

4. Selected site and land area descriptions

The following is a selection of the sites and landscape areas that were recorded and mapped during the present project. The selection was based on the size, type and amount of information that was obtainable from the purpose-flown aerial photographs. The air photos were labelled with a mnemonic, e.g., Run C at Porangahau is PORC (see Fig. 1). (Individual photographs in the run, and control points, were added to create alpha-numeric symbols for each.) One site was mapped from a New Zealand Aerial Mapping photograph taken in 1944. Unless otherwise indicated, all these sites existed on the ground at the time of compiling the record.

4.1 HERBERTVILLE

The southernmost area of the survey is Herbertville, where the Wainui River occupies a small valley with a sweeping river course and no meanders. The only pā (V24/7 and V24/76) are located on a small, unnamed stream that meanders from west to east into the Wainui River. This stream enters the Wainui River about 500 m upstream from the Herbertville bridge.

Figure 5 shows V24/7, a pā and a possible pā on a tributary of the Wainui River. Both sites were mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs HBV (4 February 1998). The grid references for each were measured using a GPS. The definite pā, V2417, has been identified by the double ditch and bank defences.

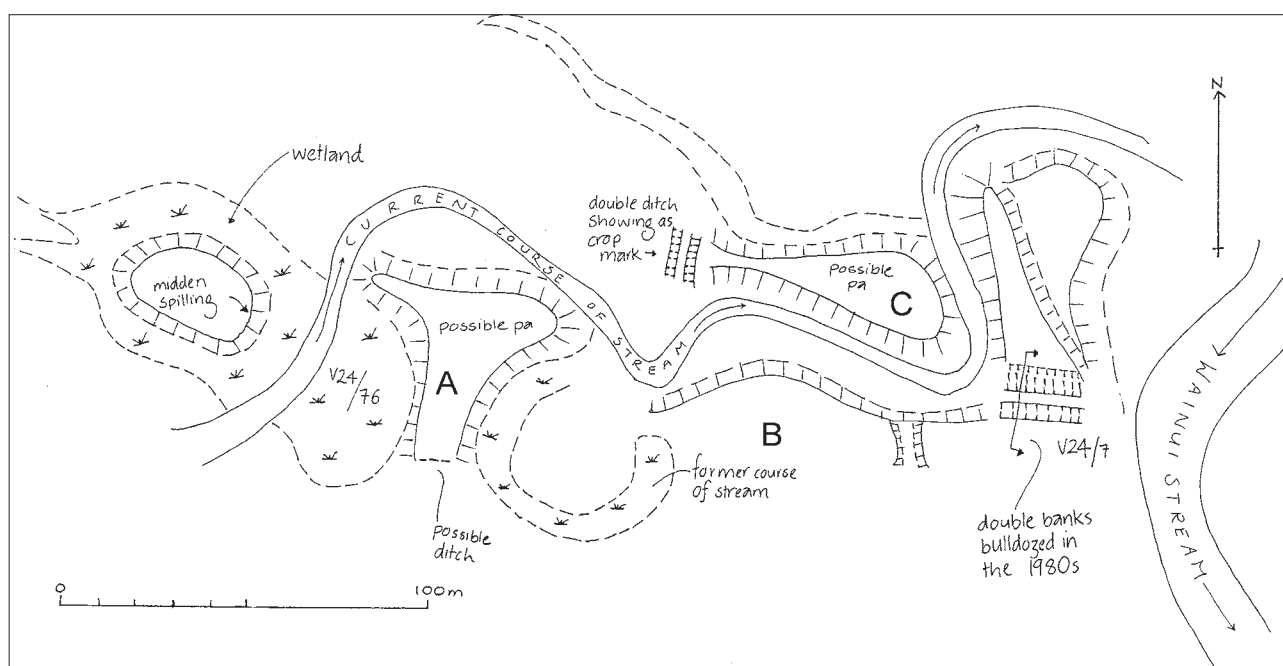


Figure 5. Plan of sites V24/7 and V24/76 adjacent to the Wainui Stream at Herbertville. Mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs HBV 4 February 1998.

