestral homeland. *Puharakeke*, 'the flax clump' is an old swamp pa site in the Te Henga wetland.

*Raeakiaki*, the headland immediately south of Te Henga, is a reminder of the large *akiaki* or 'red-billed gull' colony that was once a feature of the district. An area of cliff face north of Te Henga is known as *Opakaha*. Here, until the 1950s, Te Kawerau a Maki took the young of the *titi*, or Cook's petrel, and the *pakaha*, or 'fluttering shearwater', in early summer.

An area that once teemed with *kukupā* (kuku) or native wood pigeon was *Waikuku* at the head of Lake Wainamu. *Arakiore*, a locality near Te Henga, provides reference to a 'rat run' where the *kiore* or Polynesian rat was trapped as a valued food resource.

## 2.1.2 Te Kawerau a Maki in the 18th Century

During the early 1700s, despite a great deal of intermarriage between the people of Ngati Whatua and Te Kawerau a Maki, fighting broke out between them and the Kawerau people were gradually pushed southward and subjected to a long period of domination, including a major invasion - *Te Raupatu Tihore* or 'the conquest that laid bare'. This *taua* or war party was not seeking territory but *utu* or revenge for several *kohuru* or unacceptable killings. At least one battle in this campaign was fought at the Waitakere River mouth. After the *murū* or plunder, Ngati Whatua withdrew to the southern Kaipara. Ngati Whatua went on to conquer the Tamaki Isthmus in the 1740s, but because of important marriages between them and Te Kawerau a Maki, Kawerau were left alone in the Waitakere Ranges. The north-western tribal boundary of Te Kawerau was eventually established at '*Te Taupaki*', or 'the firmly bound peace' a spot on the cliffs south of Te Henga Beach. The name is now incorrectly applied to the settlement of Taupaki.

For a century, Te Kawerau a Maki lived in peace in the Waitakere area, although further pa were built in case of further invasion, including Koropotiki Pa constructed on Te Aute ridge to guard the villages and cultivations of the lower Waitakere Valley.

## 2.1.3 19th Century

### Ngapuhi Raids

The mid 1820s brought disaster, a major depletion in tribal numbers and a long period of exile in the Waikato to Te Kawerau a Maki, when they were decimated by Ngapuhi raiding parties armed with muskets. These attacks had their origins back in 1807 when Pokaia, a Ngapuhi war leader, had been killed in a battle against the Ngati Whatua in which the new weapon, Te Pu (the musket) had been introduced. Hongi Hika succeeded Pokaia as the Ngapuhi war leader and subsequently visited England, calling in to Sydney on the way home to exchange supplies gifted by King George VI and other well-to-do English families, for muskets. It is said he returned to the Bay of Islands with 500 muskets. In 1825 raiding parties of musket-armed Ngapuhi warriors set out from Northland, intent on redressing grievances against their enemies in the south, including Ngati Whatua. Te Kawerau a Maki, being in alliance with Ngati Whatua, were placed amongst the enemies of Ngapuhi.

Te Kawerau fought Ngapuhi at Te Henga and Karekare, but with traditional weapons no match for the Ngapuhi muskets, they were overwhelmed, and survivors fled south into the Waikato, leaving the whole stretch of west coast shoreline from Whatipu to Te Henga deserted.

It was not until 1835 -1836 that Te Kawerau a Maki returned to their ancestral land, under the protection of the Tainui *Ariki*, Te Wherowhero. They first moved to the shores of the Manukau Harbour, but soon moved to Te Henga. Here, Te Kawerau built a musket pa against further attack from Ngapuhi at Parawai beside the then-navigable Waitakere River, now the banks of the Te Henga wetland. Its palisades were padded with bundles of flax to withstand musket fire.



Site of Parawai Pa on the banks of the then-navigable Waitakere River

### Contact with Europeans

By the 1790s the Kawerau people had the first contact with European material culture when they were introduced to the pig and the potato by their northern tribal neighbours who had been in contact with visiting whaling ships. At this time they faced an outbreak of European introduced disease known as *rewharewha*, which is thought to have been influenza. In 1820 some of the Kawerau people met 'Te Matenga' or the Reverend Samuel Marsden when he visited the village of Oneonenui in the Muriwai Valley, but it was not until the 1840s that the majority of Te Kawerau came into direct contact with Europeans.

The first European to visit the Waitakere Valley was the Wesleyan missionary the Reverend James Buller who visited Parawai in 1844, and in 1845 converted the two leading Kawerau *Rangatira*, Tawhia and Te Tuiarau to Christianity, which the tribe soon adopted with zeal. In this era, the Kawerau a Maki people were secure on their land and continued to move across their domain in the seasonal cycle that had been followed by their ancestors.

*Painting of Te Kawerau a Maki village with Lake Wainamu in the background. Sam Stewart 1886<sup>1</sup>*



By the early 1850s, the Crown, under pressure from settlers to buy more land, began to eye the northern Waitakere Ranges. In 1853, the Crown purchased the Hikurangi block covering most of the Waitakere Ranges and beyond, in a transaction that involved no senior rangatira of Te Kawerau a Maki. When it was already too late, and many Europeans had settled on the land, the Crown recognised this and concluded a separate Hikurangi purchase agreement with Te Kawerau a Maki in December 1856. The Pae o te Rangi block of 25,000 acres was sold by the chief of Te Kawerau a Maki in March 1854, for eight hundred pounds. By the end of this process, Te Kawerau a Maki retained only the Waitakere and Puketotara native Reserves (1180 hectares along the coast at Bethells/Te Henga and the lower Waitakere river Valley), together with the Piha and Wekatahi Native Reserve (725 hectares), and land extending north to Muriwai and Kopirinui (Woodhill). These native reserves were to be 'inalienable' for Kawerau people to live on in perpetuity.

The provision of the native reserves was largely undermined by the Native Land Court, created in 1865, which was based on the settlers' legal system, and converted customary title to land into individual title. This effectively made it easier for Maori land to be sold to settlers. Te Kawerau had their land surveyed (an expensive process entailing considerable effort) and in the Native Land Court hearings of the 1860s, claimed and were awarded Certificate of Title to the Waitakere, Puketotara and Piha blocks. The Waitakere block at Bethells/ Te Henga is shown in the map dated 1870 from the Maori Land Court, at Figure 5.

The Kawerau principle dwelling site in 1854 was at Parawai on the banks of the Waitakere River. Extensive gardens were also located on the western side of the Waitakere River at Okaihau, and further gardens at Waiti near the confluence of the Waiti Stream and Waitakere River. In the early 1860's, no longer living in fear of musket attacks, the Kawerau people moved from Parawai down river to settle at Waiti near the junction of the Waiti stream and the Waitakere River (refer Figure 4). A census taken in 1862 revealed 36 permanent Maori inhabitants living at Waiti. Figure 6 notes the location of these places.



**Figure 4:** Waiti Village. Arthur Butler 1910.

*Looking south: Tasman View Rd is behind the ridge in the centre of the picture.*

**Note:** The kainga would have become uninhabitable soon after this photo was taken, upon the commissioning of the Waitakere Dam in 1910 and subsequent changes in the hydrology of the Waitakere River.



Here at Waiti, they maintained large gardens and continued to practise their seasonal cycle of harvesting the resources of land and sea. Disillusioned as a result of the land wars and by the destruction of their lifestyle and environment by the processes of colonisation and European settlement, they lived in cultural isolation.

**Figure 6: Some locations of significance**



The arrival of the railway at Waitakere Township in 1881 brought increasing numbers of settlers, placing greater pressure on Te Kawerau to sell their remaining land. It also facilitated the milling and destruction of the remaining kauri forest, accompanied by the desecration of many sacred sites. Although the Kawerau at Waiti maintained good relations with their Pakeha neighbours, they spoke little English and abandoned the Wesleyan Church which they had supported since 1845, becoming firm adherents of the Pai Mariri faith that had been adopted by the King Movement. A Pai Mariri church was constructed in the village at Waiti, near the banks of the Waiti Stream, and the village also boasted two marae<sup>5</sup>.

Te Kawerau a Maki remained in occupation of the land at Piha and Waitakere until the mid 1880s, when the Piha and Wekatahi reserves were first leased and then sold to private European purchasers.



*Bridge over the Waiti Stream close to where the Waiti Village once stood*

<sup>5</sup> Rewi Spraggon (2010) Personal communication.

