



20 April 2021

Dargaville Racing Club
c/o Sophie Herzog-Bell
Griffiths and Associates Limited
PO Box 454
Whangarei
(via email)

Tena koe

As requested, I have carried out a desk-based review and field inspection of the Dargaville Racing Club (DRC) property at Awakino Point, Dargaville. The purpose of this work was to determine if any archaeological site(s) will be impacted by the plan change and subsequent developments on the property. Advice about cultural values of the site should be sought from mana whenua.

All archaeological sites, whether recorded or not, are subject to the provisions of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. An archaeological authority must be obtained from Heritage New Zealand before any work occurs that may affect archaeological site(s).

DESKTOP RESEARCH

Desktop review of the property involved consultation with the NZAA site recording scheme, historic aerial imagery, historic survey plans and other documentary evidence.

There are no recorded archaeological sites on the DRC property and very few in the surrounding area. Historic survey plans (e.g., Fig. 1) suggest the area around the racecourse was wet and covered in manuka and fern scrub or Kahikatea forest until at least 1912. The DRC (then the Northern Wairoa Racing Club) conducted race meets in several locations near Dargaville before settling on the current course, possibly in 1914¹. Buildings on the site have been significantly remodeled over the years and have no clear heritage value.

The low-lying nature of the ground on which the race course is located may account for the absence of Māori archaeological sites. Where present, sites of this kind appear to be on raised ground (e.g., P07/34) such as is present in the northwest of the DRC property. On this basis this area was a focus of the field inspection.

¹Mary Mountier, 'Horse and Greyhound racing – Racing clubs', Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD INSPECTION

I carried out an archaeological field inspection on Tuesday 6 April 2021. It is clear that the racecourse has been heavily modified, therefore the field inspection focused on areas outside of the track, particularly the high ground in the northeast of the property, where it was deemed that sites were most likely to occur.

No archaeological features were visible on the surface of the property, including the northeastern high-ground. To test the presence of subterranean features/deposits a shovel test-pitting exercise was carried out across the property (Fig. 2). All test pits found natural soil profiles with no evidence of archaeological deposits.

On the basis of the results of the archaeological field inspection and desktop research, I consider it unlikely that archaeological features will be found during earthworks on the property. However, the presence of subterranean archaeological features or deposits (e.g., midden) cannot be ruled out entirely.

ADVICE & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is no evidence of archaeological sites on the Dargaville Racing Club property.
2. On the basis of the field survey and desk-based research, it is considered that the risk of damage to intact archaeological deposits during any earthworks on the property is low and does not warrant the need for a prior archaeological authority from Heritage New Zealand.
3. An Archaeological Site Discovery Protocol should be used during all ground disturbances. All staff and contractors should be made aware of the requirements of the protocol, prior to the commencement of any ground disturbance, to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the unlikely event that buried archaeological deposits are encountered.
4. Any archaeological features that may be encountered are subject to the provisions of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. If archaeological material is encountered during ground disturbance, all work in the area of the find must cease and further archaeological advice should be obtained.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions about the advice.

Naku noa na



Dr Andrew Brown

Director | Horizon Archaeology Ltd





Land Information New Zealand, Custom Software Limited, Date Scanned 2002, Last modified February 2002, Plan is probably current as at 02/03/2020

Figure 1 – Historic survey plan of Awakino Point (DP 7811 - 1912) showing the presence of manuka, fern and kahikatea forests in the area prior to clearance and drainage for farming.

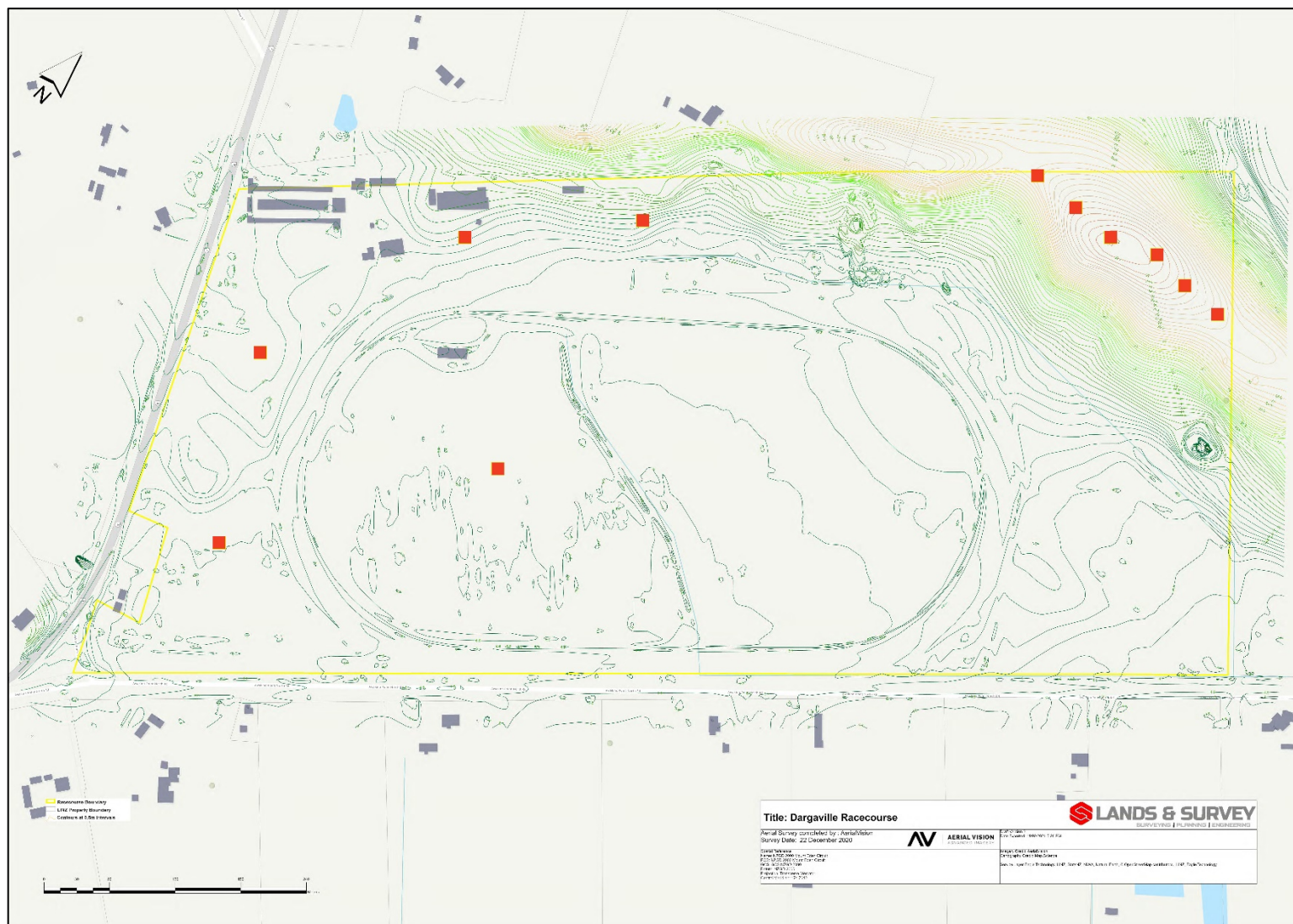


Figure 2— Location of test pits (red squares) within the DRC property. Map supplied by Griffiths and Associates.