



Information Sheet:
Managing Archaeological Material
November 2014

This information sheet has been prepared by Heritage New Zealand to:

- a) provide guidance to consultant archaeologists on current archaeological practice for managing archaeological material during archaeological work under archaeological authorities granted under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014
- b) provide information for landowners and applicants about their legal responsibilities and rights during archaeological work and what archaeological work may involve.

Archaeological material includes any material removed from an archaeological site for analysis, reporting and interpretation as required by conditions of archaeological authorities. This includes artefacts (including *taonga tūturu*¹), buildings fabric, faunal material, botanical and environmental samples.²

Legal Ownership:

In New Zealand the legal ownership of archaeological material is as follows:

- a) If artefacts meet the definition of *taonga tūturu* under the Protected Objects Act 1975 they are legally property of the Crown in the first instance and managed by The Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH). There are legal requirements for notifying the MCH of *taonga tūturu* found within 28 days after the completion of archaeological field work. This then allows others, such as tangata whenua, who have an interest in *taonga tūturu* to make legal claims for ownership and formalise arrangements for custody.
- b) All other material is the property of the landowner at the time of removal

Archaeological Management of Material

Owners and applicants need to be aware that some archaeological material can be analysed on site but for the most part material needs to be accessible and removed from site to allow an archaeological consultant to undertake detailed archaeological analysis and recording with access to appropriate resources.

Under section 45 an archaeologist should consider whether they have sufficient skills and competencies to ensure that the archaeological work is carried out to the satisfaction of

¹ *taonga tūturu* is used here as defined in Section 2 of the Protected Objects Act (POA) 1975

² Kōiwi tangata are excluded from this information sheet. Please refer to the Kōiwi Tangata/Human Remains Guidelines for information management of kōiwi tangata in accordance with legislation and cultural values

Heritage New Zealand, Māori values are recognised and respected, they have access to the appropriate institutional, professional and cultural support and resources.

To accompany an application for an Archaeological Authority or for approval under section 45 an archaeologist and/or applicant should be able to demonstrate to Heritage New Zealand the following documents prepared by a consultant archaeologist:

- **Artefact Retention, Sampling and Discard Policy:** detailing how and why certain types of artefacts and samples will be retained during archaeological work. This is important for clarifying to an applicant, owner or other affected party what archaeological material will be removed from a site. Information about sampling is also critical to allow for scientific analysis, such as statistical analysis, research and interpretation of collections at a later stage. All newly found *taonga tūturu* must be retained and notified to the MCH.
- **Artefact Management Plan:** detailing how archaeological material will be managed in the field and during post-field work. Security, equipment, storage, artefact handling, labelling, tracking, managing archaeological archives and field documents, cleaning, processing, conservation, health and safety, notification and other reporting (e.g. for *taonga tūturu*), POA 1975 requirements, standard and specialist analysis, assessment, disposal processes and roles and responsibilities should be detailed. Aspects of Artefact Management Plans may require tailoring to individual projects. It is up to consultants how they wish to manage this plan in relation to their existing policies and procedures.

Where other parties, such as a museum, MCH, iwi/hapu or landowner, may have involvement or responsibility it is essential they are involved with the development of these processes and approval where appropriate as early as possible. For example museums may have an interest in compatibility with their database systems. Owners need to be aware of their rights and how their property is cared for, applicants aware of what archaeological work involves and cultural values need to be recognised and respected.

Archaeological, Cultural and Other Heritage Values:

Options for disposal will depend on the requirements of the legal owners and the archaeological, cultural and other heritage values of archaeological material. It is the consultant archaeologist's responsibility to assess the archaeological value of collections and make a recommendation to owners, iwi/hapu, MCH, museums and other affected parties as appropriate.

Criteria for Assessing the Archaeological Values of Archaeological Material:

The following values should be considered when assessing archaeological material: condition; contextual value; rarity/uniqueness; information potential; cultural associations; amenity value; historical associations.