## 2.1.4 20th Century

Te Kawerau a Maki remained in permanent occupation of their village at Waiti until the death of their Rangatira, Te Utika Te Aroha, in 1912, when most of those remaining at Waiti moved to the settlements of their close relatives at Orakei on the Waitemata Harbour and Pukaki at Mangere. After this they occupied their remaining land at Te Henga intermittently until the 1960s by which time the remaining reserved land had been sold as a result of economic pressures and individualisation of titles introduced by the Native Land Act.

Some of the last pieces of land to be sold by the tribe were two islands - Te Ihumoana (Ihumoana Island) north of the mouth of the Waitakere River and Motu Kauwahaia at the southern end of O'Neil's Bay. The title of Te Ihumoana was investigated by the Maori Land Court in 1953 at the request of the Commissioner of Lands in order to satisfy Europeans who wished to purchase it to erect a holiday home. Title to the island was awarded to Kura Taua and Whatitiri Poni on behalf of Te Kawerau a Maki. The tribe were then in a position of considerable poverty and made a decision to sell the island to fund the erection of headstones at Orakei Urupa and Pukaki Urupa, as well as the production of new carvings for Pukaki Marae. Motu Kauwahaia was sold at the same time<sup>6</sup> and was purchased by members of the Woodward family to 'prevent it falling into uncaring hands'<sup>7</sup>.



*Te Ihumoana island Pa*

One of the last inhabitants of the Te Henga area is described by Hayward and Diamond as a 'cross and savage old Maori' called Pareoha who lived alone for fifty years in a cave in the basin above Cannibal Creek Falls beyond the southern end of Te Henga. He cultivated food and dried his own fish. His isolation gave rise to tales that he had eaten human flesh and been expelled from the Waiti village, so settlers named the stream that flows over the cliff-face Cannibal Creek. It is now recognised that Pareoha was not a cannibal but a *tohunga*, a man of spiritual wisdom, whose chosen life of isolation and contemplation caused others to regard him with fear and mistrust<sup>8</sup>.

Although they are no longer in permanent occupation of their ancestral domain, Te Kawerau a Maki are regarded as holding *mana whenua* or traditional ownership of the land. A *pou whenua* (carved post) on public parkland in the Cascade Kauri Park (at the start of the Montana Trail) acknowledges and represents the relationship between Tāngata Whenua (the people of the land), their ancestors and their environment or *tūrangawaewae* (place of standing).

<sup>6</sup> Graeme Murdoch 2008, *Nga Motu, Nga Motu Nohinohi, Me Nga Kohatu E Tu Ana I roto I Nga Wai Whakatu a Kupe (the Islands off the Western Coastline of Waitakere City)* Waitakere City

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication to Dan Baker 2010

<sup>8</sup> Bob Harvey, (2003) *Untamed Coast: Auckland's Waitakere Ranges and West Coast Beaches*.

## 2.1.5 21st Century – A renaissance?

In 1995 the proposed Waitakere City District Plan introduced an area of land at Te Henga zoned as a Special Area (Marae), intended as a site for a marae for Te Kawerau a Maki, and Council completed purchase of the land in 2010. The land is coloured purple in the map at Figure 7. The purchase was to facilitate a long-standing Council policy “to support the development of an iwi-based marae by Te Kawerau a Maki, at Te Henga”. The development of a marae is intended to re-ground the tribe in an area where there are many ancestral sites of significance.

Figure 7: Te Henga Marae Site



It is intended that the marae will provide benefit to both local iwi/Maori and the wider community.

## 2.1.6 Conclusion

The Kawerau a Maki people have a long and intimate association with the Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley area, which is their most significant area of cultural association in the Waitakere Ranges. Te Kawerau a Maki are the recognised ‘people of this land’.

Of the complex mosaic of Maori place names in the area, few remain in general use, apart from examples such as Te Henga, Lakes Wainamu and Kawaupaku, Te Aute Ridge Road and Pae o te Rangī. Consideration of dual place-name signs is a possibility to help retain some of the ancient Maori names.

With the purchase of the Marae land at Te Henga, near the site of their former village at Waiti, there is now the opportunity for the Tangata Whenua to return to their ancestral home.

## 2.2 HISTORY – EUROPEAN

### 2.2.1 Early Settlers

Following purchase by the Crown from Maori of the Te Pae o te Rangi block in 1854, the land was surveyed into blocks with the necessary road access. Usually these blocks were of 40 to 80 acres with a sprinkling of 100 to 150 acres depending on the topography, but in the Waitakere Valley much of the land was in two large blocks (in addition to the 'Native Reserve' at Te Henga). The first was a block of 1,751 acres, called 'McLeod's claim' on the northern side of the Waitakere River, and the other was Kelly's block of 2,873 acres, mainly on the southern side of the river and extending out towards the coast. Many of the blocks were granted by the Crown to Europeans who were eligible through the free grant system. There was no requirement to take up the grant and if rates remained unpaid long enough the property was resold. Many of the new European landholders were absentee owners, a fact commented on by Te Kawerau during farewell speeches at a visit by Dr Ferdinand von Hochstetter to Parawai Pa in 1859. Maori orators laid the blame for the poor state of the roads into the Bethells/ Te Henga area at the time on the high rate of non-payment of rates.

One of the first European landowners in the Waitakere Valley was Allan Charles O'Neill, an Irish immigrant who arrived in New Zealand in 1842. O'Neill surveyed the Waitakere Valley after its transfer to the Crown in 1853, and in 1856 his sons, John Henry and Allan O'Neill received Crown grants (Allotments 1 and 2, Parish of Waitakere). John Henry O'Neill also bought a third block from the adjacent block owned by J Kelly, who purchased land (Lots 6 and 7) from discharged soldiers in 1859 and then selected his free grant of 2873 acres. He advertised the whole property for sale but by 1866 was living in a house built on the property and was felling timber.<sup>9</sup>

Another notable early European resident in the area was John Neale Bethell, who arrived in Auckland in 1858 aged two, and from a young age helped his older brother to clear and farm his father's 225 acres of land on the northern side of the Anawhata Stream. The local Te Kawerau a Maki made the boys welcome and John learned the language and became a life-long friend<sup>10</sup>. In 1894 he purchased from Edmond Thomas Dufaur, the Waitakere 1 A Maori land block of 1,625 acres<sup>11</sup>, part of the Waitakere Native Reserve. Dufaur was an Auckland lawyer who had gained the block seven years earlier from Maori. John named the property Te Henga, its original Maori name from the shape of the dunes, which resemble an upturned waka.

Descendants of John Neale Bethell still own a significant amount of land and are an important part of the community at Bethells/ Te Henga.



*Some of the Kawerau people visiting the Bethells family in 1910. From left: Hori Winikerei Whareiti (Miti), Mrs Clara Bethell, Mihi Te Rina Te Utika, unknown, Mrs Heremaia. Photo: Arthur Butler, Mrs A. Woodward collection.*

**Source:** Jean Garriock, Clive Sleeman and Stephen Crane 1991 'A Pictorial History of West Auckland' (West Auckland Historical Society Inc).

<sup>9</sup> J Barnes 'Into the West 1836-1936'

<sup>10</sup> Mary Woodward, 2004 'The Landscape of my Heart'

<sup>11</sup> M Woodward 'Waitakere Ranges: Nature, History, Culture'

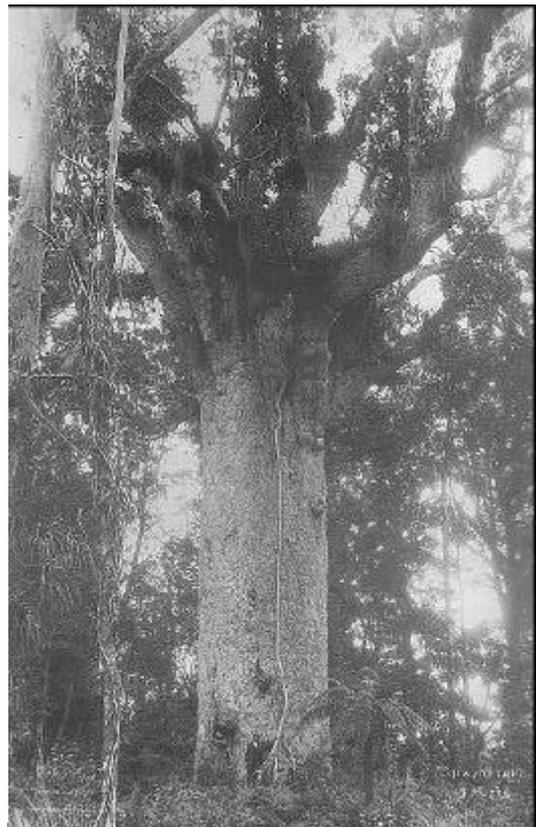
E. Earle Vaile in his book 'Waitakere National Park with a Short History of the Ranges'<sup>12</sup> recorded the following account of some of the area's early settlers:

*'at one of the lakes lived a real old hard-baked frontiersman named Haughton, living in a hut furnished with a genuine old-time chimney where the great lob burned all day and all night and was hauled through as it became consumed. Right inside the chimney were benches where several persons could sit or sleep or do both'. Vaile also noted that 'in the Waitakere Valley, just below the falls, there were settled from time immemorial two old gentlemen named George who occupied an area extending from the banks of the river to the slopes of Pukematekao. They were an outstanding example of the attractions of an independent living and the possibility of achieving it without demeaning themselves by the acceptance of 'relief'. There together with their two sisters, they existed for year after year on the produce of about 200 sheep. Lower down were the holdings of Messrs. Sisam, Meikle, Snell, Kelly and O'Neill'.*

### 2.2.2 Timber milling

In the days prior to the arrival of Europeans, the hills, and particularly the ridge-tops of the Waitakere Ranges were covered in virgin kauri and broadleaf-podocarp forest. After 1841 when Auckland became the official seat of government, the growing town required large amounts of timber, and kauri was also sought after for ship building and for export, mainly to Australia.

