

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH INTERNAL REPORT 7.

**REALIGNMENT OF STATE HIGHWAY 12,
WHIRINAKI HILL: A PRELIMINARY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT.**

Compiled by

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from Reports by
D Nevin & M Taylor

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Regional Archaeology Unit, Auckland.

for

Science and Research Directorate
Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 10420 Wellington

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INTRODUCTION

A section of unsealed highway lies between Whirinaki and Pakanae, on the southern side of the Hokianga. This passes over a ridge known as Whirinaki Hill, at about 100 m above sea level (Fig. 1).

The Ministry of Works and Development propose to realign and seal the road over the hill for approximately 2 km. From the east the route will climb a wide moderate slope to the saddle between the Whirinaki and Pakanae Valleys. It will cut across the saddle and continue west in a gentle curve along the northern slope of the ridge.

At the present time the area has received more attention from local historians than from archaeologists (Maingay 1986:83). There have been no archaeological surveys in the general vicinity of the proposed realignment.

Archaeological inspections of the area were conducted in 1987 by David Nevin and Michael Taylor, for the purpose of recording archaeological sites and providing management recommendations (Nevin 1987; Taylor 1987).

This assessment combines information from both of their reports.

DESCRIPTION

Whirinaki Hill is situated approximately 600 m east of Hokianga Harbour. Creek runs along the west of the ridge and tributaries of the Whirinaki River rise on the east. Valley floors on either side contain fertile alluvial soils.

The area which will be affected by road construction is partly farmland and partly unallocated scenic reserve. The reserve is in regenerating native bush and a stand of well-established puriri is situated on the property of Mr Dabrowski. The remainder of the land is mainly in



pasture and teatree scrub.

The ridge has already suffered modification from previous road construction and farming activities.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Prior to 1987 this area had not been surveyed archaeologically although two pa sites are shown on map N14, immediately west and north of the present road (Fig. 1).

During recent inspections a number of archaeological sites were recorded by David Nevin in the general vicinity of the realignment. These included sites of traditional Maori significance.

Methods

Discussions between Ministry of Works and Development staff and Whirinaki kaumatua were held before archaeological inspections took place. Agreement was reached concerning protection of a tapu site adjacent to the highway.

The area was visited by David Nevin on 19 and 31 March 1987. On these occasions the western ridgeline, the saddle and the upper part of the eastern slope were examined for archaeological features. Subsequently a search was made of old survey plans and aerial photographs at the Department of Survey and Land Information, Whangarei.

A further archaeological inspection and consultation with tangata whenua was undertaken by Michael Taylor on 23 November 1987.

RESULTS

Nine archaeological sites were recorded. Two of these, a tapu area and associated burial cave are on the east of Whirinaki Hill.

A single pit site N14/243 was also recorded on the eastern slope but no visible features were discovered on the saddle.

The remaining sites, consisting of numerous pits and a few terraces, could be defined as a single archaeological complex strung along the ridge top. However separate site numbers have been allocated to groups of features for convenience of description and management recommendations (Table 1).

In total the complex contains 37 pits, five terraces and two possible platforms along 750 m of ridgeline. Four sites are in immediate or close proximity to the proposed road alignment. Pit and terrace sites N14/241 and N14/242 are located on the broad apex of the ridge near Mountain Road (Fig. 2), and similar sites N14/239 and N14/240 and lie west of Dabrowski's driveway where the ridge is only about 6 m wide (Fig. 3). The most impressive of these sites, N14/239, consists of 21 pits and three terraces along 120 m of narrow ridgeline.

In addition an old-track N14/244 runs along the apex of the ridge in a direct line between Whirinaki and Pakanae. This may be an eastern continuation of the track shown on a plan made in 1887, SO 4358. As it crosses several pits in site N14/239 it is obviously more recent than the pit and terrace complex.