Bulldozed in the last decade, they are now revealed by crop marks, except for a small length of double ditch and bank on the easternmost one. This pā is a small elevated narrow point 50 m long and 23 m wide at its southern end, narrowing to about 8 m at its northern end. It appears to have been defended by a double ditch and bank, which is 23 m wide and some 12 m from inner bank edge of the inner bank to outer edge of the ditch. There may be a western extension of this pā (B) along the elevated riverbank, marked by a prominent ditch at right angles to the road, while the eastern lateral defence lies under the present road (not shown on Fig. 5). On the northern side of the stream, there exists what can also be tentatively identified as a pā (C). It cannot be seen on the older vertical photos but a possible cropmark of a double ditch is visible on the purpose-flown photographs HBV (4 February 1998). These show two possible ditches 10 m long enclosing a point 75 m from west to east.

Figure 5 also shows site V24/76, 200 m west of V24/7. The site comprises a possible pā (A) on the southern bank of the current course of the river, and an island or swamp pā to the west which has a compact lens of midden (primarily pipi, *Paphies australis*) spilling from its eastern aspect. The island measures approximately 35 × 25 m; the patch of midden measures 3 m across. The possible pā was formed by the former stream course that almost created an island on which the site is located. The pā is 45 m wide at the northern end. A ditch may have been located on the narrow piece of land between the former stream meanders. In 1998, midden comprising oven stones, charcoals and broken pipi (*Paphies australis*) were recorded at the site.



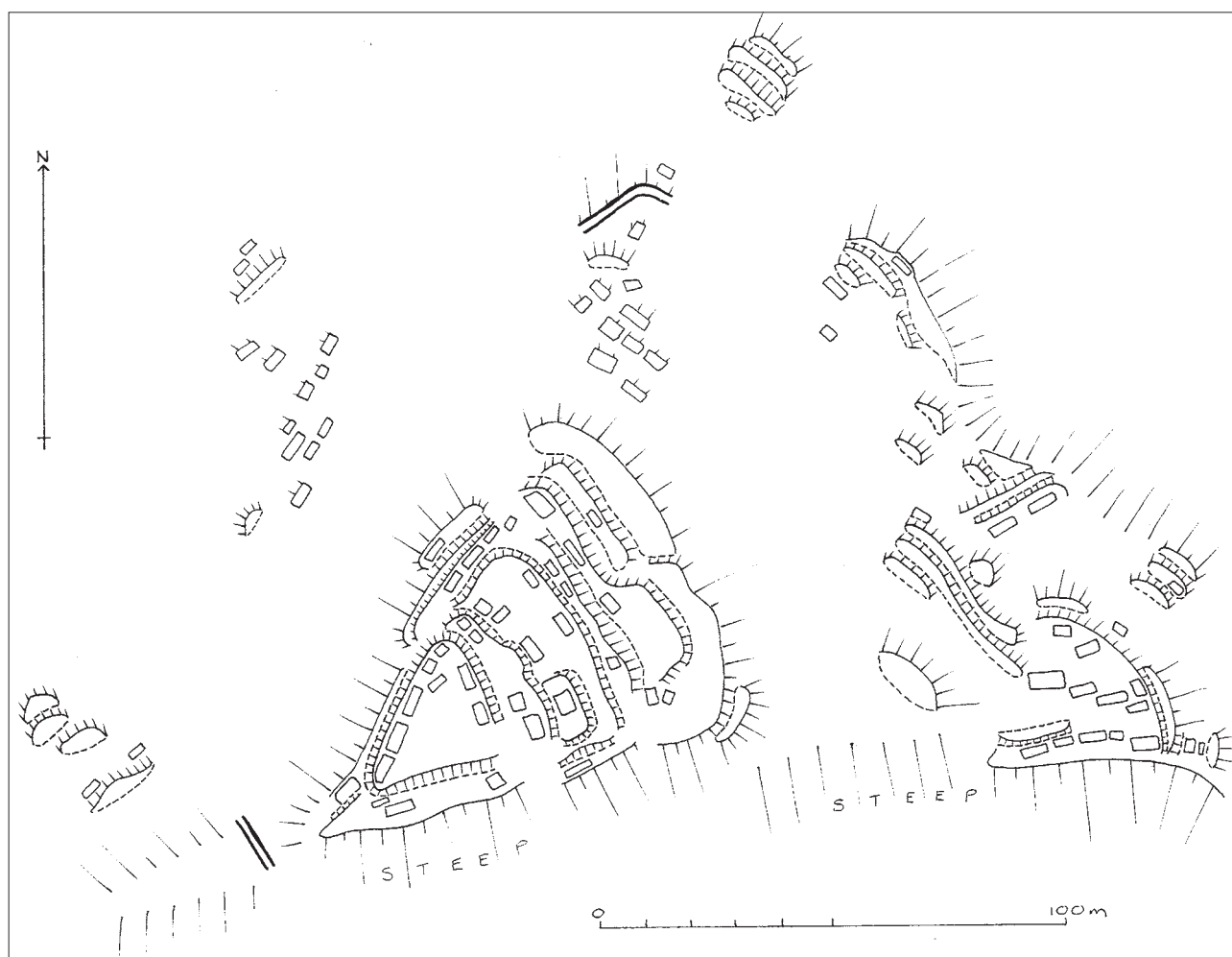
Figure 6. Aerial photograph looking north to the mouth of the Porangahau River. The photograph is taken above sites V24/54 and V24/56.