Diamond and Hayward<sup>13</sup> note that the most accessible kauri close to the sea and boat transport were removed first, and later, logs inland were moved, with the help of bullock teams. However, 'bullock roads' were suitable only in the more gentle country, and as these areas were cut over, felling was extended further back into the more rugged country. Here, the bushmen turned to 'skidded' roads made up of a row of smaller logs along which the large logs



*Kauri trees like this one were the basis of the timber industry.*  
Photo: Josiah Martin. Negative number 3004  
Auckland Institute and Museum collection.  
**Source:** Jean Garriock, Clive Sleeman and Stephen Crane 1991 'A Pictorial History of West Auckland' (West Auckland Historical Society Inc).



<sup>12</sup> E. Earle Vaile (1939) 'Waitakere National Park with a Short History of the Ranges' Waitakere National Centennial Park Citizens' Association.

<sup>13</sup> JT Diamond and BW Hayward (no date) *Kauri Timber Dams*. Lodestar Press

could be slid or rolled, and log chutes, for short distance transport.

According to Jim Brown (1992) in his chapter titled 'Timber working at Waitakere' in 'West Auckland Remembers Volume 2'<sup>14</sup> logging in the northern Ranges was away to a slow start compared with other parts of the Waitakere Ranges. Transport was the main difficulty. Waitakere roads at that time were only clay tracks, usable in the summer months but boggy quagmires in the winter, and to waste time trying to haul timber long distances under such conditions was uneconomic.

Brown (1992) notes that the first definite information on timber working in the Waitakere Valley area came from Ned Meikle, who claimed his father obtained work in the Cascade area as a bullock driver for John Smyth, in 1870. John Smyth, listed as 'Gentleman, of Scarborough Terrace, Auckland', had purchased most of McLeod's block of land from Wairere Road across to the Waitakere River and the Cascades, and also owned land in the Mokoroa Valley. The site of John Smyth's mill in 1870 is not recorded, but the sawn timber was taken to Henderson Stream and then barged to Auckland.

The completion of the railway from Waikumete to Kumeu on 18 July 1881 opened the northern Waitakere Ranges to logging by providing an economic means of transport for timber logs, which then only had to be hauled to the railway yards at Waimauku or Waitakere.



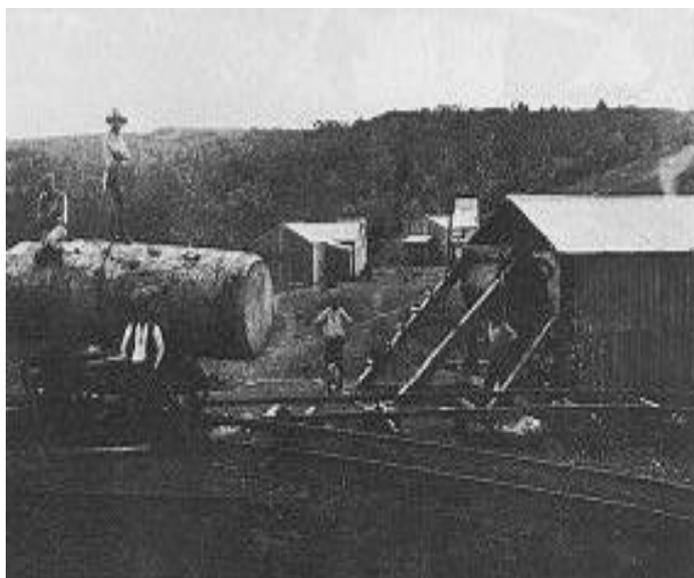
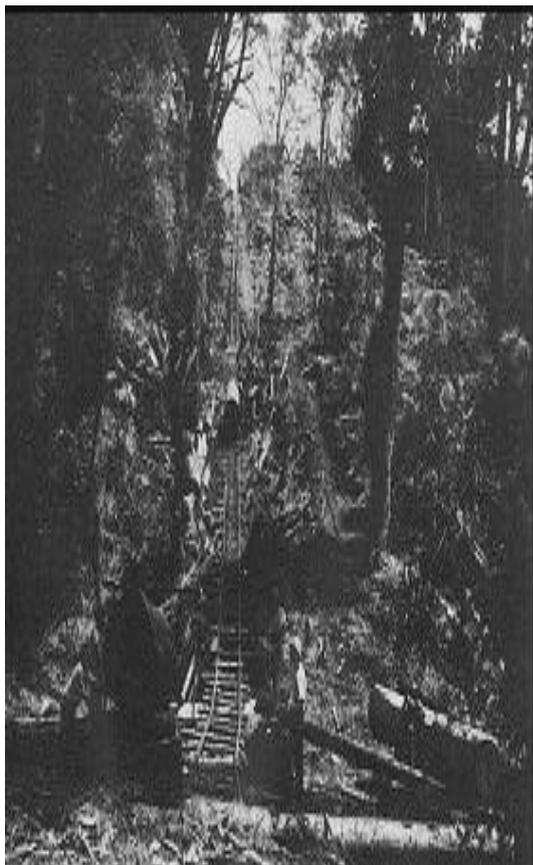
Harold Hunter, Pa Bethell and Tom Hunter with Bullock Team at the Waitakere railway yards.  
Source: Waitakere School Golden Jubilee Booklet 1971.



Kauri logs from Roe's Mokoroa Bush await loading onto railway wagons at Waimauku Station in 1882  
Source: Diamond and Hayward 1980 Waitakere Kauri

In 1881 Mathew Henry Roe, who had previously run the Cornwallis and Huia Sawmills, purchased 1800 acres in the Mokoroa (on the northern side of the Waitakere River) and the lower Waitakere Valleys. He began felling operations in the upper Mokoroa Valley and established a settlement called Roeville for the bush workers. He brought in a steam hauler to the ridge between the Mokoroa and Muriwai valleys to pull logs up the steep slopes from the Waitakere Valley (see photos below).

<sup>14</sup> James Northcote Bade (ed) (1992), *West Auckland Remembers, Volume 2*.



*Mathew Roe's steam hauler on the ridge between the Mokoroa and Muriwai Valleys pulled logs up the steep tramway incline from the Waitakere valley. As each section of valley was cut out, the tramway and hauler were moved further along the ridge.*  
**Source:** *Diamond and Hayward, 1980, 'Waitakere Kauri'.*

Ebenezer Gibbons purchased a block in front of Cascade Kauri Park, running up to Pukematakeo, in 1882, and constructed a bush tramline up what is now Tram Valley Road, across Cassel Stream west across the present Scenic Drive and down to the junction of Unity and Te Henga Roads. From there it swung south to the bank of the Waitipu Stream. There is some evidence that a small mill, driven by a water wheel, operated on the Waitipu Stream, but it is uncertain who used it. Mr Snell, a previous owner, had cleared the valley for farming and may have milled the timber on the flatter land but left the trees on the steeper slopes. The tramline from the Scenic Drive was a gentle downhill gradient and it is recorded that the trucks of timber operated by gravitation.

Another operator around the 1880s was Mr Wigmore, who worked timber in the area between Te Henga and Anawhata. John Neale Bethells records selling Mr Wigmore standing trees off his Anawhata block. This timber was taken along Smyth Road to Long Road. In those times, Smyth Road was often referred to as Wigmore Road. Mr Wigmore (senior) died in 1903 and his name is commemorated by Wigmore Bay, just south of Bethells Beach.

