

6.10 Tataraimaka Cemetery

Description

Location:	Lower Timaru Road, approximately 700m north of SH45, between Oakura and Okato
Legal description:	Part Section 19, Tataraimaka District, Block II Cape Survey District
Size:	0.88 hectares
Reserve status:	Subject to Reserves Act 1977
Reserve classification:	Local purpose (closed cemetery) reserve



Physical description

Tataraimaka Cemetery is visible from Lower Timaru Road; the headstones are close to the road with no vegetation or structures obscuring them. The land form is initially flat and then descends steeply behind the burial area into a stream gully, rising up again on the western side of the cemetery land. The gully and western area are covered in native bush. The cemetery is surrounded by farmland.

Tangata whenua interests

This reserve is within the tribal rohe of Taranaki Iwi. It is of historic and cultural significance to Nga Mahanga-a-Tairi hapu.

Land status and acquisition history

Governor Ranfurly in 27 November 1902, permanently reserved Part Section 19 for the purpose of a cemetery under section 235 of the Land Act 1892, an area of two acres and 28 perches by gazette notice 98 (page 2559).

In September 1933, a gazette notice (page 2429) records Governor-General Bledisloe pursuant to Section 4 the 'Cemeteries Act 1908', delegating the Taranaki County Council the powers to appoint and remove Trustees.

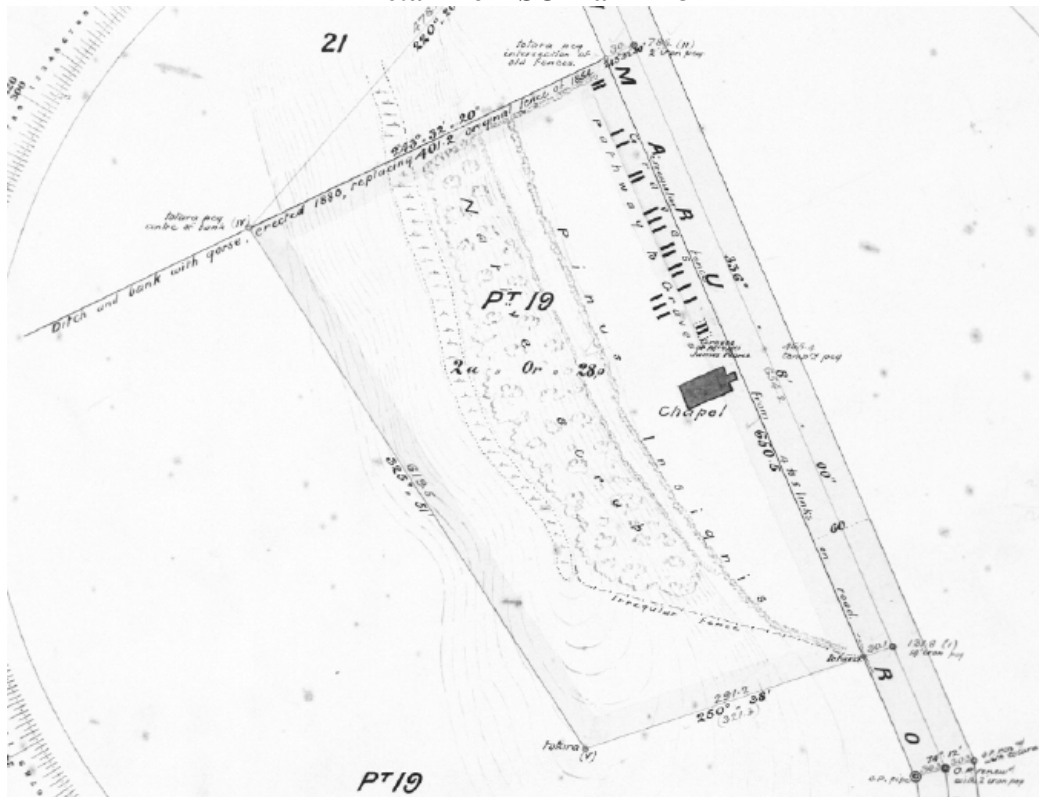
A 'closing order' under the Burials and Cremations Act 1964 was made for the cemetery in a gazette notice in March 1968 (page 2071), by the Right Honorable Keith Holyoake stating that the Tataraimaka Cemetery shall be closed and any burials therein discontinued after 30 September 1968. In the same notice, control and management of the closed cemetery was vested in the Taranaki County Council.