Other sites recorded at Herbertville include the cropmark of the foundations of a building (V24/77) such as a woolstore or wharf shed on the bank of the lower Wainui River, and a ditch and bank fence enclosure (V24/78) just upstream from the township.

4.2 PORANGAHAU

This area appears to have been a major settlement focus in the coastal districts and warrants fuller description of the setting (Fig. 4, detail). The Porangahau River emerges from the northern side of the coastal ranges about 4 km directly overland from the sea, and runs north for about 7 km behind and cutting through dunes until finally emerging at the sea (Fig. 6). The coastal range lies north of the main river fan and inland of a 2 km-wide belt of fan deposits, and truncated and active dunes. The hill streams tend to peter out as they cross the dune country. Access up the river and to potential sources of fresh water appear to be the main factors in determining settlement distribution. Major pā (V24/57 and 58) are located on the low hill country where there would have been reasonable foot access across the plain to the river. The river here is tidal so the main source of fresh water lay in the valley below the pā. Karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*) groves have survived on some of the outwash fans where streams

Figure 7. Plan of previously unrecorded pā V24/75 at Porangahau. Mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs PORC 16 June 1998. See also Fig. 8.



emerge from the hill country, indicating the importance of the fan areas (water, good soils) for human settlement. (Karaka is thought to have been endemic to some Northland forests but in pre-European times the seeds were planted in all districts north of Banks Peninsula, and in the Chatham Islands.)