The booklet by Diamond and Hayward (1980)<sup>15</sup> contains a photograph of the small mill operating in the upper Waitakere Valley in the late 1800s to cut the kauri felled in the area to be flooded by the construction of the Waitakere Dam (see photo below).



This small mill in the upper Waitakere Valley in the late 1900s cut the kauri felled in the area to be flooded by the construction of the Waitakere dam. The site lies beneath the reservoir lake.  
**Source:** Diamond and Hayward 1980 'Waitakere Kauri'.

Brown (1992) records that in 1908 the Cashmore brothers sublet a contract to Short Bros (Bill and Owen) to work a stand of timber near O'Neill's farm. The timber was hauled by bullocks over a skidded road to the foot of the hillside up Te Henga Road. From there it was hauled on wooden tram rails to the top of the ridge (on the present-day Steam Hauler Track) by a stationary engine, then by horse wagon down Bethells Road to Waitakere Station. This job lasted about four years.

Since their early days in the 1870s, the Smyth family over several generations

had remained active in the timber business in the area. In latter times, Smyth's mill was sited alongside the Waitakere River at the junction of the present Te Henga and Bethells Roads. When Short Bros completed their contract around 1912, Smyths took over their tramline and used it to haul their timber to the top of the ridge, then by bullock wagon to Waitakere Station. It is thought the Smyths closed their mill about 1919, but they continued to haul logs from a block of land on Long Road until the early 1920s. From Waitakere Station, the logs appear to have been railed to a mill at Mount Eden. For several decades, Smyth's abandoned steam hauler sat across the road opposite Waitakere Railway station, while a steel derrick they brought up from Kennedy Bay toppled into the Te Henga wetland near their mill site and was never recovered.

It was late 1919 before the Kauri Timber Company (KTC) commenced constructing a bush tramline along the Waitakere Valley and up the hill (on the route of the Short Bros/ Smyth bush tramway) then down to the Waitakere Station. R.B. Croker in his booklet 'Over the Hill... Waitakere'<sup>16</sup> records that the KTC was the largest of several fellers operating in the area around Waitakere River/ Goldie's Bush/ Waitakere Township, and at one stage had 600 men employed in 38,000 acres of bush. Browne mentions that sixty-odd men were employed in the 'Waitakere area' (the Waitakere Valley/ Wairere areas). The KTC established no mill in the area, preferring to rail their logs to Auckland and their large Freeman's Bay sawmill.

The KTC had three large timber blocks in the area surrounding the wetland, including the Wainamu Valley, and two blocks on the north side of the wetland at Snows Bush and the Mokoroa Stream. In the 1920s they constructed driving dams on these blocks, a technique introduced early in the kauri logging days which allowed removal of vast quantities of logs from the more rugged areas.

---

<sup>15</sup> John T. Diamond and Bruce W. Hayward (1980) *Waitakere Kauri: A Pictorial History of the Kauri Timber Industry in the Waitakere Ranges, West Auckland* Lodestar Press.

<sup>16</sup> RB Croker (1973), *Over the Hill... Waitakere* Lodestar Press

The main dam of the five built in the Wainamu Valley was where the stream forked a few hundred metres above the camp site, which was where the present Wainamu tramping track crosses the stream. The logs were dragged by bullock and horse teams into the stream beds below the driving dams, or into the lake that formed above the driving dams (termed the backwater by the bushmen). They were washed down by the wave of water once the dam was 'tripped' (by all accounts a most impressive and deafening event, and in latter years, where a dam was reasonably accessible, quite a tourist attraction). If there were a number of tributaries in one valley, they were tripped at prearranged times so that their waters combined to maintain an even flow in the main stream. Brown (1992) records that the logs were driven down through the gorge into Brookfields Lake (Lake Wainamu) and taken by horse tram to near the outlet of the 'lagoon' (the Te Henga Wetland, once a navigable waterway).

Diamond and Hayward record driving dams constructed in the 1920s on both the Wainamu and the Wheeler Streams and on the Mokoroa Stream in Goldies Bush on the northern side of the Te Henga wetland. However, driving was very wasteful of timber as many of the logs moved by this method sustained considerable damage on their way downstream. Sapwood was also lost because of the time lapse between felling and milling – most logs lay in the creek beds for at least three months before the dams filled sufficiently for a 'drive'.



*Mokoroa Falls Dam, a typical Stringer dam built by Ebenezer Gibbons about 1920 Auckland Institute and Museum collection*



*The remains of a dam in the Wainamu Stream built about 1922, now overgrown with vegetation. Photo: B Hayward*

Croker (1973) contains a description by David Lowe of Lodestar Press of the system once the logs had been driven down into the 'lagoon' (now the Te Henga Wetland).

*'Once in the lake, the logs were rafted and towed by an ageing steam launch to the eastern head of the lake, where they were loaded onto the tramway and hauled along the valley floor, crossing marshy ground on sets of low trestles to the foot of the hill where the locomotive handed over to the rope operated from a steam hauler situated on the crown of the ridge. The loads were roped up and over the hill and dropped down to the other side to be collected by a second locomotive for the run to the Waitakere Station.'*

Croker records that the two small steam locomotives used in this operation arrived at Waitakere Station on a railway wagon, dismantled, and were assembled by local smiths.

The launch used to raft the logs would also tow a barge fitted with a power-operated drag worked from a long boom, in order to keep encroaching reeds from blocking the channel. The lagoon abounded with eels, and Brown relates a story of an eel hit by the launch propeller that weighed forty pounds (18.1 kilograms).

As far as can be established, 'the landing' at the head of the 'lagoon' where the logs were transferred to the bush tramway was located near the Brissenden Stream. Brown records that running eastward, the bush tramway followed the northern side of the river for some distance, crossed the Waitakere River and continued for a short way on the south side of the river, before again crossing the River to the spot where the locomotive handed over to the steam hauler at the base of the hill at the head of the valley (near Te Henga Road). A few remnants of the embankments for the old bush tramway may still be seen in farmland at the base of the valley.

The incline up this hill was too steep for the locomotive, and the steam hauler (or bush hauler) installed at the top of the hill at the highest point on Steam Hauler Track, hauled the logs on their bogie, with a long wire rope, up the hill and along the ridge close to the path of the present Steam Hauler Track, following the old tramline route previously constructed by Short Bros. From the top, the hauler lowered the bogie by gravity down a valley to the south of the Bethells Road through land now belonging to the Jonkers. The bogie was met at the bottom of the hill near the present junction of Bethells and Wairere Roads<sup>17</sup> by the second steam engine and towed along what is now Bethells Road past the primary school before turning over the Kumeu River to Waitakere Station.



*The bush hauler Photo J Brown*

*Source: Jim Brown 'Timber Working in Waitakere' in West Auckland Remembers Vol. 2' 1992*

Brown explains that the haul where the timber climbed the hill from Te Henga Road, although long, was not as difficult as it may seem. As one log was going down the hill towards the Waitakere Station, another one would be coming up, the two tending to balance one another out. The hauler acted as a winch or brake as required. A siding was provided at the top for the passing of logs and empty bogies.



*Bullock teams pull wagon loads of sawn timber from Goldie's small Mokoroa sawmill along Waitakere Road towards the Waitakere Station in 1911.*

*Source: Diamond and Hayward 1980 'Waitakere Kauri'.*

It was noted by Brown that some huge logs came out of the area, like the one which was loaded onto the train at Waitakere Station but was too big to go through the tunnel at Tunnel Hill (on the way to Swanson). It was shunted back to the Waitakere station yards where slabs had to be

<sup>17</sup> Arty Jonkers (2010), personal communication.

pit-sawn off its sides. Railed to Auckland, the logs were unloaded at the wharf, then dumped into the harbour and floated round to the KTC timber mill at Freemans Bay. David Goldie and Sons also contracted with KTC to use their tramway for a short period, and other fellers and millers brought their timber to the railway station by bullock teams and a traction engine.

Brown relates an accident that occurred on the hauler. The wire broke and Jim Brown, the hauler driver, received injuries from the whip back of the broken rope, while another bushman was more seriously injured when struck by the careering log. He was carried out along a track over Tunnel Hill to Swanson, where he was met by an ambulance.



