

MĀPUA MASTERPLAN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Research has found that the archaeological evidence of Māori occupation and settlement in Māpua is extensive and stretches back over centuries.

Excavations at Ngaio Reserve exposed three cultural layers which indicates an intensive and long occupation of this area. The earliest layer is thought to date back to 1400 – 1450 AD due to the presence of moa bone. This layer represents low-density occupation, indicating short-term visits from hunter-gatherers. Apart from moa bone, only shell midden was found within this layer¹.

Over lying this layer, indications of more intensive occupation from people who were permanently settled. Designated areas for cooking, toolmaking and fishing can be found. Hāngi pits, large middens, large quantities of fish bone, small bird bones and rat bones indicate intensive use of food sources. The presence of obsidian from the North Island provides evidence for long distance travel to the area. This layer is thought to be between 1500 and 1820, ending with the arrival of the first Europeans. The most recent layer is more disturbed due to modern construction, it is thought that this layer represents the occupation of both Māori and European people around 1850. Grossi Point is significant because of the rare evidence found here which indicates early occupation of the estuary, with artefact types typical of the 'archaic period'.