DISCUSSION

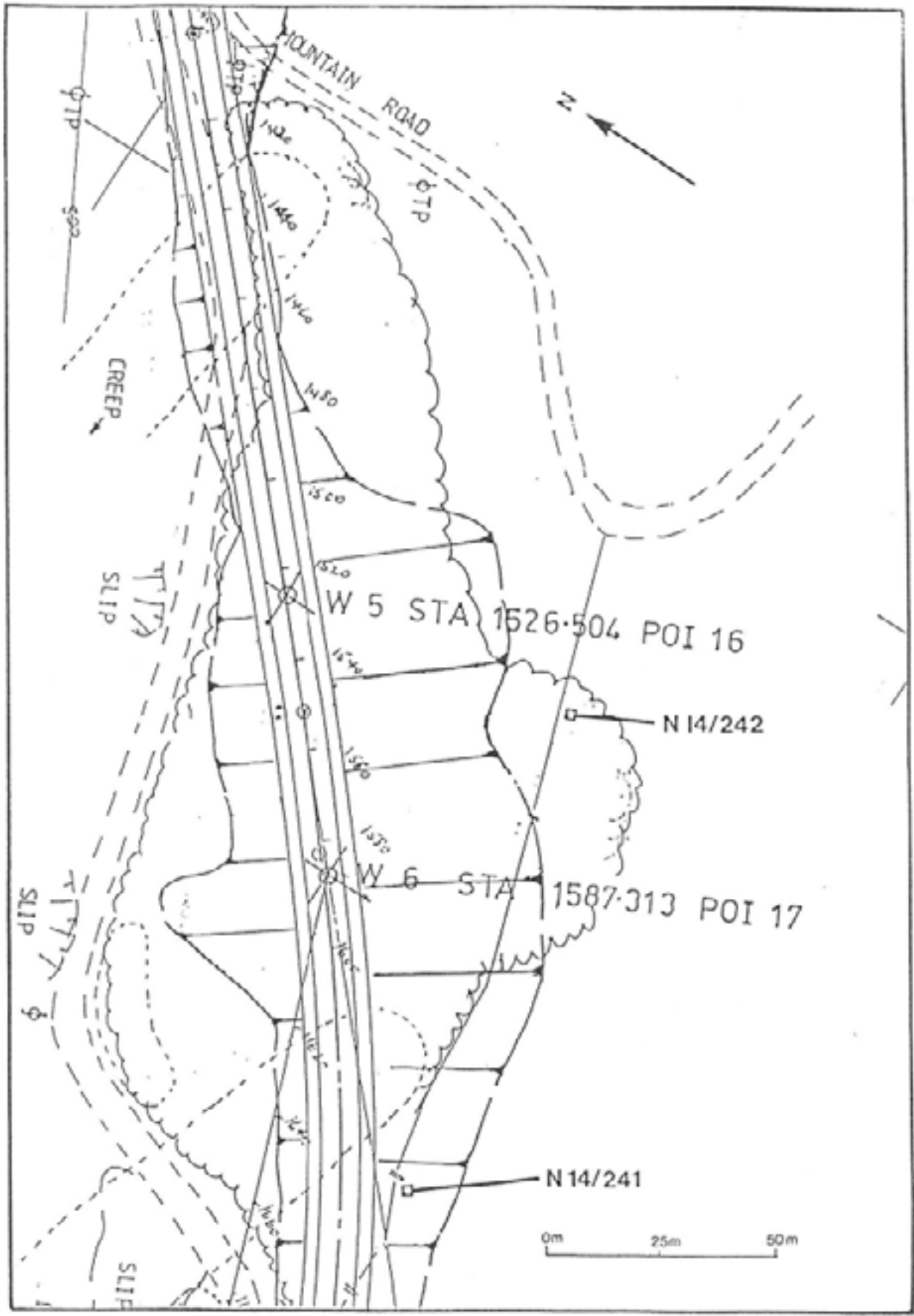
The prehistoric importance of Hokianga Harbour is emphasised in oral traditions (Lee 1987), but current archaeological knowledge of the southern shore is extremely sparse. While a few major pa have been recorded, surveys have been confined to small areas near Waima River and Pakanae (Nevin 1981; Maingay and Nevin 1987), and only two brief