Criteria are not intended to be exhaustive and heritage and other values will need to be considered as they arise. While considering archaeological values an archaeologist should ask about:

- i. The integrity of a site and its deposits, how much of the site was excavated and whether there is potential to recover further material from the site or whether it been destroyed

- ii. The size and diversity of the material, whether it is common, representative or unique/rare
- iii. What is the information potential of material, what is the potential for further analysis and will the material be able to address national or regional research questions
- iv. The values of the collection as a complete scientific collection versus the values of individual artefacts
- v. How does the material add to the values of the site and does it have potential for display or interpretation
- vi. Acknowledge if Māori or other cultural values are to be affected, and how. An assessment of these values, effects and recommendations should be made by the relevant group(s) for example tangata whenua. It is important for an archaeologist to acknowledge that these values are recognised and respected as they relate closely to recommendations made for archaeological material

Māori Cultural Values and Archaeological Material:

Both *taonga tūturu* and non- *taonga tūturu*, such as midden, waste or by products of manufacturing or other scientific material, may have cultural values for tangata whenua. Decisions about the ongoing care and management of this material may affect Māori values. Consultant archaeologists are required to recognise and respect Māori values when managing archaeological collections and it is expected that archaeologists will engage with tangata whenua and advise their clients about consultation accordingly. Applicants and owners are advised to consult with tangata whenua about archaeological material of interest to Māori and *taonga tūturu* when preparing an application for an authority and as appropriate or as agreed when making decisions about archaeological material.

Final Reporting

Archaeological material needs to be adequately documented in a final report, with future research in mind, as this may be the last publically accessible record.

Final reports of archaeological work need to contain an inventory of material recovered, including a catalogue of artefacts, photographs and/or drawings, location of where the material is currently held, information on the sampling and discard processes followed, archaeological analysis and interpretation of recovered material, assessment of archaeological values of archaeological material and a recommendation for disposal in accordance with accepted archaeological practice and tikanga Māori.

A recommendation for disposal and the ongoing care of archaeological material should be written with archaeological values and the interests of the owner, applicant, MCH, tangata whenua and any other affected party in mind. For example the collecting areas and objectives of museums should be considered. Permission from the owner of archaeological material must be obtained and should be documented. For example the disposal of *taonga tūturu* must be approved by and discussed with the MCH and other claimants as appropriate.

It is recommended that a draft report with recommendations is circulated for comment to affected parties prior to submission and acceptance of the final report by Heritage New Zealand as meeting the conditions of an authority.

Disposal

Once a final report has been prepared to the satisfaction of Heritage New Zealand decisions about disposal and the ongoing care of archaeological material must be finalised.

Transfers and disposal of material should be documented. The location of archaeological material should be recorded in the final report and in the NZAA site record with reference or catalogue numbers as appropriate. Archaeologists need to be aware of any requirements for disclosing personal information. If there is sensitivity about the location of archaeological material being known contact Heritage New Zealand for advice.

Identifying Options for Disposal

Disposal is a controlled process for changing or removing care of archaeological material, for example from an archaeological consultant at the completion of archaeological work. Disposal options may include such things as disposal via transfer to an owner or custodian, destruction, destruction of samples for scientific testing, reburial on site, display on site, transfer to a museum or retention as a reference collection.

