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Oral Presentation

The Waikato River banks are known to have contained evidence of past Maori occupation.

The alluvial sandy soils along the river bank were suitable for kumara cultivation and extensive gardens have been mapped.

Storage pits and living sites have been found on adjacent higher ground and cooking sites have been found close to the Waikato River. Defensive pa sites have also been found beside the river.

Types of occupation have been found on, or immediately adjacent to, this property.

Most parts of the garden soils within the property have been destroyed by quarrying and the construction of the Expressway. A cooking area on a river terrace has been damaged by the Te Awa Lakes Trail cycleway and the pine plantation.

However, research and field tests have identified four areas where evidence of past Maori occupation may still exist on the property (Figure 4 in Statement of Evidence):

A: cooking area on river terrace, recorded as S14/284. The trees are to be removed from the terrace (the tree removal will be monitored under authority from HNZPT), after which it is to be preserved through containing it in the esplanade reserve and scheduled by council.

C high ground: above the stream valley, which has not been affected by quarrying, is likely to contain occupation evidence.

C stream channel: although the upper parts of the banks have been highly modified, the lower banks, including any swampy deposits, may contain archaeological evidence. In this case, the evidence may be: artefacts deliberately placed, or accidentally incorporated into the wetlands; paths leading down to canoe anchorages; eel traps, canoes or structures beside the stream.

E: high ground, formerly the loading area of the quarry. It was part of the extensive Maori garden site recorded as S14/164. As it has a 2m deep overburden on top of the former ground surface, it could not be tested to determine if evidence of garden soils or related activity still exist.

It is highly likely, that these identified areas contain valuable information about Maori occupation in the past in this stretch of the Waikato River. Notably they are immediately north of the extensive Mangaharakeke Pa (recorded as S14/17, 18, 112 and 113), which indicates the importance of the vicinity.

Areas **C high ground** and **E** are within the land to be developed, and will be destroyed by the works. In mitigation, it is intended to archaeologically excavate these areas under authority from HNZPT to recover any information that remains. Area **C stream** may also be modified, and it is intended to monitor works as required, so that information can be documented and any organic artefacts can be recovered and conserved.



Figure 4. Location of test pits and areas where archaeological deposits may exist (red shading) with river terraces (yellow shading) (Google Earth 2015).