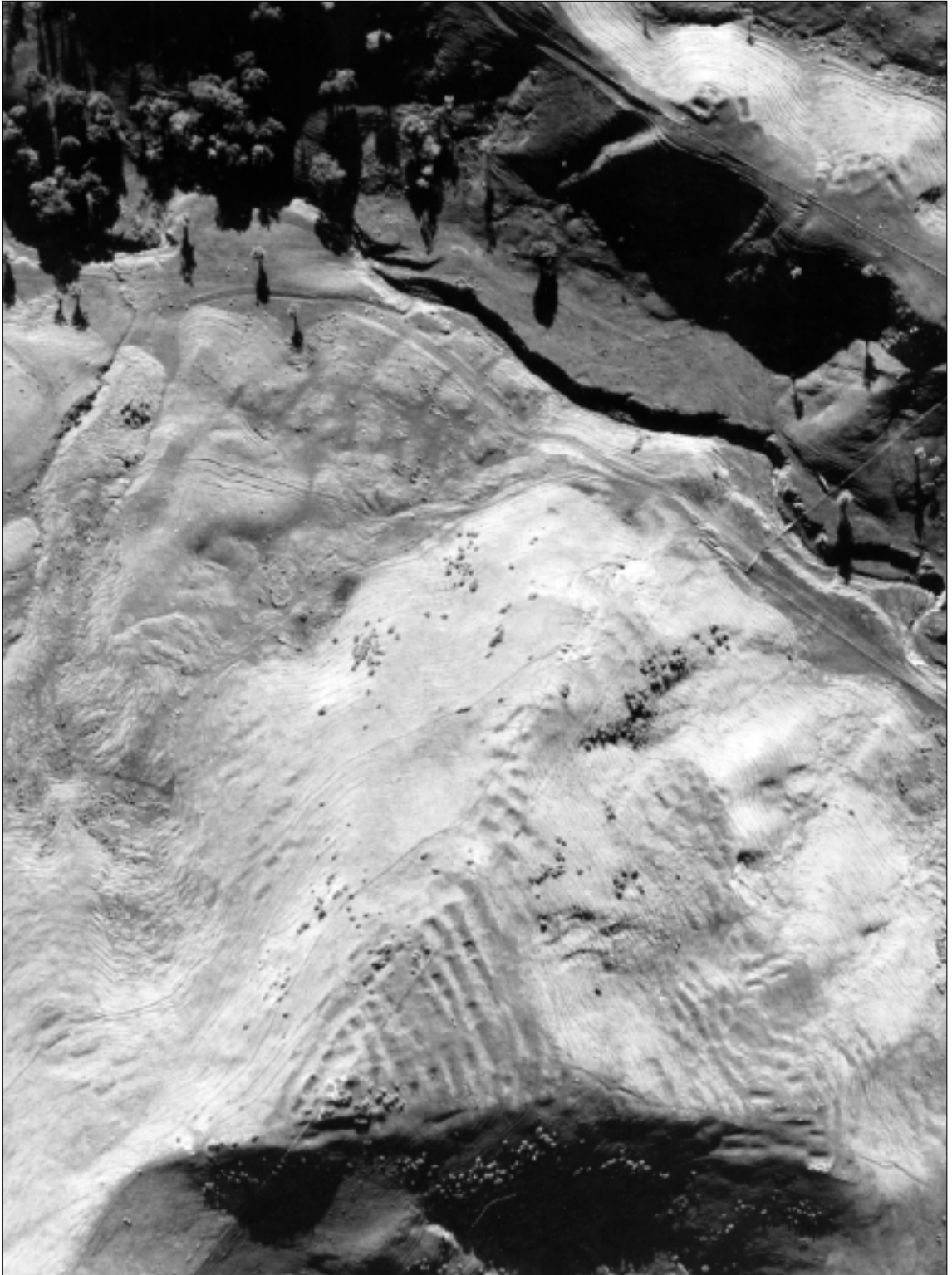


Figure 8. Vertical aerial photograph of part of the area mapped from purpose flown series PORC 16 June 1998 at Porangahau. Sites visible include pā V24/75 (bottom half of photograph), pā V24/58 (top left) and pā V24/57 (right). See also Fig. 9.