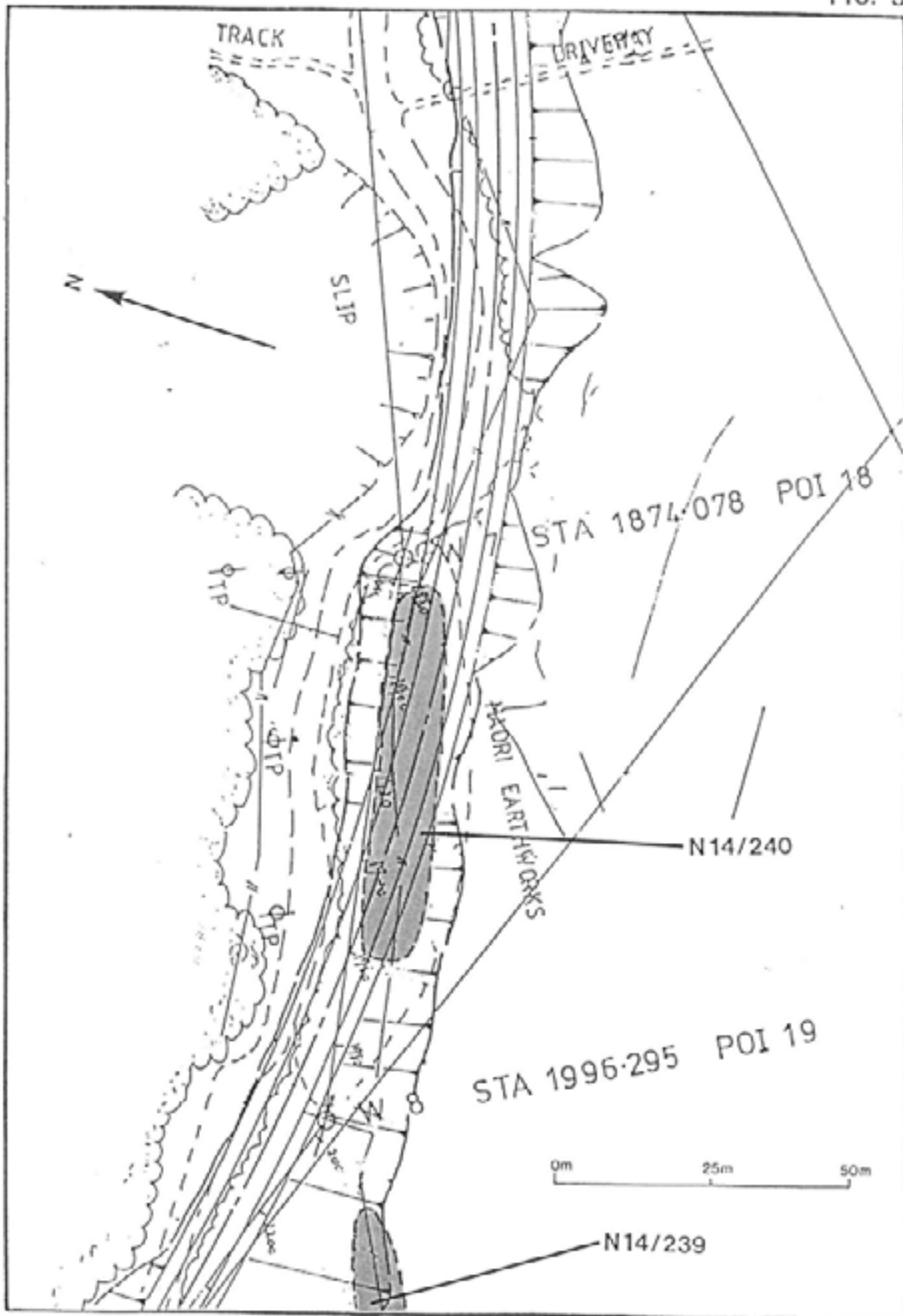
Table 1

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Site No.	Grid Ref.	Description
N14/238	950240	1 pit, 1 mound, 2 possible platforms.
N14/239	952240	21 pits, 3 terraces, along 120 m of ridgeline.
N14/241	954240	7 pits, along 80 m of ridgeline.
N14/241	957241	2 or 3 pits, 1 terrace.
N14/242	958241	6 pits, 1 terrace.
N14/243	961243	1 pit.
N14/244	950240	-
	958241	Old track along ridge.

Two sites of traditional importance were also recorded. As these were associated with burial practices, their location is not included in Table 1.





'rescue' excavations have been undertaken, both of these at midden and stone flaking sites near Opononi (Maingay 1988; Taylor pers. comm.).

Considering the present dearth of information, destruction of sites on Whirinaki Hill cannot be justified without first recovering the data they contain.

Surface evidence indicates that the ridgeline of Whirinaki Hill was an extensive prehistoric storage area for crops grown on the lower hill slopes and nearby valleys. The presence of 37 storage pits suggests that the area supported a relatively large population and that agriculture was an important aspect of the economy.

Five terraces associated with the pits may have been used for house sites, and it is possible that parts of the ridge and saddle without visible features also contain subsurface evidence of habitation.

Two pa are situated near to the ridge, one approximately 0.6 km and the other 1.2 km north of the alignment. The storage complex was probably associated with these defensive sites.

It appears inevitable that realignment of the highway will destroy sites N14/240 and N14/241, although it should be possible to avoid damaging other sites in the area. N14/240 is of considerable archaeological interest as it contains a variety of pit types. Excavation of the site could provide valuable information concerning the construction and function of the pits, the age of the site complex, and the contemporaneity of features.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pit site N14/243 should be fenced off during construction work to ensure that the area is adequately protected.
2. Damage to sites N14/239 and N14/242 should be avoided by retaining a buffer zone of at least 10 m between visible archaeological features and the upper edge of the highway batter. Again the periphery of the sites should be enclosed by temporary fencing.
3. Destruction of sites N14/240 and N14/241 is unavoidable, given essential need for highway improvements. Application should be made to the NZ Historic Places Trust for Authorities to destroy the sites. It is recommended that Authorities be issued subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) That test excavations are undertaken in the vicinity of these sites and on the saddle, to determine the existence and extent of subsurface deposits.
 - (b) That more intensive archaeological excavation takes place subsequent to testing and dependent on results of the preliminary exercise.
 - (c) That an archaeologist is present to monitor the initial stages of road construction.