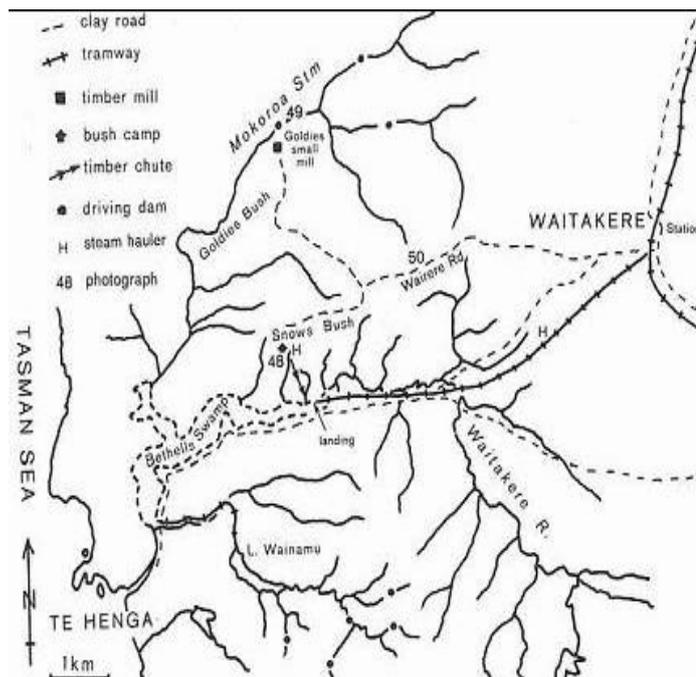
Kauri logs, Bethells Road 1938

The KTC operations lasted for almost six years, but by the end of 1925 the two KTC locomotives were sold, the tram rails were uplifted and together with the stationary engines, were shifted to their next job at Great Barrier Island. Browne estimates that KTC extracted 31 million super feet of their own timber from the Waitakere Valley/Wairere area, and some 4 million for David Goldie and Sons.

An area stretching from Long Road eastwards across the Cascade Stream to the watershed boundary of the Waitakere Reservoir (the

present Cascade Kauri Park) was also lined up for felling. Brown records that Ben Copedo and Johnny Diamond were all set to climb the trees and bleed them for gum prior to felling, when the Auckland City Council, in 1924, began negotiating for the purchase of the area as a public reserve. When the council acquired this area in 1925, they paid KTC for the standing trees. The area was saved just in time, some tracks had been cut and plans were afoot to dynamite the Cascade falls to allow logs to be more easily shot over them.

During the Second World War, the Auckland City Council permitted an ugly gash to be cut up the hillside from the Waitakere River at Cascade Kauri Park. The intention was to suspend a wire rope up the hillside from the present parking area and anchor it to a kauri tree on top of the ridge. Dead and dying trees would be felled and lowered down the rope on pulleys. There was an outcry over the damage it would cause to the park and the idea was dropped. The area levelled to handle the logs became the present Cascade/ Kauri parking area.



Extent of Kauri Timber Company and David Goldie's kauri timber operations in the Wainamu, Waitakere and mokoroa Valleys in the 1910s and 1920s. **Source:** Diamond and Hayward, 1980 "Waitakere Kauri".

### 2.2.3 Gum digging

Vaile (1939) gives the following account of gum digging in early Auckland.

*'...the country was over-run with predatory diggers, a motley gang of all sorts...down-and-outs of every kind and degree. Anyhow, these folks had to battle for a living which was highly speculative. Sometimes the rewards were rich, but oftener very poor, maintaining men only on the very edge of existence... A digger's outfit cost next to nothing. He erected his camp from materials collected on the spot and lined his dwelling with old sacks. The chimney was built of sods and often capped with a kerosene tin from which the top and bottom had been removed... All the plant he needed*



*Gumdiggers in the Waitakere Ranges. Photo: E. Earle Vaile. Source: Jean Garriock, Clive Sleeman and Stephen Crane 1991 'A Pictorial History of West Auckland' (West Auckland Historical Society Inc).*

*was a spear, a knife and a kit. After securing any 'loafers' (lumps of gum protruding from the soil) with a spear....he probed the ground and experience taught him knowledge of the feel of gum, which he then dug up. Later the use of the spear diminished and 'paddocking' was followed. This meant that the whole of the ground was dug ... (up and cleaned for sale). Later still, swamps were drained and washing machinery employed.'*

Gum digging was also closely associated with the timber felling industry. 'Climbing rights' were obtained from the timber companies and gum was found in the forks of the kauri branches, or 'bled' before the trees were felled.

The special train known as the 'Gumdiggers' Special' took family groups of prospectors at weekends from the city to the Waitakere Station for many years. These activities provided at best only a precarious living, but most families on the weekend train were likely trying to supplement the family income in economically hard times.

### 2.2.4 Flax

One of the earliest commercial ventures in the area was flax milling. Vaile (1939) mentions a flax mill in the Waitakere Valley worked by Burton and Foster, who took over from a Mr Fraser. Another flax mill was established by Edward Brissington (sic) in 1870 near the Waihoroi or Brissenden stream close to the Landing (the embarkation point for canoe travel at the top of the Waitakere Swamp) for processing the flax that grew so abundantly in the marshy land. This was located on 384 acres of leased land fronting onto the Waitakere River, and provided employment for many local people. The Kawerau people established a camp by the Waihoroi or Brissenden Stream while they worked in the flax mill. The cut flax was loaded



*A typical flax mill of the early days showing the raw product and the finished article, mainly used in rope and twine making. Photo: Lloyd Astley*

onto canoes and towed up the swamp to the mill to be scotched or heckled (the fibre separated from the fleshy part). Diamond (1966) notes that as well as producing flax fibre, unsuccessful attempts were made to weave flax into cloth and to manufacture a type of paper.

### 2.2.5 Shipwreck

The West Coast, with its large swells, strong prevailing on-shore winds, unpredictable squalls, surf swept ocean beaches and rocks and sudden sea mists, has gained a fearsome reputation among seafarers, and is treated with caution and respect. Despite that, a number of vessels have been lost. Of the 38 vessels of significance that were lost between Raglan and the Kaipara Harbour between 1840 and 1981, just one is recorded as foundering off Bethells/Te Henga.

Peter Buffett<sup>18</sup> records that on 16 September 1853 the Helena, a barque of 265 tons owned in Sydney and en route from Melbourne to the Hokianga, was driven ashore and wrecked at Waitakere Bay (Bethells Beach). For almost two weeks the Helena had fought against westerly storms and before being driven ashore had tried in vain to enter the Hokianga, Manukau and Kaipara harbours. Her Master, Captain Brown, had only recently taken command after being wrecked in the Australian Bight. He perished with six of Helena's crew. There were four survivors, who were cared for and assisted by Te Kawerau a Maki.

### 2.2.6 Early Access

As may be seen from the map at Figure 8, in pre-European times the Waitakere Valley was the major route for Maori from the west coast inland to Swanson and beyond, and Te Henga was at the junction of the coastal track and this inland track.

When the first Europeans journeyed via the Kaipara to the West Coast and the Manukau Harbour, they used the Maori trail which ran along the ridge tops. The fastest routes in and out of Bethells also used this track network (Smythe Ridge track, Ridge Road Track, Cutty Grass track, the Ian Wells Track (originally known as Wasley's) and thence down West Coast Road through Oratia. The cutting of the Old Coach Road (later Mountain Road), made the road shorter but very steep.