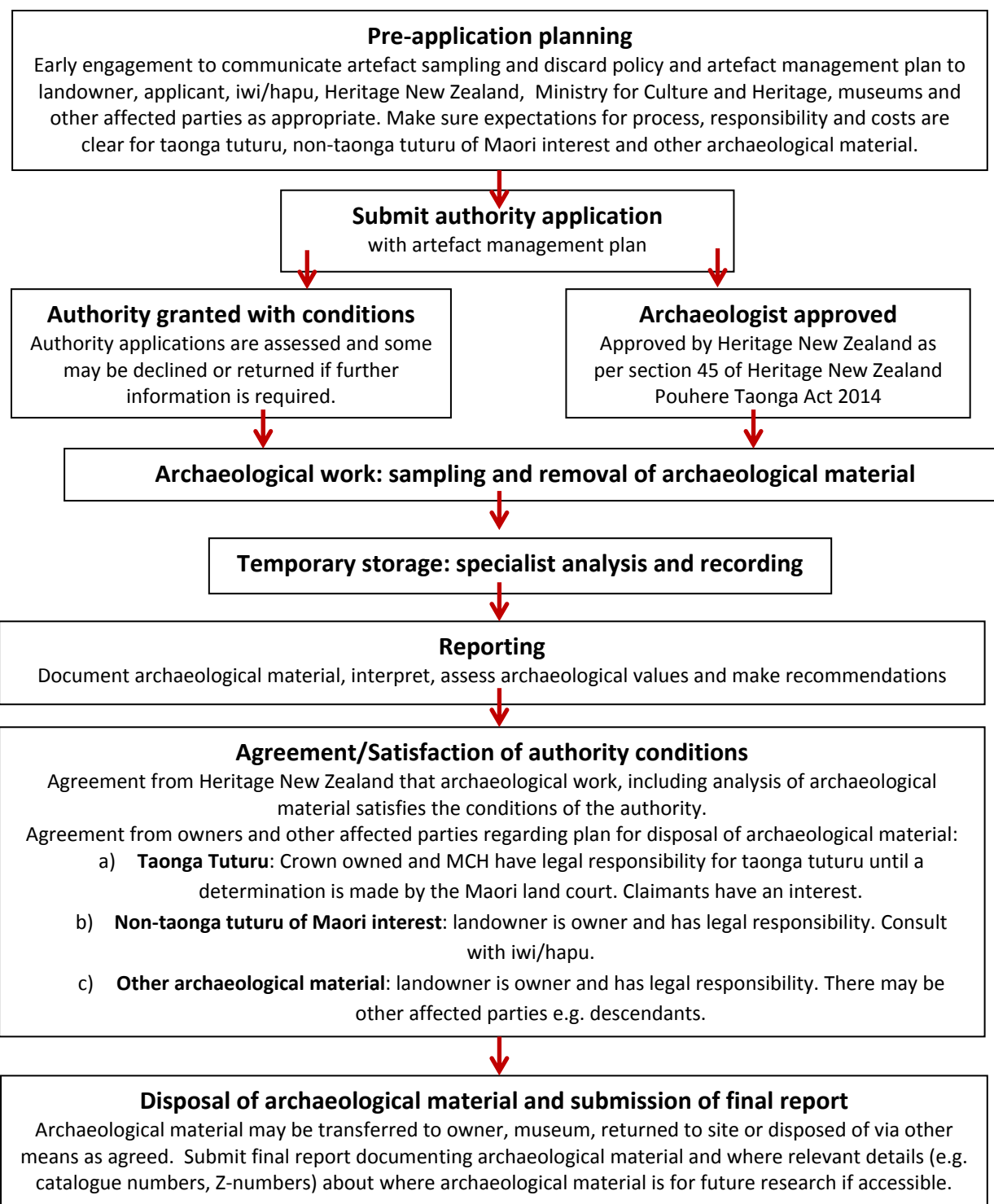
Archaeological laboratories are not normally appropriate for the long term care of archaeological material or archaeological archives (digital and hard copy field records and photographs). Archaeologists need to consider the codes of ethics of their international and national professional organisations. Wherever possible, archaeologists should discourage, and should themselves avoid, activities that promote illegal trade and the use of archaeological objects as items of commerce. Where appropriate archaeologists should encourage the curation of archaeological collections in public institutions, by iwi/hapu or other places where they are readily available for scientific study, public interpretation, and display.

For Further Information

Refer to the attached Quick Guide flowchart and see also:

- Heritage Victoria 2012 *Guidelines for Investigating Historical Archaeological Artefacts and Sites*
- Heritage New Zealand 2014 *Archaeological Guidelines Series 7: Guidelines for Archaeologists in Relation to the Finding of Artefacts*
- Heritage New Zealand 2014 *Archaeological Guidelines Series 8: Guidelines for koiwi tangata/human remains*
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2010 *Protected Objects Act: Guidelines for Taonga Tūturu*

Quick Guide: Managing Archaeological Material



Disclaimer

This information sheet may be of assistance to you but Heritage New Zealand or its employees do not guarantee the accuracy of information and accept no liability for any loss, error or consequence that may occur from relying on this document. Heritage New Zealand reserves the right to grant authorities/approve archaeologists in accordance with the Act and Policy. This information sheet does not replace legislative or policy requirements or replace legal advice. If you have any questions please contact Heritage New Zealand to discuss the archaeological authority process.