### Summary Report

**Hokianga Sawmill Company Wharf (Former), Kohukohu (List No. 3947)**

**File:** RS 3947

**Address:** Kohukohu Road

**Legal Description:** Pt Sec 81 Blk X Mangamuka SD (CT NA978/136, *NZ Gazette* 1950, p. 8), Pt Sec 81 Blk X Mangamuka SD (s 5, *Foreshore and Seabed Endowment Revesting Act* 1991), Legal Road (*NZ Gazette*, 1977, p. 951) and Bed of the Hokianga Harbour, North Auckland Land District

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1. NZTM Easting: 1649549.0; NZTM Northing: 6086825.0. Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) cadastral data supplied by QuickMap v7.3.185. Readings are from the approximate centre of the main wharf structure.
Extent includes the land described as Pt Sec 81 Blk X Mangamuka SD (CT NA978/136, NZ Gazette 1950, p. 8), Pt Sec 81 Blk X Mangamuka SD (s 5, Foreshore and Seabed Endowment Revesting Act 1991), part of the land known as Legal Road (NZ Gazette, 1977, p. 951) and part of the land known as Bed of the Hokianga Harbour, North Auckland Land District, and the structures known as Hokianga Sawmill Company Wharf (Former) thereon. Refer to the extent map tabled at the Rārangi Kōrero Committee meeting on 31 May 2018.

**Summary:**

The Hokianga Sawmill Company Wharf (Former) at Kohukohu is a notable remnant of one of New Zealand’s most important nineteenth-century industries - the conversion of native forests to timber products. Made of local timber, the wharf was constructed in 1878 to service the Hokianga's first large-scale, steam-powered sawmill, a major step in the industrialisation of timber production in the region. Used by notable businesses such as the Hokianga Sawmill Company (1878-87) and Kauri Timber Company (c.1888-1912), the wharf reflects the importance of waterborne transport to the industry, as well as associated processes such as log and finished product storage, timber waste disposal and land reclamation. Between 1933 and 1937, it serviced Northland’s largest butter box manufactory, itself connected with the growing importance of dairying as forests were replaced by pasture. Decommissioned in 1938, the wharf remnants reflect Kohukohu’s role as the main timber production centre in the Hokianga during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
Kohukohu forms part of the traditional rohe of Te Ihutai hapū of Te Rarawa. During the 1820s and 1830s, local Māori partnered Sydney- and Hobart-based merchants in extracting kauri from throughout the Hokianga Harbour, resulting in the region becoming a pre-eminent centre for New Zealand’s nascent timber-extraction industry. Located at a narrowing of the harbour, Kohukohu became strategically important to this trade, attracting a succession of European merchants to operate a timber and trading base on land adjoining the current wharf remains. In the 1870s, part of this property was selected for the Hokianga’s first steam-powered sawmill, operated by the Hokianga Sawmill Company - a consortium involving South Island, Wellington and other interests. Initial products included baulk, sawn and dressed kauri timber, totara piles, and joinery such as sashes and doors. These were shipped to markets throughout New Zealand and Australia.

The wharf was the first part of the mill to be erected, demonstrating its importance to the enterprise. Largely completed by September 1878, it was constructed by a Māori workforce under the guidance of William Lowe (c.1833-1901), an Auckland shipwright. Described as ‘far superior to the usual style of wharf to be seen at saw-mills’, it was built of heart kauri and totara, incorporating piles up to 57 feet (17.37 m) in length. In plan, it measured some 450 feet (137 m) long and 30 feet (9.15 metres) wide, with two headstocks 12 x 5 feet (3.65 x 1.5 m) in size; and had a tramline on its deck. The structure also formed the southern side of a large boom for holding logs prior to processing, and became integral to the creation of land-based storage and the disposal of timber waste by forming the northern revetment against which reclamation made up of sawdust, timber offcuts and other material took place.

A township developed around the mill which was for a period the third largest settlement north of Auckland. Its inhabitants watched Kohukohu’s first regatta (1880) from the wharf – until 1886, the only major pier in the town. In c.1888, the Melbourne-based Kauri Timber Company (KTC) acquired the mill, adding a large shed at the landward end of the wharf (pre-1892), a tee at its eastern end (pre-1905), and further reclamation against its south side - possibly accommodating additional wharfage. After a hiatus between 1912 and 1924,
milling resumed under the King Brothers, when repairs to the wharf probably took place.\textsuperscript{13} The wharf subsequently serviced K.D.V. Boxes Limited, whose adjoining butter box factory was the largest built-over space in the Hokianga.\textsuperscript{14} Parts of the wharf were probably dismantled after it was sold to the Hokianga Harbour Board in 1938, and its landward end covered over during subsequent construction of a road.\textsuperscript{15} Surviving remnants, including piles, associated posts and reclaimed land made up of sawmill waste and related material contribute to an important cultural and historical area at Kohukohu, and a wider landscape connected with timber extraction in the Hokianga.\textsuperscript{16}

Further Reading

\textit{Auckland Star}, 25 Sep 1878, p. 2.