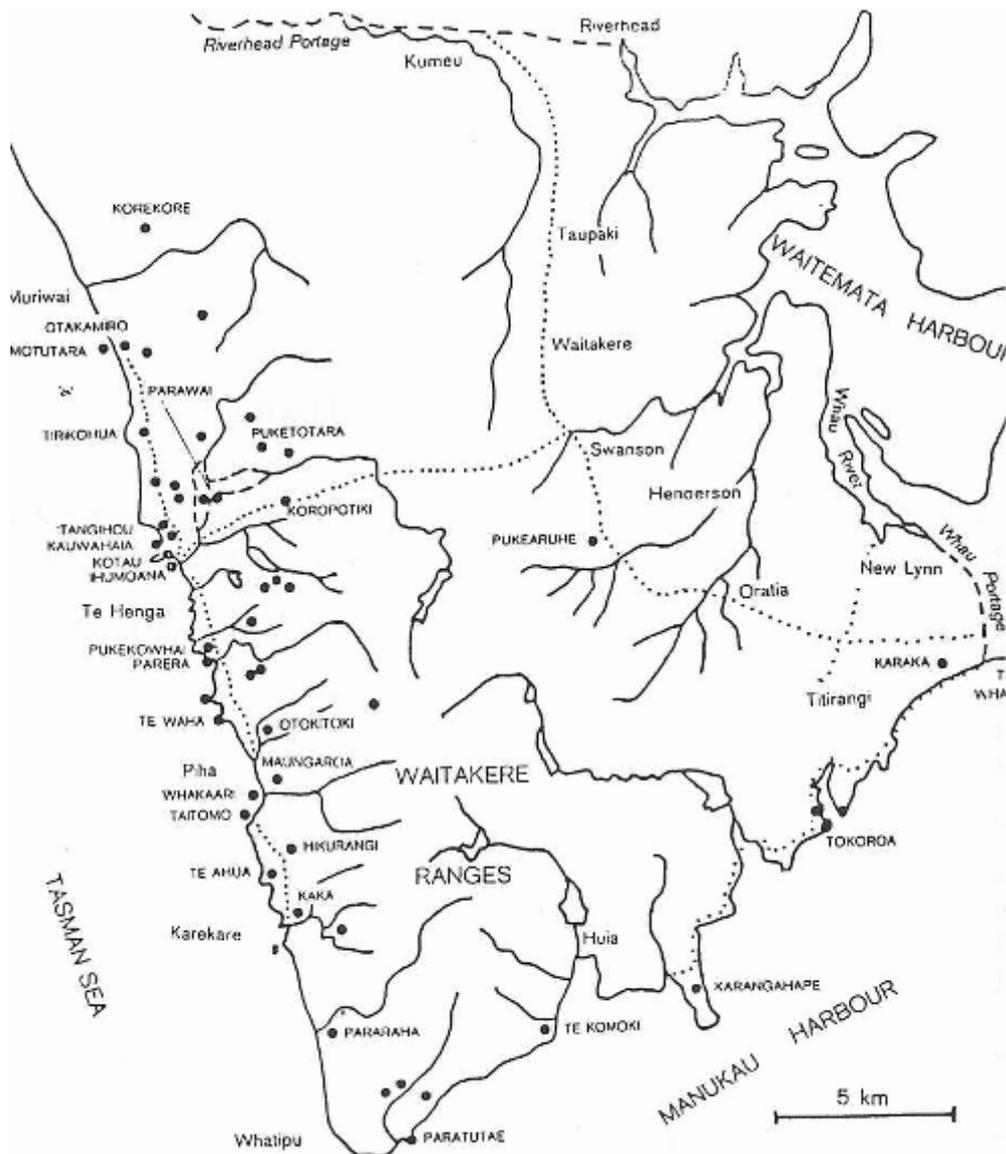
As described by Vaile (1939), the hauling of heavy kauri logs along the early tracks and roads made of them an indescribable mess.

*'Everywhere the roads were badly cut up, but in the dips the effect was truly awful. Before the log descending the slope could take the opposite rise, it had scooped a great quantity of earth out of the bottom. Subsequent logs dug deeper and deeper and so on, until the condition described in the following well-known anecdote (attributed to Mr Wasley) was arrived at.*

---

<sup>18</sup> Peter Buffett 'The Anxious Shore: Shipwrecks on Auckland's West Coast, Raglan to South Head Kaipara, 1843-1982' from James Northcote Bade (ed) 1990 'West Auckland Remembers' (West Auckland Historical Society Inc)

A bullocky personally conducting his log and urging his team with the usual energetic eloquence of those strong days saw a good hat in a hollow. Halting his team, he picked up the hat and was astonished to find a man underneath. Having rescued this unfortunate he enquired how he had avoided complete engulfment, when the saved one remarked that he had been standing on his horse. Would his rescuer kindly haul the horse out so that he might retrieve his new saddle? This tradition of the olden times is known to many but I venture to recount it here in order that all may realise the condition of the roads in now forgotten times.'



**Figure 8** Map of West Auckland showing the canoe portages between the harbours and the known inland Maori walking tracks. Location of pa sites (dots) together with some of their names, are also shown.  
**Source:** Diamond and Hayward 1990 *Prehistoric sites in West Auckland* in Northcote-Bade (ed)

The extension of the railway from Waikumete to Waitakere Township and Kumeu in 1881 meant that people and goods travelling into Auckland could now do so by train. At some point after 1881, a number of the settlers including Messrs Bethell, Foxall and Bacon cut a

track across the Waitakere River. This became known as the Waitakere Trail and enabled the settlers faster access to the railway station at Waitakere Township and the wider Auckland community.



On the road from Swanson to the Waitakere Falls in the 1880s.  
**Source:** Northcote Bade (ed) 1990



Mr and Mrs F. Bethell and Peter. Carting wool to the Waitakere Railway Station.  
**Source:** Waitakere School Golden Jubilee Booklet 1971

Some visitors to Te Henga walked up the coast from Piha and Karekare, having taken the boat from Onehunga to Whatipu. Others would walk out from the Waitakere Railway Station.

It was not until 1982 that the Bethells Road was sealed and Te Henga Road opened as an alternative route down into the valley from Scenic Drive.

### 2.2.7 Early tourism

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, nature lovers, trampers and families began visiting the West Coast. Diamond (1953) notes that the Waitakere Falls were one of the sightseeing attractions of the Ranges<sup>19</sup>. Andreas Reischek, an Austrian naturalist, journeyed to view the falls in April 1880, and left the following account of his impressions:

*'From a projecting part of the cliff one can observe the marvel of the masses of water plunging over 100 metres. I climbed down the dangerous wet cliff face and had from there an even more overpowering sight. With a deafening roar, a column of water, dissolved into white foam, dives into the dark-green pool, from which white clouds of water-spray rise like bright banners. Light-green fern trees, sprayed by never-ending dew, frame this majestic picture.'*



'Te Awa Kotuku' or the Waitakere Falls, c1880.  
 G. Murdoch Collection  
**Source:** Northcote-Bade 1990

Reduced flows in the river following the upstream construction of the Waitakere Dam in 1910 substantially reduced the size of the falls.

Many of the early tourists camped near the Bethells Homestead, and in about 1903 the Bethells opened a Boarding House on their land at Te Henga. Woodward (2004) describes

<sup>19</sup> John T Diamond 1953 *'Once ... the Wilderness'*.

how guests would be met off the train at Waitakere Township, where John Bethell owned a twelve-acre paddock for his horses to rest before the homeward trip. It was a seven mile trip from the station to the guest house by trap or gig, with a rest at Black Bridge. At the northern end of Bethells Beach, the luggage would be transferred to the konaki for the remainder of the trip along the beach. Arrivals and departures had to be timed for days when the tide would allow the konaki to be driven along the beach. One early visitor to Te Henga wrote as follows:



Having a rest. Auckland Institute and Museum Collection. Negative number C5747. Garriock, Sleeman and Crane 1991 'A Pictorial History of West Auckland' (West Auckland Historical Society Inc).

*'At best, Te Henga is too inaccessible ever to be popular with the average tourist, who is something of a 'tenderfoot' as well as a 'new chum'; but for a healthy man or woman who would breathe pure, untainted air; who can lie hard, eat well, climb, ride, and swim; who is not afraid to dispense with conventions and come close to elemental things – or who would learn the unsuspected grip that Nature can lay on a blasé soul – the experience is to be recommended.'*<sup>20</sup>

By 1912 Te Henga had become a fashionable place to holiday, with plentiful seafood and farm produce available. Mrs Bethell was very well known for her wonderful meals, and as many as eighty guests or more were accommodated at any one time<sup>21</sup>. During the years of the Second World War, rationing of petrol made travel by civilians to the coast more difficult; however the guest house was often used by service personnel on leave from the Pacific War.

### 2.2.8 Te Henga School

Woodward (2004) records that the Education Board provided a teacher in the 1920's and briefly established a school at the Bethells property 'Te Henga' for children from neighbouring farms. The Waitakere School Golden jubilee booklet notes that Education Board requirements were that at least nine children had to attend before a teacher could be supplied, and to make up the numbers other children, including some from Piha, were accommodated, clothed and cared for by Mrs Bethell. The children would ride over and spend the school week at Te Henga, staying in the guesthouses (a source of supplementary income for the Bethells family).



Te Henga school children performing a play.  
From left: Nancy Bethell, Trudy Bethell, John Bethell, Merle Mobbs  
Front: Jocelyn Bethell and Bill Thorpe  
**Source:** Waitakere School Golden Jubilee Booklet 1971

<sup>20</sup> RL Huntington 'Close to Nature in New Zealand' (no date provided)

<sup>21</sup> Jubilee Committee 1971 'Waitakere School Golden Jubilee 1921-1971.'

## 2.2.9 Subdivision in the 1900s

From the 1930's onwards when increasingly viable roads made holiday retreats in the area a feasible option, parcels of land owned by the families out at Bethells/ Te Henga began to be sold off to friends, family and regular visitors to the area. These included the three sites sold by John Henry O'Neill at the base of Erangi Point and on the coast opposite, on the northern side of the Waitakere River. The island pas of Ihumoana and Kauwaihaia were sold by Kawerau elders in 1953 and 1963 respectively, with the proceeds to be invested in development of marae at Orakei and Pukaki.



