

**WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME** Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall

**ADDRESS** Rangiriri Road, Rangiriri

**PHOTOGRAPH**



[1 May 2017]

**DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO.** xx                      **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** N/A

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION** Lot 2 DP 31569 Blk III Rangiriri SD Maori War Cemetery

**FILE NUMBERS** 1003342

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION** 1926

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER** McNab & Mason, monumental masons

**STYLE** Classical arch and masonry style wall

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANT FEATURES**

Pedimented entrance arch carried on squared posts with flared capitals. East face of tympanum features inscribed granite panel [see photograph below]. Rusticated stone style treatment of wall and posts. Pipe metal railing carried on uprights set into low boundary wall.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Concrete, granite and galvanised iron pipe.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

None known.

**SURROUNDINGS, CONTRIBUTION TO CONTEXT & EXTENT OF SCHEDULING**

The entrance arch is centrally located on the eastern boundary of the Rangiriri Cemetery, set within a concrete and pipe metal perimeter wall. Immediately to the south of the cemetery is the surviving portion of the Rangiriri Domain, which is entered via World War I memorial gates (reconstructed c.2016). Across the road from the cemetery is the Rangiriri Hotel, which is an 'A' ranked scheduled heritage item. A sign board positioned on the street front near the entrance arch tells the story of the Battle of Rangiriri. The extent of scheduling encompasses the whole land parcel on which the cemetery is located. Archaeological, architectural, cultural and historic values present within the cemetery are also noted.

- **HISTORY OF SITE/STRUCTURE/PLACE/AREA**

By November 1863 an Anglican Maori church had been built at Rangiriri. It was made of thatched raupo and overlooked a landing place and small settlement, Paetai, as well as the pa to the north. On 20 November 1863, during the bloodiest battle of the New Zealand Wars, imperial troops engaged with the Maori defenders of the Rangiriri pa, built between the river and Lake Kopuera to block the British advance. At least 47 Maori and 47 British died either during the battle or later from their wounds. Some of the Maori buried on the battle site were later exhumed and taken to Taupiri for re-burial, some of the European troops were buried in a graveyard beside the church but others, mostly officers, were taken to Auckland for burial.

By July 1867 the church and its graveyard were in disrepair. Prompted by advocacy to recognise the historic value of the cemetery, a monument was erected in 1889 bearing the inscription 'Sacred to the memory of the officers and men who fell at the battle' and listing the names of the British troops. In 1910 the Department of Internal Affairs assumed responsibility for the cemetery and began making improvements. Tenders were called for 'extensive renovating' of the Rangiriri Cemetery in December 1925 and a wall and entrance arch built by McNab and Mason of Auckland was complete by October 1926. Veterans from both sides of the conflict attended the unveiling ceremony by the Hon RF Bollard on 13 April 1927. Centenary commemorations of the Battle of Rangiriri held in 1963 included a service held at the Rangiriri Cemetery. Rangiriri's present-day cemetery is located to the north of the village on Te Wheoro Road.

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The site of the Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high potential archaeological significance given the cemetery's use as a burial ground from the early 1860s.

#### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has aesthetic significance as a classically styled structure defining the historic extent of the cemetery. McNab and Mason, leading monumental masons in Auckland, were also responsible for Cook Monument in Gisborne (1906) and the reconstruction of the Pokeno Waikato War Soldiers' Memorial in 1926.

#### **CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high cultural significance as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The memorial has commemorative significance and is already the subject of interpretation that seeks to increase understanding of the legacy of the Waikato War.

#### **HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high historic significance for its association with the Battle of Rangiriri and the Waikato War (1863-64) more generally. It is also associated with the Maori Anglican church in whose grounds the cemetery was established and the colonial settlers of Rangiriri.

#### **SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has scientific value for its potential to provide further information about its design and construction.

#### **TECHNOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has technological value for its construction methods and materials.

• **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high overall significance to Waikato District. The site has high potential archaeological significance and the arch and perimeter wall have aesthetic significance as the work of leading Auckland monumental masons, Mason & McNab. The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high cultural significance given its commemorative purpose and the site's potential to contribute to an understanding of Rangiriri's place within the history of the Waikato War. The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has high historic significance for its association with the Battle of Rangiriri and the district's early colonial settlers. The Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery Arch & Boundary Wall has scientific and technological value for its research potential and construction methods and materials.