Boswijk, Gretel and Duncan Munro, ‘Making productive space from sawmill waste: timber production and reclamation at Kohukohu, Northland, New Zealand (1879–1912)’, \textit{Australasian Historical Archaeology}, Vol. 33, 2015, pp. 3-14.


\textit{New Zealand Herald}, 12 Nov 1879, p. 3; 6 Jan 1880, p. 3; 12 Mar 1892, p. 1.

\textit{Northern Advocate}, 18 Nov 1933, p. 11; 1 Apr 1937, p. 5.

SO 3976 & SO 20286, North Auckland Land District, Land Information New Zealand.

\textsuperscript{13} Duncan Munro, ‘Sawdust and Slabs: The disposal of sawn waste from colonial and dominion-era sawmills of New Zealand’, MSc. thesis, University of Auckland, 2012, pp. 51-2; ‘Particulars of Property Leased by the Public’, Lease No.15083, New Zealand Railways, 23 Jun 1924, BAEI A336 10003 312/e 24109, Archives New Zealand, Auckland. After the KTC closed the mill in 1912, at least some of the structures were dismantled. The site was subsequently obtained by the Railways Department in 1918-19 and leased to George Edward King and Henry Charles King in 1924. A letter at the time of the Kings' first lease renewal in 1929 states that repairs to the wharf had been effected 'from time to time' and that the occupant of the mill had kept it 'in fair repair': Letter, William Wallace, Valuer and Assessor, Auckland, to Railway Land Officer, Wellington, 13 Aug 1929, BAEI A336 10003 312/e 24109, Archives New Zealand, Auckland. Six years later, the wharf decking was reported to have been previously patched using rimu: Report, 'Kohukohu – Mill site & wharf. Lease No. 15083', J[D] Doidge, 18 Mar 1935, BAEI A336 10003 312/e 24109, Archives New Zealand, Auckland.

\textsuperscript{14} Northern Advocate, 1 Apr 1937, p. 5. The plant and buildings were destroyed by fire in 1937. The butter boxes were manufactured from kahikatea, although kauri, rimu and matai products were also sold from the mill for general building purposes.

\textsuperscript{15} Letters, H.W. Beasley, District Engineer, Auckland, to Engineer, Hokianga Harbour Board, Rawene, 9 Aug 1938, and G.H. Davis, Land Office to H.W. Beasley, District Engineer, Auckland, 9 Mar 1939, BAEI A336 10003 312/e 24109, Archives New Zealand, Auckland. The wharf is shown as intact on a plan attached to a letter dated 6 April 1938, which also shows a proposed road alignment. The thoroughfare was built sometime after May 1948: ‘Plan showing proposed road, Kohukohu Town District’, n.d., and Letter, Senior Engineer, Okaihau, to Resident Engineer, PWD, Whangarei, 25 May 1948, ZACE A1547 14959 78/f 24/2, Archives New Zealand, Auckland.

\textsuperscript{16} Additional in-ground material connected with the mill complex, including possibly further remnants of the wharf, survive immediately to the west: see Boswijk and Munro. Also a short distance to the west is New Zealand's oldest surviving stone bridge (List No.7741, Category 1 historic place) and several other identified historic places.
| Other Names                          | Kauri Timber Company Wharf (Former) (c.1888-1912)  
|                                    | Kings’ Brothers Wharf (Former) (1924-1933)  
|                                    | K.D.V. Boxes Limited Wharf (Former) (1933-7)  
|                                    | Wharf Piles  
|                                    | NZAA reference: O05/229 |
| Key Physical Dates                 | 1878: Original construction of wharf, including associated piles  
|                                    | pre-1885: Reclamation against south side of wharf  
|                                    | pre-1892: Addition – Wharf shed  
|                                    | pre-1905: Addition – Tee at east end of wharf  
|                                    | pre-1912: Further reclamation against south side of wharf  
|                                    | c.1918: Demolition – Removal of shed  
|                                    | post 1938 - Demolition - Removal of decking |
| Uses                               | Transport - Wharf/Dock/Pier/Jetty (Former) |
| Associated List Entries            | N/a |
| Protection Measures                | Far North District Plan, Operative (27 August 2009), Appendix 1E: Schedule of Historic Sites, Buildings and Objects, ‘Wharf Piles’(for information only as the site lies within the coastal marine area)  
|                                    | Proposed Northland Regional Plan, Notified (6 September 2017), ‘Kohukohu Wharf Piles’  
| Recommendation                    | **Technical change required:**  
|                                    | Board Paper reference(s): BCC paper HP 223/1984  
|                                    | Wharf Piles, Kohukohu (part conservation area).  
|                                    | Change Name; Change Address; Add Legal Description; Clarify Extent. |