**Figure 9:** In this early aerial photo (circa 1940) the settlements on Tasman View Road and at Te Henga Coastal Village are yet to be constructed, and the sand dune flows through from the beach to Lake Wainamu.

**Figure 10:** Te Henga Coastal Village and surf club



Subdivision on Tasman View Road began in 1953. In 1973 the Bethells also sold 64 acres (26 hectares) of foreshore to the Waitemata County Council which became the Te Henga Park, the first step in opening the beach to the general public. A further large lot was sold by the Bethells in 1974 when allowance was made for a subdivision of 21 sections on the flats near the beach (the Te Henga Coastal Village, see Figure 10).



Today there are still a number of large properties in the Bethells/ Te Henga area owned by descendents of the original settler families, with the Bethells property remaining the largest single privately owned property in the Waitakere district.

### 2.2.10 Old Timers

Near the beginning of the Te Henga/ Muriwai walkway are the crumbling remains of an old chimney, marking the site of the cottage belonging to Jack Wells, known locally as 'Huapai Jack'. Jack was a bushman and shepherd, and a veteran of the First World War, where he served in the cavalry. It is said that of 85 men in his mounted cavalry unit, only five survived. A bachelor all his life, he lived at Te Henga, making the return trip into Huapai or Swanson on his trusty horse 'Bill Ace', who could find his way home on his own. Over the river at Te Henga lived Lou Shaw, another First World War veteran, who had served with the artillery. The story goes that the two men seldom spoke, owing to an incident in the war when the cavalry came under 'friendly fire' from an artillery unit.

According to Dan Baker, Jack always had a half gallon jar of wine in his saddle bags and 'he was never slow to offer you a swig, but he was a true gentleman and never pestered you to drink if you didn't want to'.<sup>22</sup>



*Remains of 'Huapai Jack's' cottage*

### 2.2.11 Conclusion

Today, the land in Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley reveals little of the early European history of the area - those busy days of extractive industries – gum digging, pit saws, crashing trees, driving dams, timber tramways and flax mills. What remains, as for example the remnants of the driving dams and the embankments for the bush tramway, is fast fading into the bush and farmland. The names of many of the local roads, streams and other landmarks reflect some of the early settlers and activities, for example O'Neils Beach, Wigmore Bay, Bethells Road, Steam Hauler Track and the Olaf Stream (for Olaf Peterson, an early photographer of the area hailing from Swanson). In addition, a number of local people, notably Mary Woodward, have recorded aspects of the early European settlers' lives in the Bethells/ Te Henga area. However, there is little 'on the ground' interpretation available to bring the past alive, the exception being the historic interpretation panel at Cascade Kauri Park.



Where appropriate, the LAP should explore and support ways to research and record the area's history, for example the recording of the stories of the older residents and the mapping and recording of the remnants of the bush tramway in the Waitakere Valley. In addition, appropriate opportunities should be found to provide more 'on the ground' historical interpretation.

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication Jack Wells to Dan Baker, around 1971

## 2.3 CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES

The study area was the main area of settlement of Te Kawerau a Maki. Archaeologically, with over 75 recorded Maori sites, the Te Henga area is known to have been one of the most densely settled areas of Auckland's west coast (Hayward and Diamond 1978)<sup>23</sup>. This is undoubtedly due to the rich natural resources and the flat land available for cultivation and settlement, especially inland around the Te Henga Wetland and Lakes Wainamu and Kawaupaku. Most of the coastal sites are occupation sites close to favoured fishing points and usually beside a source of fresh water. There are also lookouts. Inland, many sites are located on rich sandy soils that were prized for kumara growing, and close to the natural resources in the swamps and lakes. Kumara storage sites are common around the lakes.

The great range of artefactual material recovered in the area indicates that Te Kawerau a Maki had far-reaching contacts throughout the north and south islands. Rod Clough (1997)<sup>24</sup> records that the bulk of the adzes (62%) are manufactured from Waipapa group greywackes derived either from the islands of the Hauraki Gulf or from Northland, while other rocks came from as far afield as the Nelson mineral belt (argillite), Mayor island in the Bay of Plenty (obsidian) and the West coast of the south Island (nephrite jade). Food remains, in particular cockles, also attest to considerable local movement as these could only be obtained from the harbours – the Manukau to the south, the Kaipara to the north, and the Hauraki Gulf.

Clough (1997) observes that the form of the artefacts give a clear indication of the many activities. The adzes and chisels, and half finished canoes all attest to an active canoe building industry, and in addition there are a considerable number of items relating to fishing, clothing manufacture and warfare.

Te Henga also has remains relating to early European occupation and industries such as timber, as described in section 2.2.3.

### 2.3.1 Cultural Heritage Inventory Sites

The Cultural heritage Inventory (CHI) is a computer database that contains information on historic and cultural heritage within the Auckland Region. The CHI includes:

- archaeological sites
- historic buildings, places, objects and structures
- maritime places and areas
- reported historic places and areas
- historic trees and other botanical sites

In addition, it includes places that are recognised by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) in their register, places scheduled for protection in District Plans and archaeological sites recorded in the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) Site Record File. Many other historic places from various sources have been added to the database for their heritage values. These sources include Territorial Authorities, NZHPT,

---

<sup>23</sup> Hayward, B.W. and Diamond J. (1978) *Prehistoric Archaeological Sites of the Waitakere Ranges, West Auckland, New Zealand*. Auckland Regional Authority.

<sup>24</sup> Rod Clough (1997), *Large Properties Project – Te Henga: Preliminary Assessment of Heritage Sites and Management Issues*. Waitakere City Council.

Department of Conservation (DoC), Ministry for the Environment (MfE), NZAA, Department of Anthropology University of Auckland, historic societies and iwi authorities. The CHI of itself does not afford formal protection, simply identifying sites, but some of these items may also be protected by legislation, and/or the District Plan.

The Historic Places Act 1992 automatically protects any archaeological site (being classified as evidence of human occupation or use prior to 1900) whether the site is listed, scheduled or otherwise, including shipwrecks. The Historic Places Trust has the power to schedule items of particular historic interest, and permission must be received from the Trust to modify or destroy an archaeological site, or a scheduled item, in addition to any resource consent requirements.

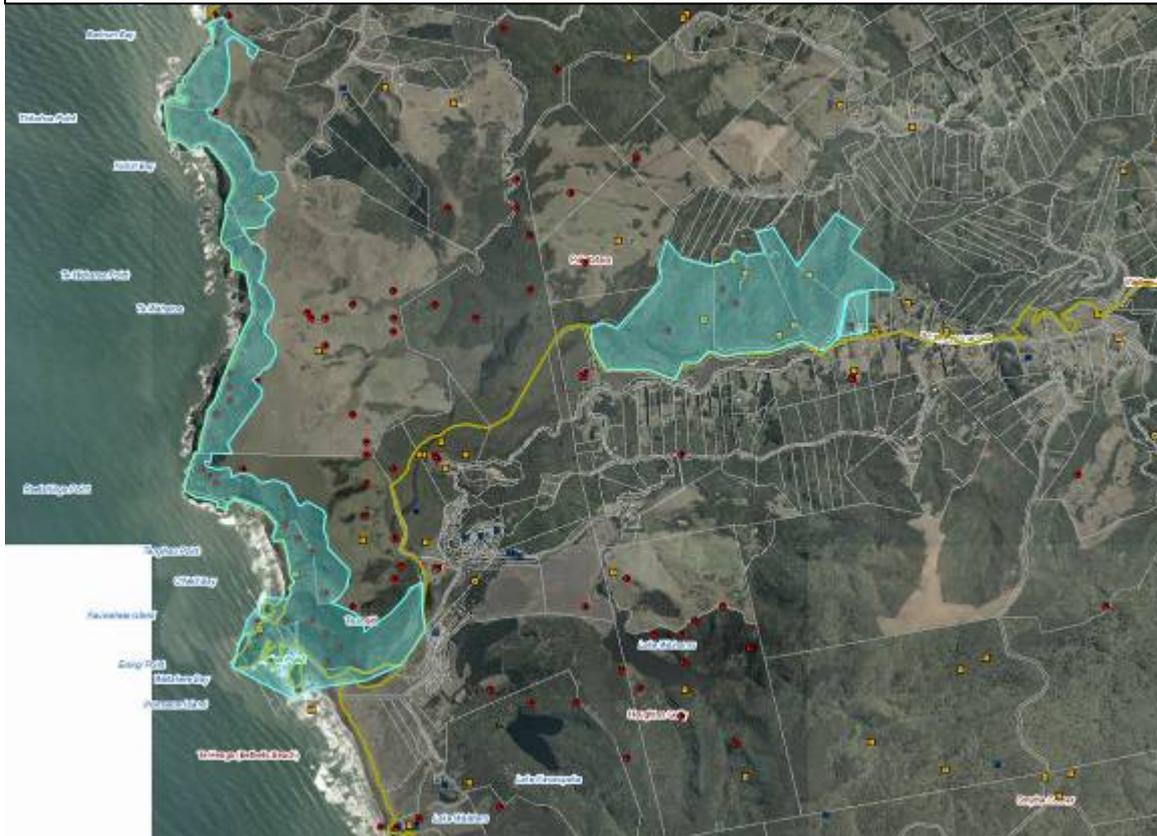
The Waitakere City Council District Plan also lists a number of items of particular local, regional or national interest, including archaeological sites, evidence of past industries, built heritage, and heritage vegetation. Resource consent is required for modification or destruction of these sites, other than for minor repairs.