Please note. Hokianga County Council has requested that this archaeological project be initiated in the immediate future to avoid delaying construction work.
4. Whirinaki kaumatua should be consulted on all aspects of the proposed investigations, and their requirements incorporated within the archaeological programme.

REFERENCES

- Lee, J. 1987. Hokianga. Hodder & Stoughton.
- Maingay, J.M. 1986. Initial report on Northland Archaeology. NZ Historic Places Trust Auckland 1986/13.
- Maingay, J.M. 1988. Preliminary Report on an Excavation at Site N14/247, Opononi. Unpublished report, Regional Archaeology Unit, Department of Conservation, Auckland.
- Maingay, J.M. and D C Nevin. 1987. An Archaeological Report on Seven Proposed Post Office Microwave Stations in Northland. Unpublished report, NZ Historic Places Trust, Auckland.
- Nevin, D.C. 1981. Archaeological Site Survey, Wiama River, Hokianga. Unpublished report, NZ Historic Places Trust, Auckland.
- Taylor, M. 1987. Whirinaki Road Development. File note to Conservation Officer, Department of Conservation, Waipoua.
- Taylor, M. 1988. Personal communication regarding a recent excavation near Opononi.

APPENDIX 1

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/238													
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 19 March 87													
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Pit/platform												
NZMS 1 map name	Hokiangara	SITE NAME: MAORI	--												
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--												
Grid Reference	Easting	950	Northing												
240															
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)															
On apex of ridgeline on a rise, above the boundary fence to S. 12, in pasture and light scrub. About 200ft contour.															
2. State of site and possible future damage															
Good, pasture and teatree.															
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)															
A slight rise at the end of a long ridge, about 200ft east, before the ridge drops down to tidal creek. (Motutoa Creek) Pit floor measures 5 x 3m. It is 2m deep where it is dug into the slope and 50cm deep at the other side. Immediately adjacent on the east side is a mound 4 x 2 x 1m high, which may be spoil from the pit. The highest point appears flattened to form a platform 10 x 5m and the ridge east of the pit, about 5-8m wide, appears flattened for about 30m.															
4. Owner Address		Tenant/Manager Address													
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)		Brief visit													
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)		--													
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)		554A/6 1951 under scrub													
6. Reported by Address		Filekeeper Date													
G Nevin 17 Wakelin St Whangarei															
7. Key words															
Pit open, platform															
B. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)															
NZHPT Site Field Code															
<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td><td>Type of site</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>Local environment today</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>Land classification</td></tr> </table>			Type of site		Local environment today		Land classification	<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td><td>Present condition and future danger of destruction</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>Security code</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td>Local body</td></tr> </table>			Present condition and future danger of destruction		Security code		Local body
	Type of site														
	Local environment today														
	Land classification														
	Present condition and future danger of destruction														
	Security code														
	Local body														

