

# NGĀ MAUNGA

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAUNGA (MOUNTAINS) IN THE AUCKLAND VOLCANIC FIELD

DEVORA  
FACT SHEET 06

Interesting volcanic facts from the DETERMINING VOLCANIC RISK IN AUCKLAND (DEVORA) PROJECT

Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland has over fifty volcanoes, the first of which began erupting around 200,000 years ago. What was first a heavily forested region of valleys and headlands was filled with tuff and lava from multiple volcanic eruptions, creating the unique landscape we see today. Māori tradition holds that the atua (gods) of the Māori pantheon shaped the land through their spiritual and physical connections. The wrath of Mataoho (guardian of the secrets hidden in the earth) and his brother Rūaumoko (guardian of earthquakes and volcanoes) flowed from deep beneath the earth's surface and created the many Maunga (mountains and volcanoes) that dominate the Auckland landscape today.

## HOW THE MAUNGA WERE USED BY MĀORI

As Māori became established in Aotearoa / New Zealand around 1000 years ago, the Maunga were valued as natural places for pā (settlements), with their rich volcanic soils and their unique form and height for easy defence. Most of the Maunga in Tāmaki Makaurau were developed into pā settlements.

The slopes of the Maunga were shaped into tūāpapa (terraces) for whare moe (sleeping houses), rua (roofed storage pits) for seasonal storage of kumara and other crops, tāpapa (garden mounds) and hāngi (earth oven) pits.

For defence, tall timber palisade fences were built around the tihi (summit) and the upper parts of the Maunga to provide strongholds to fend off invaders. The Chief of the iwi (tribe) and other important people lived within these defences.

A GREAT PĀ REPRESENTED THE MANA (PRESTIGE) AND STRATEGIC ABILITY OF AN IWI. THEY WERE OFTEN HOME TO THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AND WERE SITES OF BIRTH, BATTLE AND BURIAL.

## MAKE WAY MAUNGA! DAMAGE AND DEVELOPMENT...

Development of Auckland as New Zealand's first capital city began in 1840 and the Maungawhau / Mt Eden tihi (summit), with its expansive views, became the primary survey point. Sadly, as the development progressed, there was little regard for the Māori history of the Maunga, resulting in significant and irreversible loss of the pā archaeology.

MOST OF THE MAUNGA WERE QUARRIED FOR SCORIA AND BASALT ROCK USED TO BUILD AUCKLAND'S EARLY ROADS AND BUILDINGS.

The Maunga of Takararo / Mt Cambria in Devonport was quarried to the ground and is now Cambria Reserve. Water reservoirs were sunk into the craters of many Maunga, forever changing the topography and further destroying pā remnants.

In the late 1800s Maungauika / North Head was developed into New Zealand's largest coastal military defence fortification with a comprehensive network of tunnels and gun emplacements. Most Maunga were farmed in some way, and in more modern times they have been managed by local authorities as parks.

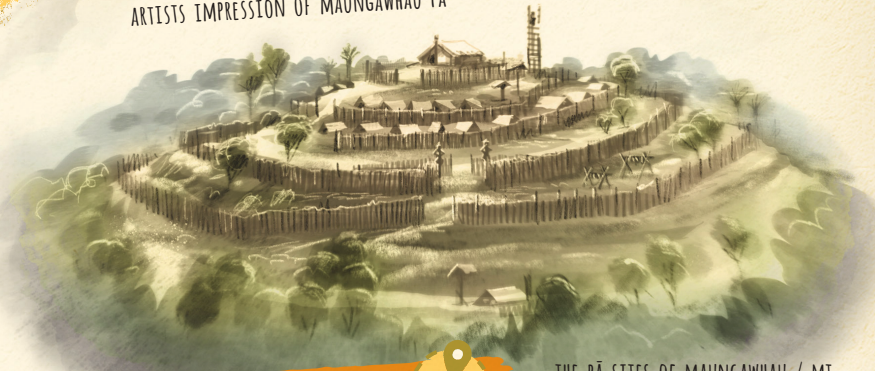


## What is the significance of Maunga for Māori?

The Maunga are central to the spiritual and cultural identity of Māori. They are regarded both as Tūpuna (ancestors) and as living entities with mauri (life force) and wairua (spirit).



ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF MAUNGAWHAU PĀ



## World famous...

The history of Māori occupation of the Maunga sets the Auckland volcanic landscape apart from any other in the world. For that reason the Maunga are being considered for UNESCO World Heritage status.



THE PĀ SITES OF MAUNGAWHAU / MT EDEN, MAUNGAKIEKIE / ONE TREE HILL AND TE PANE O MATAOHO / TE ARA PUERU / MĀNGERE MOUNTAIN ARE AMONG THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF HISTORIC EARTH FORTIFICATIONS IN THE WORLD.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE MAUNGA



PUKEWĪWĪ-PUKETĀPAPA / MOUNT ROSKILL WITH THE PĀ ARCHAEOLOGY CLEARLY INTACT



PUKEWĪWĪ-PUKETĀPAPA / MOUNT ROSKILL AFTER THE WATER RESERVOIR IN 1963, WITH MOST OF THE ARCHAEOLOGY DESTROYED

In 2014 fourteen Maunga were returned to thirteen iwi of Tāmaki Makaurau as part of an historic Treaty of Waitangi settlement. This set the stage for their permanent care guided by te ao Māori (the Māori world view).

**The Maunga remain public reserves for recreational use by everyone, but importantly, the management approach is restoring recognition of the Maunga as wāhi tapu – sites of immense historical, cultural, spiritual and customary importance to the Mana Whenua tribes.**

The Tūpuna Taonga Trust hold the Maunga in trust for the common benefit of the thirteen iwi and the people of Auckland.

The Tūpuna Maunga Authority governs and administers these Maunga and is responsible for day to day management and delivering enhancements to protect and restore the Maunga. The Authority is a co-governance entity with equal representation from the thirteen iwi and Auckland Council. **Find out more at [www.maunga.nz](http://www.maunga.nz).**



**What is Midden?** Many of the Auckland Maunga contain shell middens consisting of seashells discarded by Māori. Usually visible along paths and within dirt banks, the midden date to the ancient pā and are important archaeological features. Try not to disturb them!

Are you ready for the impacts of volcanic activity?

[getready.govt.nz](http://getready.govt.nz)