

Guidelines - Cultural Management Guidelines for the Burial of Koiwi



For Consultation - as at 22-02-2023

1 Background

In the 1980/90s the Whanganui Regional Museum Board voted not to receive any more Koiwi Bones. This started discussions over a long period of time on how to dispose of the bones, and eventually resulted in four plots at Aramoho Cemetery being set aside for this purpose.

The plots are for bones found in the District. If the bones are not claimed within a certain period, they will eventually be buried. There is a period of two years for people to claim the bones.

Cleveland Funeral Home, Whanganui are currently looking after a number of bones until they are identified or buried. Cleveland Funeral Directors have paid for two plots and Whanganui Iwi have paid for two plots.

The historic oral agreement for the area is between Iwi, Cleveland Funeral Home and the Whanganui District Council. The Council shall look after the plots in perpetuity. It is anticipated that the opening of the plots for burial will be once a year after liaison with iwi and Cleveland Funeral Home as to the most appropriate time for this to occur.

All rules and guidelines on the digging of graves and burial procedures will apply.

If Iwi wish to erect a monument, then the monument must be consistent with the Guidelines – Cemetery Monuments.

2 Relationship Arrangements

In keeping with the Te Whakarauhitanga o Te Tangata Relationship Document between the Whanganui District Council and Te Runanga o Tupoho, the Council will work in partnership that supports respectful engagement on all issues.

In keeping with the Te Whakarauhitanga o Te Tangata Relationship Document between the Whanganui District Council and Te Runanga o Tamaupoko, the Council will work in partnership that supports respectful engagement on all issues.

3 Burial of Koiwi bones

It is anticipated that Whanganui Iwi will liaise with the Whanganui District Council on any re-interment of Koiwi bones so the day to day cemetery operational matters do not interfere with any re-interment that may take place.

4 Cultural Considerations

All Koiwi are the responsibility of this agreement. The identification of Koiwi is by presentation in whatever form e.g. Maori, Pakeha or other. On all levels, tangata whenua are individually involved for managing the burials in the first instance.

To assist in this process, Whanganui Iwi have advised that the following considerations should be allowed for:

1. The appropriate persons contacted being the Kaiwhakahaere of the Te Runanga o Tupoho
2. Sufficient time to be provided for karakia (prayer) and tauparapara (incantations)
3. Refraining from eating and carrying food and drink within proximity to works or activities associated with the remains
4. Use of appropriate tools for exhuming remains i.e. not home gardening implements
5. Use of appropriate containers and receptacles i.e. nothing currently or previously used for containing food
6. Provision for a designated repository or an agreed storage facility i.e. not residences or places of work
7. Provision of water on site for cleansing/tapu removal

5 Burial Plots

There are four burial plots set aside for the specific purpose of burying Koiwi bones at the Aramoho Cemetery.

6 Ownership of the Plots

Koiwi plots belong to Whanganui Iwi but are maintained and situated at the Council owned cemetery at Aramoho.

The burial area, for Council records, will be known as the Koiwi Burial area Papaiti Lawn Extension 1 Aramoho Cemetery, Whanganui.

7 Burial Costs

The four burial plots set aside at the Aramoho Cemetery have been paid in full.

In liaison with Whanganui iwi, the Whanganui District Council has agreed that it will take responsibility for the cost of opening of a grave and interment of bones. It is anticipated that this will occur once a year.

8 Standards for recording

The Council records the burial and cremation of human remains at the Aramoho Cemetery.

Koiwi are recorded as Koiwi remains along with the burial plot location on the Council cemetery database and the copies held in the Aramoho Cemetery Office.

9 Supporting Documents

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga - AGS8 Guidelines for koiwi tangata/human remains