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/239																		
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 19 March 87																		
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Pits/terrace																	
NZMS 1 map name	H-kinnon	SITE NAME: MAORI	--																	
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--																	
Grid Reference	Easting	9	5	2	Northing	2	4	0												
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)																				
On apex of ridge line along boundary fence, under teetree. Start 220m west of Debrowski's driveway (1987) and extends 120m to west. Immediately above S.H.12																				
2. State of site and possible future damage																				
Excellent, teetree. Possible future farm development.																				
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)																				
Site description forms. 23 open pits and 3 terraces over 120m of narrow ridge.																				
4. Owner Address																				
Debrowski S.H. 12 Pakemac			and			Tyrone Whangarei Address														
State Highway Reserve c/- MOW Whangarei																				
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)																				
visit, Pace & compass plan.																				
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)																				
--																				
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)																				
55/A/6 1951 under scrub.																				
6. Reported by Address																				
D C Kevin 17 Wakelin St Whangarei			Filekeeper Date																	
7. Key words																				
8. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)																				
NZHPT Site Field Code																				
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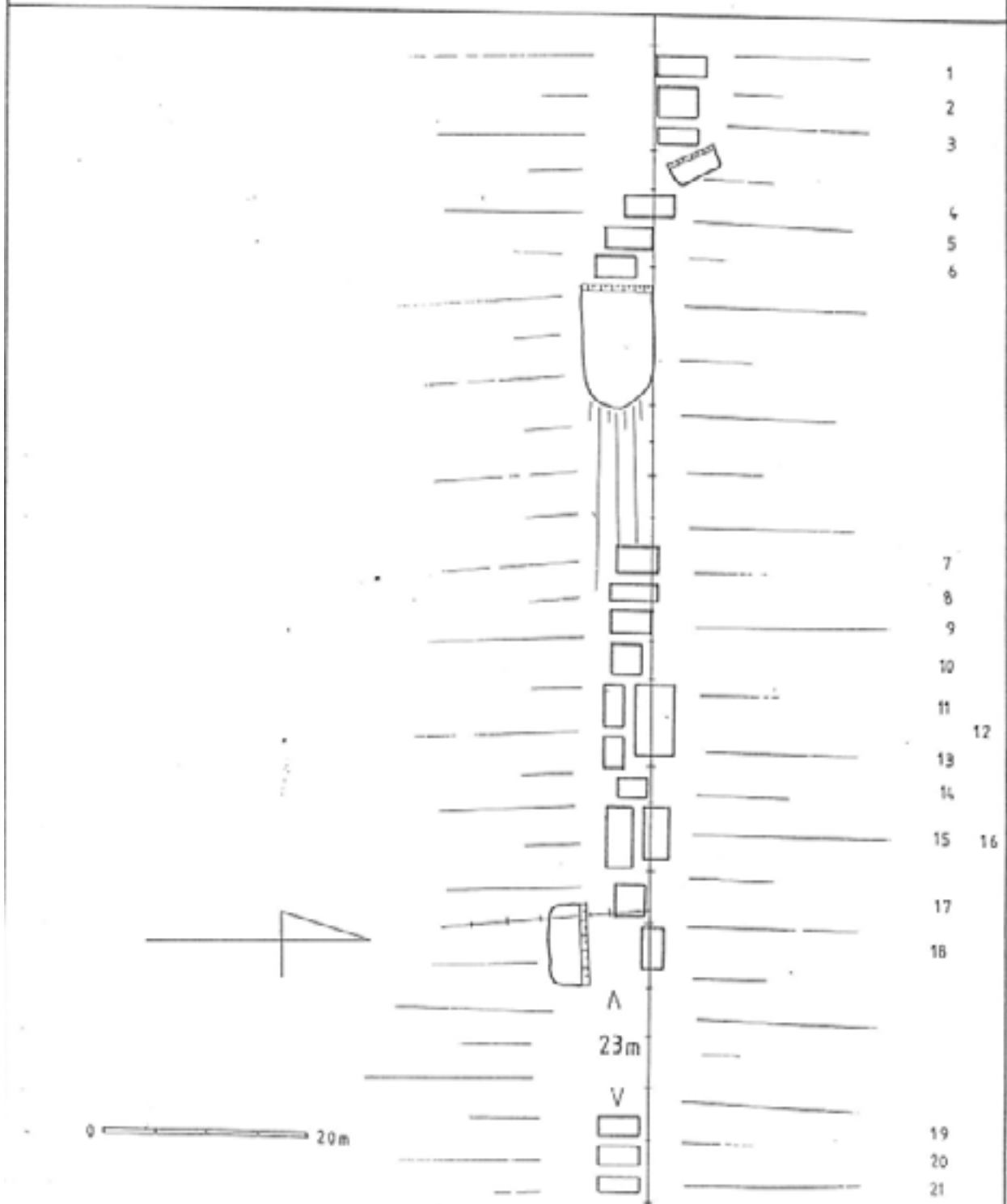
NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
 SITE DESCRIPTION FORM

Map Number N14
 Map Name Hokimara
 Map Edition 2nd 1972
 Grid Reference 952240

SITE NUMBER N14/239

SITE NAME: MAORI
 OTHER --

SITE TYPE Pits/terraces



NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SITE DESCRIPTION FORM		SITE NUMBER N14/239
Map Number N14	Map Name Hokianga	SITE NAME: MAORI -- OTHER
Map Edition 2nd 1972	Grid Reference 952240	SITE TYPE Pits/terrace

(This form may be used for recording any descriptive information or other supplementary information on the site, or for maps and drawings.)

23 open pits and 3 terraces are spread along the apex of the long ridge, about 5-7m wide. The ridge line is fairly flat, rising slightly to the west. It is steep on both sides. Other pit sites on the same ridge line are N14/238, 240, 241 and 242. There is no site on the high point of the ridge about 300m west. The ridge is c180 ft asl, about 1km from Motutau Creek and a route between Pakenge and Whirinaki.

Three terraces, from the east: 8x4m with 70cm rear scarp, on the south shoulder of the ridge.

12 x 7m, on ridge top, slight scarp on uphill side,

4 x 2m, 50cm rear scarp.

