

Considering historic heritage in walking and cycling projects

Many of New Zealand's trails and roads follow well-worn historic routes, because the easiest terrain to navigate remains the same as it was generations ago. Historic and cultural heritage may be located on these routes and might not be visible above ground.

Historic and cultural heritage consists of natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of our history and cultures. In New Zealand this might include:

- historic buildings and structures
- archaeological sites
- places of significance to Māori
- the surroundings of buildings, sites, and places.

A simple assessment by an archaeologist or built heritage advisor during the trail design phase can help to avoid sites if possible, or minimise the extent to which they are damaged. This will maximise the opportunity to incorporate local stories into the overall trail.

Heritage structures (eg bridges and tunnels) may also be repurposed as part of a trail. This can be a cost-efficient way of adding an interesting feature to a trail.

RELEVANT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

There are two main pieces of legislation that protect historic heritage:

- Resource Management Act (RMA) - part of this act regulates impacts on heritage caused by development. The RMA is implemented through district and regional plans which regularly include protection of specifically listed heritage places and sites.
- Heritage New Zealand Taonga Act 2014 (HNZPTA) - this act specifies the process to manage heritage sites and control modifications to archaeological sites. All archaeological sites (whether recorded or not) which pre-date 1900 (associated with human activity) are automatically protected under the HNZPTA.

The preservation of historic heritage supports the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS) environment strategic priority of 'a land transport system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, as well as adverse effects on the local environment and public health'.

Historic heritage requirements for NZ Transport Agency projects are set out on the Transport Agency cultural and historic heritage page:

www.nzta.govt.nz/roads-and-rail/highways-information-portal/technical-disciplines/cultural-and-historic-heritage/



Shell midden (Kaikōura)



Ko (digging tool) - Puhoi to Wellsford project



Adze and hammerstone, Taupiri Link (Photo: CFG Heritage Ltd.)

PLANNING PHASE

Check if there are any historic/heritage sites within 200 metres of planned route.

Sites of heritage interest can be found through:

- Heritage New Zealand list: www.heritage.org.nz/the-list
- NZ Archaeological Association database (indicative only): nzarchaeology.org/resources
- local council district plans. The Local Government NZ (LGNZ) website has links to councils: www.lgnz.co.nz/nzs-local-government/new-zealands-councils/
- a preliminary assessment of the project by a local archaeologist or built heritage advisor.

Consult with stakeholders, including:

- Heritage NZ
- regional and local councils
- tangata whenua
- landowners.

Include historic heritage within community engagement and consultation.

Trail design should plan to avoid damage to all heritage sites if possible.

Consider how identified historic heritage could add value. Opportunities include:

- adaptive reuse of built heritage (eg historic bridges or tunnels) into walking and cycling infrastructure
- storytelling along the trail
- advertising for the trail
- increasing local community interest and pride in the trail.

DESIGN PHASE

- If the planning phase has identified any potential impact on historic heritage, have a more detailed assessment prepared by an archaeologist or built heritage advisor.
- If damage to an archaeological site or area with potential for archaeological features is unavoidable then an authority application to Heritage NZ must be made. www.heritage.org.nz/protecting-heritage/archaeology/standard-archaeological-authority-process
- A resource consent may also be required. Building and resource consents for heritage structures will need to show how the heritage qualities are being protected and change minimised.
- Seek specialist heritage advice on adaptive reuse of structures to conserve heritage values

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- The standard procedure in the event that an archaeological site is accidentally discovered is set out in Transport Agency's Minimum Standard p/45 - Accidental Archaeological Discovery Specification. While the standard is specific to Transport Agency projects, it may be adjusted for external use. www.nzta.govt.nz/z-series
- If the planning and design phases identify a need for protection and conservation of heritage structures/sites, ensure the appropriate heritage professionals are engaged, the relevant permits and consents are in place, and any Heritage NZ conditions placed on the project are adhered to.

OTHER RESOURCES

NZ Transport Agency Environmental and Social Responsibility (ESR) screen.

www.nzta.govt.nz/esr-screen



Broken crockery, Taupiri Link
(Photo: CFG Heritage Ltd.)



Old Māngere Bridge, SH20,
Auckland



Spoons Tunnel - Tasman's Great Taste
Trail (Photo: NZ Cycle Trail)



Ōrauta Stream suspension bridge -
Twin Coast Cycle Trail



Contact email address:
environment@nzta.govt.nz