In a gazette notice dated April 1969 (page 855), the Minister of Health, D. N. McKay pursuant to section 41 and 42 of the Burial and Cremation Act 1964, known as the 'Tataraimaka Clearance Notice', noted that Tataraimaka Cemetery is now closed for any further burials from March 1968 and that the Taranaki County Council is now authorised to remove all monuments and tablets erected in the cemetery.

History and cultural values

A chapel was originally located at the site, fronting onto Timaru Road midway along the eastern boundary. This is shown on Survey Office Plan 1723, dated 15 September 1901.

Detail from SO Plan 1723



The chapel was built soon after the settler's reoccupied their land at the end of the Land Wars, the first reference to the chapel being April 1873. Local timber was cut for the chapel and stored on site at the cemetery until commandeered by the Government at the outbreak of the Second Taranaki War in 1863, being then used for

a blockhouse. The Government later provided enough kauri timber to build a community chapel¹.

Irene Waswo's article informs that John Pearce gave the land for a cemetery in 1858, the first burial being that of his wife Grace, in 1859¹. The SO Plan 1723 dated 1901, shows the cemetery as being part of 19 Tataraimaka District, owned by John Pearce who commissioned the survey plan. The Crown then purchased the cemetery with the gazette notice being produced the following year in 1902.

The Taranaki County Council took control of the cemetery in 1957 at the invitation of local residents.

In 1968, the County Engineer noted that very little interest in the maintenance of graves is shown by the relatives of the deceased and that Council workmen undertake a general clearing of rank growth once a year. In between these visits bracken, fern and other grows up to a height of two or three feet, making an untidy appearance when viewed from the road. The discontinuity and irregularity in the lines of the graves and the presence of fences, and the topping slabs of various dimensions makes clearing work difficult and costly. A recommendation was made to prepare a plan showing the exact location of all existing headstones, which will then be removed intact and the whole area bulldozed clear. The area will then be turfed and the headstones replaced over the respective graves in straightened lines and supported by a continuous concrete base, some three feet wide set flush at ground level. The area will be mowed regularly.

In 1969 the Council cleared the area, replacing the headstones over graves in straightened lines, grassing the cemetery to improve the maintenance of the cemetery grounds¹.

The cemetery is a Category B heritage site in the District Plan.

Existing improvements

There are no existing improvements at this closed cemetery.

Management and administration

The cemetery is maintained as a closed cemetery.

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage maintains one war grave at this cemetery, relating to World War 1 (see Appendix B for details).

Management objectives and specific policies

- This cemetery is managed as a closed cemetery with native tree revegetation in the part of the cemetery that does not include burials.
- The Council's aerial maps indicate that the cemetery may be encroaching on the property to the north, including part of the burial area and that farmland is encroaching on the cemetery to the south. Determination of the legal boundary via

¹ Waswo, Irene; *Okato, Tataraimaka, Puniho Districts: Their Stories Told*. 1999

a survey of the land parcel is to be undertaken as part of the implementation of this plan.

- The site of the historic chapel is immediately south of the burial area as shown on Survey Office Plan 1723. This area is an archaeological site and requires an authority from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust for any intended development work to proceed. The site has been planted over with seedling native trees in June 2006 and will develop into a small forested area.
- An area of some 900m² facing the road including that of the historic chapel site is flat enough to be used for burials. The entire area has been planted up in seedling native trees in June 2006, and will be a bush area in 10-15 years and unavailable for development. It is considered there is no need to reclaim this area by removing the recent planting and requesting the cemetery be reopened, as there is sufficient burial provision at Oakura and Okato Cemeteries. The remainder of the cemetery comprises of two sides of a steep gully surrounding an unnamed tributary, covered in native bush.

Hatched area indicates the area of pre 1900 development at the cemetery, constituting an archaeological area under the Historic Places Act 1993.