Pits:	1	5 x 2 x 1m	12	7 x 4 x 1.6m
	2	4 x 3 x 1m	13	3 x 2 x 1m
	3	4 x 1 x 1m	14	3 x 2 x 1m
	4	5 x 2 x 1m	15	6 x 2.5 x 1m
	5	5 x 2 x 1m	16	5 x 2.5 x 1m
	6	4 x 2 x 50cm	17	3 x 3 x 40cm
	7	4 x 2.5 x 60cm	18	4 x 2 x 30cm
	8	5 x 1.5 x 70cm	19	4 x 2 x 70cm
	9	4 x 2 x 70cm	20	4 x 2 x 70cm
	10	3 x 3 x 50cm	21	4 x 1.5 x 50cm
	11	4 x 2 x 50cm		

Where the pits are in close groups, there is usually one metre between them.

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/240	
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 19 March 87	
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Pito
NZMS 1 map name	Hokierua	SITE NAME: MAORI	--
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--
Grid Reference		Easting	9 5 4
		Northing	2 4 0
1. Aids to relocation of site (<i>attach a sketch map</i>)			
On apex of ridgeline by fence line, under totopoungue. Starts 100m west of Dabrowski driveway (1987) and extends 80m to west, immediately above S.H. 12			
2. State of site and possible future damage			
Totopoungue scrub. Possible slumps to S.H.12. Complete removal by proposed realignment.			
3. Description of site (<i>Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here</i>)			
Site description form.			
7 open pits along 80m of narrow ridge,			
4. Owner Address		TERRITORY ADDRESS	
Dabrowski . and S.H. 12 Pakemae		State Highway Reserve c/- MOW Whangarei	
5. Nature of information (<i>hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.</i>)			
Photographs (<i>reference numbers, and where they are held</i>)		Visit, note and compass plan.	
Aerial photographs (<i>reference numbers, and clarity of site</i>)		--	
		55/A/6 1951 under scrub.	
6. Reported by Address		Filekeeper Date	
D C Nevin 17 Wakelin St Whangarei			
7. Key words			
8. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (<i>for office use</i>)			
NZHPT Site Field Code			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of site	<input type="checkbox"/>	Present condition and future danger of destruction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local environment today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Security code
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land classification	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local body

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
SITE DESCRIPTION FORM

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Map Name Hokianona
Map Edition 2nd 1972
Grid Reference 954240

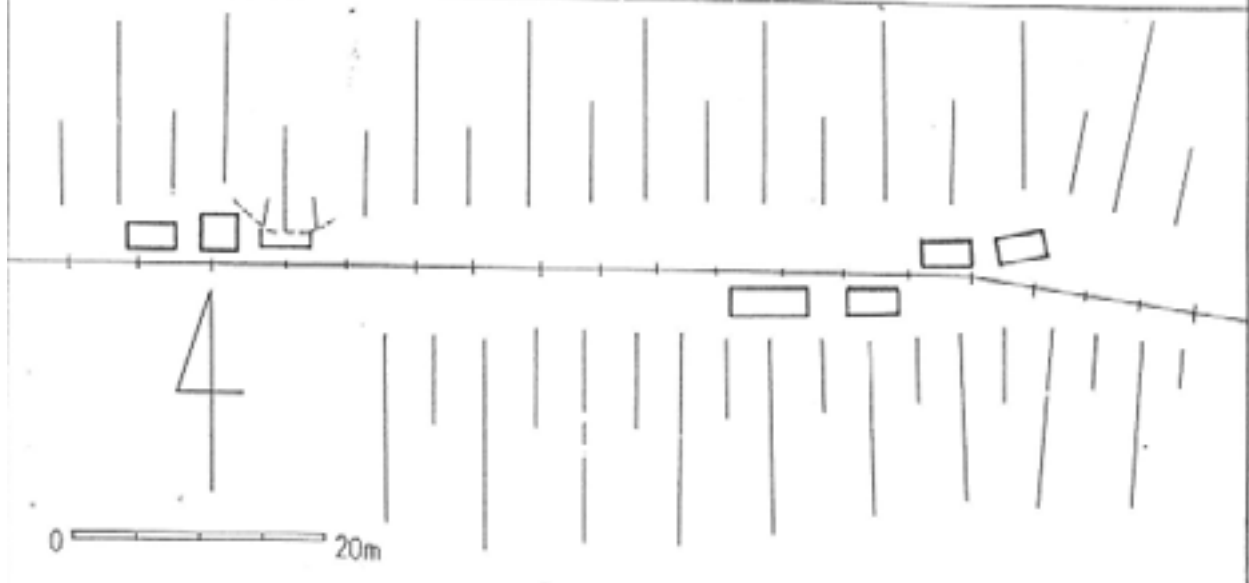
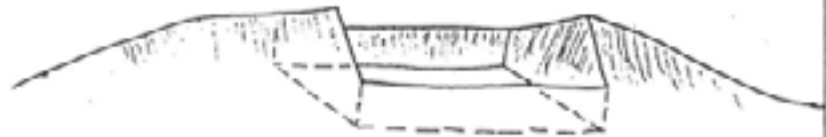
SITE NUMBER N14/240

SITE NAME: MAORI --
OTHER

SITE TYPE Pits

Two groups of pits are 30m apart on the 6m wide apex
of the long ridge line.
From the east; 4 x 2m x 1.2m deep
4 x 2 x 1m
4 x 2 x 5cm, vague and very shallow.
6 x 2m, x 1m deep but the earth ends are
raised to form a ledge 2m high.