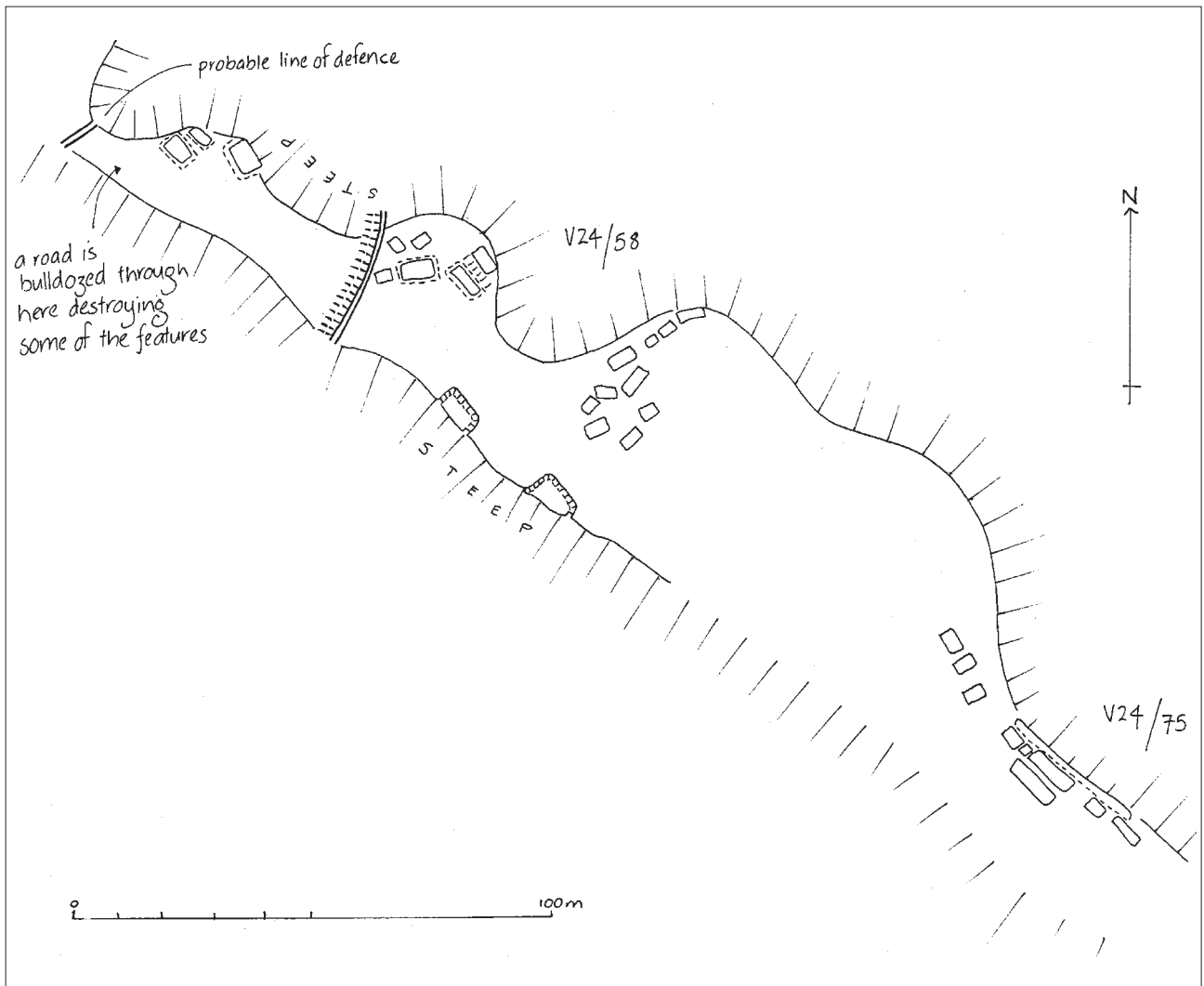


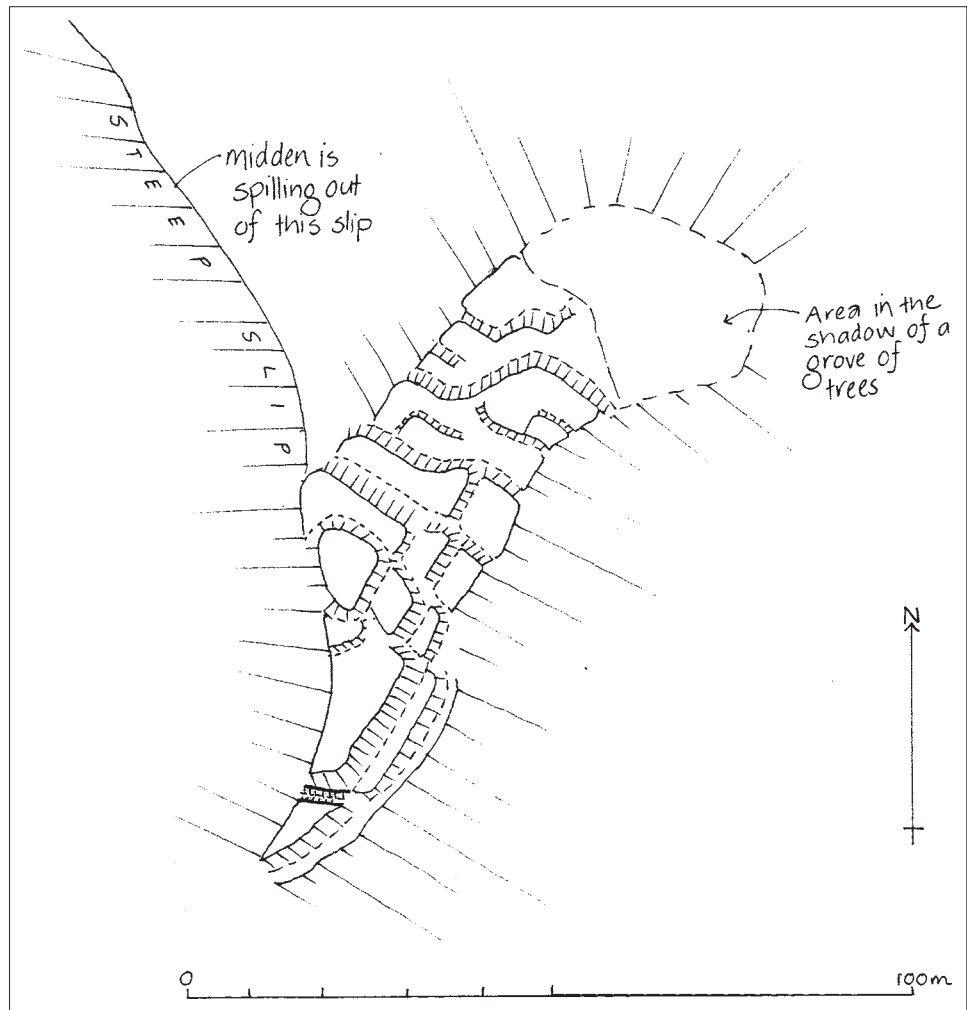
Figure 9. Plan of pā V24/58 and pits V24/75 at Porangahau. Mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs PORC 16 June 1998. For V24/58 see also top right of Fig. 8.

South of the Porangahau River mouth there is a belt of dunes. The hill country commences immediately south of Beach Road and is immediately adjacent to the coast. There are few sites in this hill country. Just inland from the coast a low ridge intersects with the river about 4 km upstream from the river mouth (and about 800 m from the sea in a straight line). This ridge is the first to have easy access from the river with three pā and numerous pits (V24/54-56) on it (Fig. 4, detail).

Four purpose-flown aerial photographic runs were taken of the Porangahau area on 16 June 1998. Many of the sites noted on these photographs had been recorded previously, although not all had been mapped.

Aerial photograph run PORC (16 June 1998), the northernmost of the Porangahau runs, covered a small valley and includes two previously recorded pā. A further ten sites were recorded from this photographic run. On the southern side of the valley, there is a large pā, V24/57, triangular-shaped in plan (Figs 7 and 8). The site is on the north-eastern end of a steep-sided ridge 80 m above sea level. The main area of the pā, defined by its outer scarp defences, is 100 m in length and ranges in width from 20 m at the south-western end to 90 m

Figure 10. Plan of pā V24/54 at Porangahau. Mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs PORB 16 June 1998.



at the north-eastern end. This is an area of extensive terracing and numerous pits. A transverse ditch, measuring 18 m from south-west to north-east, cuts the northern end of the ridge. There is another smaller ditch at the south-western end of the pā, with terraces and pits on the slopes outside of the main area. Beyond the northern defence and further down the ridge there is a series of terraces. On the eastern ridge, running westwards up to the pā, there is an 80-m long stretch of pits and terraces. Pits and terraces also cover the eastern-facing slopes, distributed over a 120-m long area from south to north. Fifty metres north of the main area of the pā, on the north-west facing, downward slopes of the hill, there are numerous pits and a few small terraces. Terraces are also located 30 m west of the transverse ditch at the south-west end of the pā.