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17 The shed appears to have been removed between March 1917 and June 1918: Plan, ‘Kohukohu Reclamation – Retaining Walls’, 21 Mar 1917, BABJ A847 14406 56 4940, Archives New Zealand, Auckland; SO 20286, North Auckland Land District, LINZ, June 1918.

Attachments

Technical Change Request

Pātaka List Entry Record

List Entry Record
List Number: 3947
Site Reference: P2516

Name: Wharf Piles
Other Names: Name
Location: Main St, KOHUKOHU
List Entry Legal Description:
Local Authority: Far North District
Summary:

List Entry Status: Listed
List Entry Type: Historic Place Category 2
List Number: 3947
Date Entered: 06 September 1984
Extent of List Entry:

Chattels
District Plan Listing: District Plan
Maori Interest: Unknown
Heritage NZ Office: Northland Office

Other Information: Please note that entry on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rarangi Korero identifies only the heritage values of the property concerned, and should not be construed as advice on the state of the property, or as a comment of its soundness or safety, including in regard to earthquake risk, safety in the event of fire, or insanitary conditions.

General Nature of Wahi Tapu:
Section 66(1) & 66(3) Assessment:
Section 23(1) Registered under previous legislation (HPA 1980)
Section 23(2) Registered under previous legislation (HPA 1980).

Section 66(1) Detail:

Section 66(3) Detail:

Statement of Wahi Tapu:
### View Statutory Action

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<th>Type</th>
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**Purpose**
- Excluded in the Crown

**Name**

**Comments**

***End of Report***
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Prior References

QCC 12090

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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Reserves reserve</td>
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<td>Proprietor</td>
<td>The Koutou Town Board</td>
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Interests:

535802.1 Gazette Notice setting apart 1 acre 2 roods 5 perches for a State primary school - 31.3.1977 at 11.31 am
340356.1 Gazette Notice proclaiming 2663 square metres as road and roading the same as Toa Hockey County Council - 18.4.1977 at 10.00 am
Legal Road (Nth)

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Extract from *N.Z. Gazette*, 31 March 1977, No. 36, page 951

Land Proclaimed as Road in Block X, Mangamuka Survey District, Hokianga County

Pursuant to section 29 of the Public Works Amendment Act 1948, the Minister of Works and Development hereby proclaims as road the land described in the Schedule hereto, which land shall vest in the Chairman, Councillors, and Inhabitants of the County of Hokianga.

SCHEDULE

North Auckland Land District

All those pieces of land, situated in Block X, Mangamuka Survey District, described as follows:

Area

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<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>3563</td>
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Being

292 Part Crown land; marked “C” on plan.
16 Part Section 81, Block X, Mangamuka Survey District; marked “A” on plan.
3563 Part Section 81, Block X, Mangamuka Survey District; marked “B” on plan.

As shown on plan S.O. 50131, lodged in the office of the Chief Surveyor at Auckland, and thereon marked as above-mentioned.

Dated at Wellington this 14th day of March 1977.

E. S. F. HOLLAND,
for the Minister of Works and Development.
(P.W. 33/1432; Ak. D.O. 50/15/7/0/50131)

E. C. KRAUTING, Government Printer, Wellington, New Zealand—1877
# View Parcel

**New Appellation Date:**
- Appellation:
  - Parcel Status: Current
  - Intent: Hydro
  - Associated Feature: North Aoddand
  - Land District: North Auckland
  - New Surveyed Definition:

**Referenced Surveys**

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***End of Report***
Images

Detail from SO 3976, North Auckland Land District, Oct 1885[?], showing wharf, associated booms and initial reclamation retained by the wharf

Detail from SO 20286, North Auckland Land District, June 1918, showing ‘Mill Wharf’ in relation to extended reclamation retained by the wharf and associated features
The wharf, including wharf shed and additional wharfage created from reclaimed land, n.d. but probably c.1912-18 (Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 1142-D28).