The ridge between the two groups has no apparent features.
The second group, from the east:
4m long and 1m deep, its northern side has
fallen away into the road cutting (S. 12)
3 x 3 x 1.2m deep
4 x 2m x 30cm deep



NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/241																		
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 31/3/87																		
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Pits/terrace																	
NZMS 1 map name	Hokiangge	SITE NAME: MAORI	--																	
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--																	
Grid Reference	Easting	9	5	7	Northing	2	4	1												
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)																				
<p>Along of ridgeline, beside a power pole, about halfway between Mountain Rd and Debrowski driveway. In pasture 2m from boundary fence.</p>																				
2. State of site and possible future damage																				
<p>Pasture and terrace. Complete removal by proposed realignment of S.H.12</p>																				
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)																				
<p>A power pole is placed in a shallow 4x2m depression with one side missing. It may be a damaged pit. 2 metres west (downslope) is a pit 4 x 2m. Its uphill scarp is 1.5m high, its depth on the lower side is 50cm. 2 metres below the pit is a probable terrace, in poor condition, 5 x 3m. About 40m upridge from the power pole, is an open pit 4 x 2m x 50cm deep with one side removed by the fence line.</p>																				
4. Owner		Debrowski		Tenant/Manager																
Address		S.H.12		Address																
		Pakanga																		
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)																				
Brief visit																				
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)																				
--																				
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)																				
554A/6 1951 under scrub																				
6. Reported by		D C Mevin		Filekeeper																
Address		17 Wakelin St		Date																
		Whangarei																		
7. Key words																				
3 open pits and a terrace																				
8. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)																				
NZHPT Site Field Code																				
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/242													
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 31/3/87													
NZMS 1 map number N14		SITE TYPE Pits/terrace													
NZMS 1 map name Wokimngp		SITE NAME: MAORI													
NZMS 1 map edition 2nd 1972		OTHER --													
Grid Reference		Easting	Northing												
		9 5 R	2 4 1												
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)															
30m west of Mountain Rd, in pasture 3m south of boundary fence to State Highway Reserve.															
2. State of site and possible future damage															
Average condition, pasture.															
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)															
Site description form															
6 open pits and a terrace.															
4. Owner Address		Tenant/Manager Address													
Debrowski S.H. 12 Pokene															
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)															
Brief visit															
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)															
--															
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)															
55A/6 1951 faintly by the fence south ground clearly.															
6. Reported by Address		Filekeeper Date													
D C Nevin 17 Makelin St Whangarei															
7. Key words															
8. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)															
NZHPT Site Field Code															
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Type of site		Present condition and future danger of destruction													
Local environment today		Security code													
Land classification		Local body													