Figure 9 shows V24/58 on the northern side of the stream, opposite V24/57. This pā is on a narrow, flat-topped ridge that runs on a NW/SE axis above a tributary stream. The pā measures approximately 65 × 27 m at its widest point. At the eastern end there is a 25-m long defensive ditch and bank. Within the pā there are two large (9 × 5 m) raised-rim pits and one maller pit also possibly raised-rim. Beyond the eastern defensive ditch and bank there are two clusters of pits. One, immediately outside the defence, consists of six pits, two of which are raised-rim in form. The other cluster, which is made up of ten possible pits, lies 60 m south-east of the defence. On the south-western side of the site there

are two large depressions, possibly terraces, 20 m apart, and 25 m south-east of the eastern defence. A bulldozed farm road has destroyed detail of the western end of the site where a line of defence may have been located on the narrowest part of the ridge. Also illustrated in Fig. 9 is V24/75, 100 m south-east of the pā V24/58. This site consists of a series of pits on a narrow (approximately 15 m wide) flat area of the ridge. The main group of pits runs for 50 m along the ridge in a 6-m wide line, with little spacing between each pit. One 14 × 6 m pit (with a fence running through it) is adjacent to, and runs parallel with the line of pits. It may have been several pits, the features of which have been destroyed by the fence. Three smaller pits are located 10 m east of the main group at the point where the ridge widens.

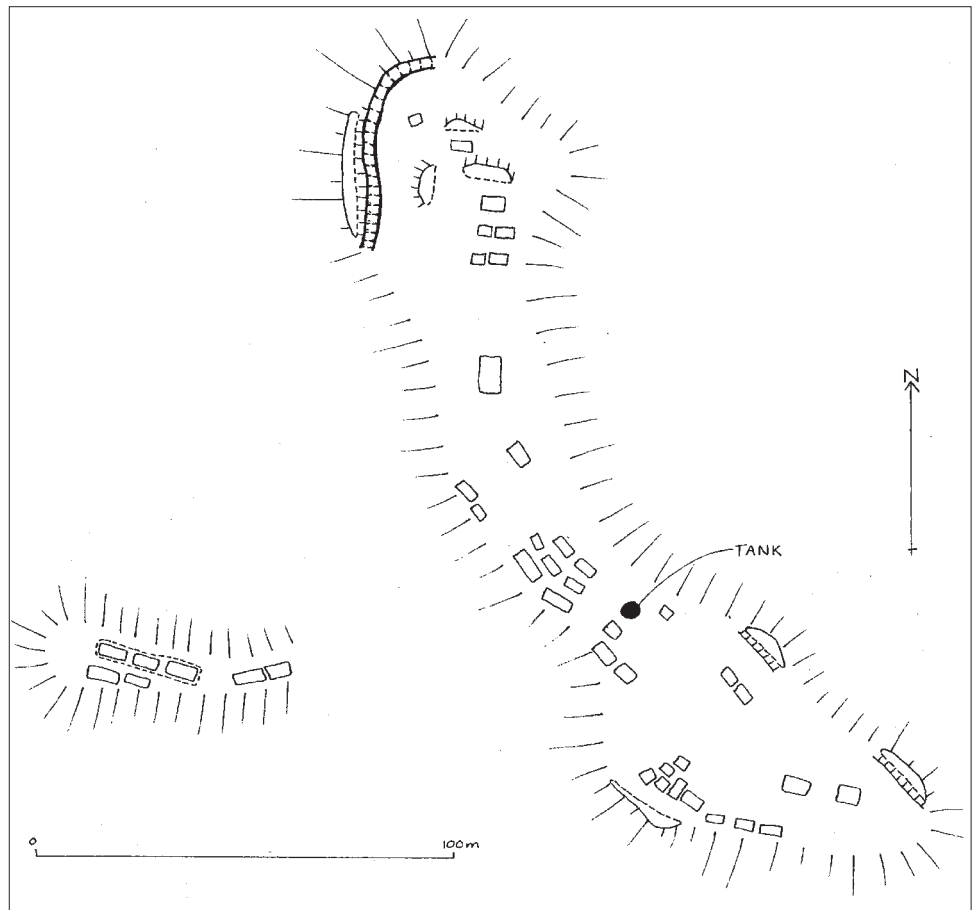
The aerial photographic run PORB (16 June 1998) covers a ridgeline on the southern side of the Porangahau River. Figure 10 shows pā V24/54 located on the northern end of the ridgeline, overlooking the river and with a view out to the ocean. The site is approximately 100 m long and 25 m wide, and consists of a number of terraces running down the slope from south to north. The southern end of the pā is defended by a transverse ditch. On the purpose-flown aerial photographs PORB (16 June 1998), the northern end of the site is obscured by tree shadow; the area the pā is thought to cover is illustrated on the map. There is midden scattered in the slope north of the trees and midden spilling out of the edge of a steep slip on the western side of the site.