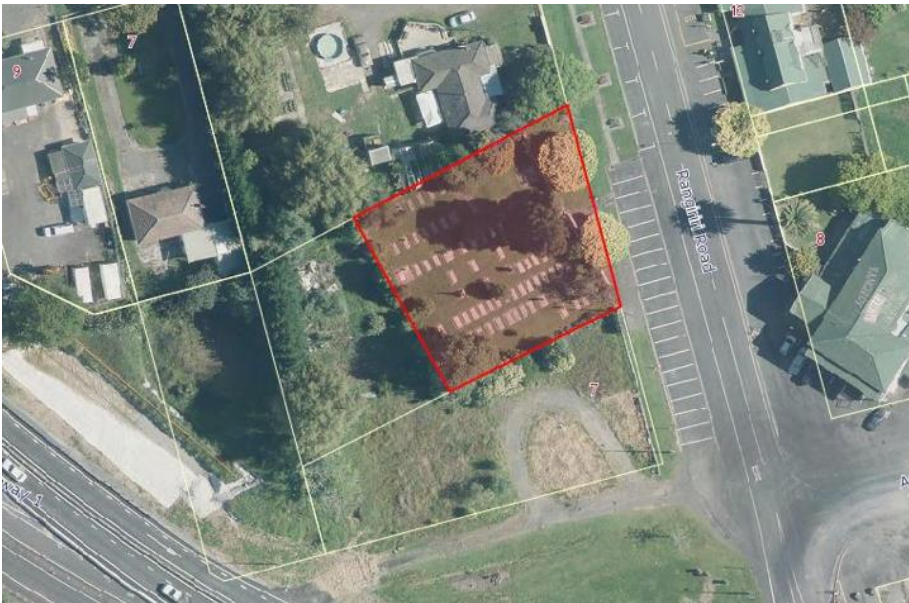
• **RECOMMENDED CATEGORY OF HISTORIC HERITAGE LISTING**

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**REFERENCES**

- *NZ Herald* 6 April 1927, p. 13; 14 April 1927, pp. 10 & 14; 12 August 1932, p. 10; 17 November 1932, p. 14.
- *Auckland Star* 11 December 1925, p. 4; 9 April 1926, p. 9; 27 September 1926, p. 10; 8 October 1926, p. 13; 13 April 1927, p. 9.
- *Bay of Plenty Times* 14 April 1927, p. 3.
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiriri-nz-wars-cemetery-1864-0>
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiriri-first-world-war-memorial>
- *The Battle of Rangiriri Centenary 1863-1963. Tua kana tanga.* Souvenir programme, Te Kauwhata, 1963.
- Also <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiriri-nz-wars-cemetery-arch> citing the following sources:
- 'The Battle of Rangiriri' *Evening Post* 6 June 1896.
- James Belich 'Rangiriri' in *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian interpretation of racial conflict* Penguin, Auckland, 1998, pp. 142-57.
- James Cowan 'The Battle of Rangiriri' in *The New Zealand Wars: a history of the Maori campaigns and the pioneering period: volume I: 1845-1864* R.E. Owen, Wellington, 1955, pp. 326-35.
- Chris Maclean and Jock Phillips *The sorrow and the pride: New Zealand war memorials* GP Books, Wellington, 1990, pp. 25-6, 39.
- Nigel Prickett 'The Waikato War, 1863-64' in *Landscapes of conflict: a field guide to the New Zealand Wars* Random House, Auckland, 2002, pp. 69-86.
- Chris Pugsley 'Walking the Waikato Wars: Controversy at Rangiriri: 20 November 1863' *New Zealand Defence Quarterly* no. 15 (Summer 1996), pp. 31-7.

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<b>AUTHOR</b>	Dr Ann McEwan / Heritage Consultancy Services
<b>REPORT UPDATED</b>	xx
<b>AUTHOR</b>	xx
<b>PEER REVIEWED</b>	xx
<b>REVIEWER</b>	xx



Extent of scheduling, Rangiriri Maori War and Early Settlers Cemetery, Rangiriri Road, Rangiriri.



Detail of entrance arch. 1 May 2017. [The wording on the memorial is inaccurate in relation to the number of British troops who were involved in the action and those who died, and in regard to the 'surrender' of Maori in the redoubt.]



Heritage Trails signboard at entry to cemetery. 4 November 2013.



Maori church at Rangiriri with cemetery in the foreground, photographed by Daniel Manders Beere in 1864. 1/2-096093-G, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.



Unveiling ceremony, 13 April 1927. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rangiriri-nz-wars-cemetery-arch>



Neighbouring reconstructed World War I commemorative gates, Rangiriri Domain. 1 May 2017.