SITE DESCRIPTION FORM

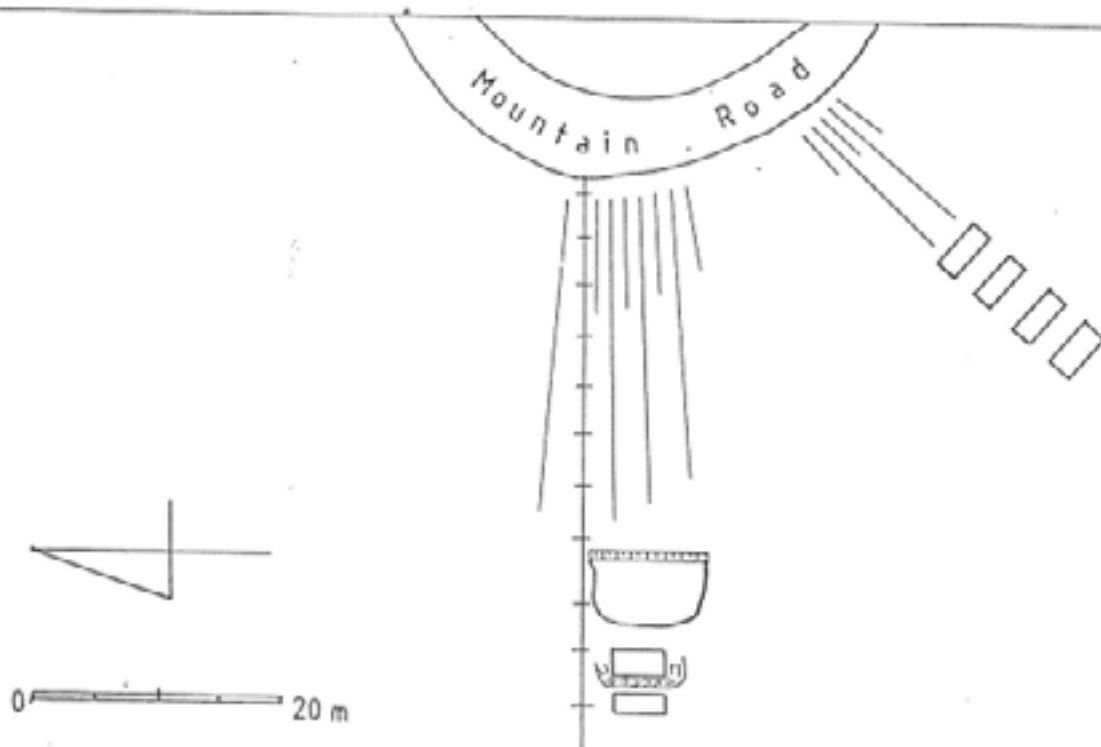
Map Number N14
 Map Name Hokianga
 Map Edition 2nd 1972
 Grid Reference 959241

SITE NUMBER N14/242

SITE NAME: MAORI
 OTHER --

SITE TYPE Pits/terrace

The site is on the apex of the long ridge and on a spur to the south.
 There is a terrace 9 x 5m with a scarp 50cm high on the uphill side. Two meters below the terrace is a pit, 4 x 2m x 60cm deep, with a raised rim forming the downhill side. One metre below is another pit, 4 x 1.5m x 30cm deep, in poor condition.
 About 50m south is a spur with 4 pits, which were not visited. They were confirmed on the aerial photo and are about 4 x 2m.



NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/243													
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 31/3/87													
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Pit												
NZMS 1 map name	Whakareia	SITE NAME: MAORI													
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--												
Grid Reference	Easting		Northing												
		9 6 1	2 4 3												
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)															
20m west of a power pole close to a driveway to a house															
2. State of site and possible future damage															
Pasture. Average condition. 50m south of proposed realignment.															
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)															
One isolated open rectangular pit, 4 x 2m x 30cm deep, on a very slight rise 20m south of a swampy area.															
4. Owner Address		Tenant/Manager Address													
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)		Brief visit													
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)		--													
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)		554A/6 1951 not visible													
6. Reported by Address		Filekeeper Date													
D C Nevin 17 Wakelin St Whangarei															
7. Key words															
8. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)															
NZHPT Site Field Code															
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Type of site		Present condition and future danger of destruction													
Local environment today		Security code													
Land classification		Local body													

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION		NZAA NZMS 1 SITE NUMBER N14/244	
SITE RECORD FORM (NZMS1)		DATE VISITED 31/3/87	
NZMS 1 map number	N14	SITE TYPE	Track
NZMS 1 map name	Hokionga	SITE NAME: MAORI	--
NZMS 1 map edition	2nd 1972	SITE NAME: OTHER	--
Grid Reference	Easting	9 5 0	Northing
1. Aids to relocation of site (attach a sketch map)		to 95R241	
Follows apex of ridgeline immediately south of S.H.12 visible where extent for 800m west from Mountain Rd			
2. State of site and possible future damage			
Good where still exists, part of ridge has already gone for existing roads.			
3. Description of site (Supply full details, history, local environment, references, sketches, etc. If extra sheets are attached, include a summary here)			
A track worn into the ground, 30-50cm wide and up to 15cm deep, occasionally diverges into two. It follows the apex of ridgeline for 800m, avoiding or crossing the pits of N14/239. It is possibly part of a track shown further west, on SO4358, 1887, but no reference to this part was found on old survey plans. It is a direct line between Pakenee and Whirinaki.			
4. Owner Address	Dabrowski S.H. 12 Pakenee	and	State Highway Reserve c/- MOW Whangarei
5. Nature of information (hearsay, brief or extended visit, etc.)			
Photographs (reference numbers, and where they are held)		Visit	
Aerial photographs (reference numbers, and clarity of site)		-- in scrub on 554A/6	
6. Reported by Address	D C Nevin 17 Makelin St Whangarei	Filekeeper Date	
7. Key words			
B. New Zealand Register of Archaeological Sites (for office use)			
NZHPT Site Field Code			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of site	<input type="checkbox"/>	Present condition and future danger of destruction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local environment today	<input type="checkbox"/>	Security code
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land classification	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local body

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