Figure 11 shows pā V24/56, located on the same ridgeline as V24/54 described above. This pā extends along the flat top of the ridge over an area 220 m long and 25–45 m wide. The southern end of the pā is defended by the steep sides of the end of the ridge, and there are a few sections of lateral terrace and scarp that may have been part of the defence. There is a defensive ditch at the northern end of the site. The site has a number of rectangular pits along its length, including an 8 × 5 m pit toward the northern end. On a narrow ridge below the pā and 80 m to its west there are a further seven pits, three of them raised-rim.

A large number of sites are located along the Porangahau River. One previously unrecorded pā, V24/95, was photographed (PORE 16 June 1998) (Figs 12, 13). The site is located on a 500-m long point in an abandoned meander on the south side of the river (today, it is across the river from the township's sewage plant). It consists of a transverse ditch and bank cutting off the point. The ditch is 52 m long and 8 m wide from the inner bank edge to the outer ditch edge. Another, possibly earlier, levelled ditch is located 85 m to the south; the two ditches creating an inner area of 85 × 46 m. This second ditch tapers out on the down-river levee slope of the pā. The down-river aspect of the site comprises a low terrace at a level about 2 m below the rest of the site. At the northern end, 170 m beyond the ditches on a slightly raised terrace area, there is a group of seven pits. Five of the pits are of the raised-rim form, with some up to 7 m in length. The site lies on a Matawhero terrace, i.e. a surface that was periodically flooded 300–500 years ago, and is therefore likely to be less than 300 years old (see Jones 1990). The Porangahau River ran in the loop past this site as late as 1944 (it shows on the New Zealand Aerial Mapping photograph RN 532/54–55 of that year).

Figure 14 shows another previously unrecorded pā, V24/121, on the Porangahau River, approximately 1.5 km downstream from V24/95. The site

Figure 11. Plan of pā V24/56 at Porangahau. Mapped from purpose-flown aerial photographs PORB 6 June 1998.



was recorded and mapped from NZAM photograph RN 532/55-56 (7/9/1944) (Fig. 15). The surface features of the site have probably been destroyed by the river and ploughing since the photographs were taken in 1944, since it was not observed during the 1998 survey. However, some of the site stratigraphy will remain underground. V24/121 is located on a sharp point in the bend of the river 500 m east of the point where the Mangamaire Stream enters the Porangahau River. On the opposite bank to the pā, the river touches hill country which has driven the current hard around the river point and pā. Because of the small scale and poor resolution at which this site could be observed, it has been difficult to determine the exact nature of the features. The features described below are probably defined (and made visible in the photograph) by plough marks revealing subsoil at the edge of the pit. The plough lurches down into the pit and scrapes the topsoil off the edge. The subsoil so exposed shows as a light colour in the aerial photographs.

The site consists of some 36 possible raised-rim pits on the raised outer edge of a natural levee on a point. The point has been eroded at its end and on its upstream edge, following the site occupation. Soils appear to be Waihirere type (i.e. high-level and flood-free for the last 600 years or so). The pits range in size from about 2 m² to the largest, which is 7 m long. The smaller ones are arranged in groups of four, or in equally spaced lines of four or five. A possible ditch is evident at the western foot of the pits at the northern end of the site. Above this, there also appears to be a ditch, approximately 50 m long, that runs on a north-west/south-east angle. At the northern margin of this site a ditch and bank forms a

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