The map at Figure 11 illustrates the location of the known heritage sites from the CHI and NZAA databases and the Waitakere City Council District Plan. The table below provides a brief description of each item:

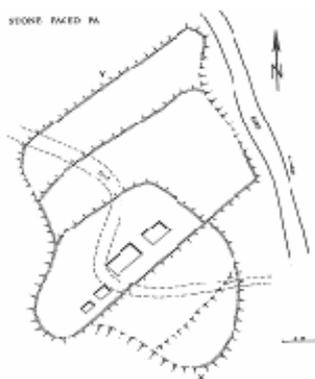
CHI NUMBER	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
1180	Wheeler Stream, Bethells	Timber Stringer Dam- built 1920's
1181	Wainamu Stream, Bethells	Timber Stringer Dam- built 1920's
3359	Erangi Place	Building-dwelling
3341	Tasman View Road	Building-dwelling
3340	Tasman View Road	Building-dwelling
3628	Tasman View Road	Building-dwellings
3350	Bethells Road	Farm house site/farm site
16166	Bethells Road	Exotic trees
3351	Bethells Road	Building-dwelling
1073	Bethells Road	House site
1298	Bethells Road	Flax mill site
4965	Bethells Road	Settlement
1066	Bethells Road	Hut site
6723	Bethells Road	Pa (ring ditch)
3352	Bethells Road	Building-dwelling
1647	Bethells Road	Occupation site
7753	Bethells Road	Pits
4958	Bethells Road	Midden/ burials
6726	Bethells Road	Pa (ridge top)/ stonework/ hut site
4973	Bethells Road	Midden
4974	Bethells Road	Shelter midden
7357	Bethells Road	Pit
1668	Bethells Road	Graves
3360	Bethells Road	Building-dwelling/cottage
3362	Bethells Road	Monument/flag staff/plaque site
3363	Bethells Road	Building-dwelling/ homestead cottages
4972	Bethells Road	Midden
7968	Bethells Road	Pits/terraces
14244	Bethells Road	Taro
1650	Bethells Road	Occupation site/cultivation pits
6727	Bethells Road	Pa (headland)
990	Long Road	Midden

CHI NUMBER	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
8392	Long Road	Terraces
1063	Waitakere Ranges Park	Cowan's House Site
1072	Waitakere Ranges Park	House site - Beasley's Shanty
1297	Bethells Road, Te Henga	Burton's Flaxmill site
1447	Waitakere Ranges Park	Snow's Bush Hauler
1463	Waitakere Ranges	Boat landing - Flax Landing
1464	Waitakere Ranges	Boat landing - Snows Bush Landing
1480	Waitakere Ranges	Log chute Snow's Bush
1558	Waitakere Ranges	Log Chute Water Hole
1632	Waitakere Ranges	O'Neill's Stockyards
1669	Waitakere	Post-European Maori Graves
3353	Waitakere	Building- pa site dwelling
4956	Waitakere	Terraces Kotau
4967	O'Neill Bay, Te Henga	Midden (shell)
4968	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Midden (shell)
4969	Northern end of Waitakere Bay	Trees - indigenous
4970	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Midden (shell)
4976	Northern end of O'Neill Bay	Midden (shell)
4977	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Midden (shell) / ?terraces
4978	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Midden (shell)
4989	Muriwai Beach, Rodney	Midden (shell)
5079	Muriwai- Te Henga	Midden (shell)
6728	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Pa (Cliff)
6730	Muriwai Beach, Rodney	Pa (Headland) Tirikohua
7352	Waitakere River, Te Henga	?Pa (Ridge)
7358	Waitakere River, Te Henga- Rodney	Pits
7366	Muriwai- Te Henga	Pit/ Midden (shell)
7965	Te Henga, Rodney	Pits/ Terraces / Trees- indigenous
8781	Te Henga, Rodney	Cave/ Midden (shell)
8782	Te Henga, Rodney	Rock shelter/ midden (shell)/ trees - indigenous
9020	Te Henga Rodney	Pa Headland Kotau / Erangi
9021	Waitakere Bay, Te Henga	Pa (Island)
9233	Tangihau Point, Te Henga	Pa (Headland) Tangihau
9236	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Pit/ Midden (shell)
9425	O'Neills Bay, Te Henga, Rodney	Terraces / Karaka
9598	Kauwahaia Island, Waitakere Ranges Regional Park	Pa (Island) Kauwahaia
9796	O'Neill Bay, Te Henga	Terrace / midden (shell)
9797	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Midden (shell) / terrace / trees-indigenous
10324	O'Neill Bay, Te Henga	Midden (shell) / burial
10327	Te Henga, Bethells Beach	Burial Erangi Point
10331	Bethells Beach, Te Henga	Burial cave
10337	O'Neills Bay, Te Henga	Pa (Headland)
10623	Te Henga Recreational Reserve	Findspot (Flake)
11477	Waitakere River, Te Henga	Burial (Cave)
17867	Te Henga Beach, Waitakere Ranges	Midden / Karaka trees

**Figure 11: Cultural Heritage Sites in the Bethells/ Te Henga/ Waitakere Valley Area**



Of particular interest are the pa sites in the Te Henga/ Bethells/ Waitakere Valley area. There were many defensive pa built at different times on islands and high points along the coast and inland, especially associated with rivers which provided a water supply. Among the most distinctive were a famous pa built on totara poles in the Te Henga wetland itself, probably in the lagoon where the Mokoroa stream joins the Waitakere River. This pa was no longer in existence at the time of the Ngapuhi invasion in the 1820s.



There were 2 pa overlooking Lake Wainamu, one at the eastern end of the lake on the prominent rounded rocky knob known to the Europeans as 'Plum Pudding', and another on a spur 50 metres above the south shore of the lake. This pa has been known as Wakatipi, or more relevantly, Pakowhatu (the pa with the distinctive stone retaining walls). This pa site contains a platform and four large terraces, all with stone retaining walls, a feature that is unique in the Auckland isthmus.

Plan of Pakowhatu - the stone faced pa  
**Source:** Waitakere Ranges Protection Society (1978)  
*Wainamu Te Henga A study*

### **2.3.2 NZ Archaeological Association Site Recording Scheme Upgrade Project**

The New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Recording Scheme Upgrade Project report in 2007 details the condition of some of Waitakere City's archaeological sites as at 2007. 76% of Maori sites visited in the City were shell midden remains from food preparation and gathering.

The study found site condition to be variable but generally most sites were in poorer condition than first recorded (in the report Prehistoric Archaeological Sites of Waitakere Ranges and West Auckland 1978). For many of the coastal middens that were assessed, only remnant scatters were found in areas where large intact middens had been previously recorded. The report suggests that coastal erosion and wind are the main causes for damage to these sites.

The modification and loss of other sites is largely due to natural processes and property development. A number of sites were not found during the survey, of these at least five were destroyed and 27.6% thought to have been destroyed (mostly through residential development).

### **2.3.3 Conclusion**

Archaeological and historic remnants are often fragile. While many landowners are aware of the importance of the sites and do what they can to protect them, others may not. In order to reduce damage to important cultural heritage sites, the LAP should explore the possibility of regular monitoring of the condition of known sites, particularly the important sites, with specific recommendations as to how the damage might be remedied, mitigated or avoided in respect of each site or group of sites.

The LAP might also consider what action might be taken to increase general awareness of the cultural heritage of the area, and in particular awareness by owners of heritage sites on privately owned land. In this way, sites may be better respected and cared for.

