

IN THE MATTER OF

The Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

Notices of requirement for designations under section 168 of the Act, in relation to Te Ahu a Turanga; Manawatū Tararua Highway Project

BY

NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORT AGENCY
Requiring Authority

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF SIOBHAN LYNCH-KARAITIANA
REPRESENTING RANGITĀNE O MANAWATŪ**

8 March 2019

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and scope of evidence

1. My name is Siobhan Lynch-Karaitiana. I work in Te Ao Turoa, the environmental centre of Tanenuiarangi Manawatū Incorporated. I am the Principal Environmental Planner. I oversee the day to day relationship between Rangitāne and New Zealand Transport Agency (**NZTA**), and lead Rangitāne kaitiaki engagement in Te Ahu a Turanga. I have married into Rangitāne, thus my role is to facilitate Rangitāne in fulfilling their duties as kaitiaki of their rohe i te taiao. I hold an Honours degree in Ecology.
2. My evidence describes how Rangitāne will fulfil their duty as kaitiaki throughout the Te Ahu a Turanga Highway Project (**Project**). My evidence is limited to cultural and ecological matters.

SUMMARY

3. As described in the Rangitāne Technical Assessment of Tangata Whenua Values, Te Apiti is a significant landscape to Rangitāne that supported a full suite of activities for over thirty Rangitāne kainga. Rangitāne have unbroken status of mana whenua for the entirety of Te Apiti and the Ruahine Ranges where the NOR is proposed. The western area has always been a strategic stronghold for Rangitāne o Manawatū. It contains an exceptionally wide range of resource types within a small geographic area which adequately sustained the needs of Rangitāne all year round. This landscape was widely traversed for seasonal hunting and gathering. Journey by water through Te Apiti and a permanent track across the Ruahine Ranges, not far from the waahi tapu Te Ahu a Turanga, were the main connection ways between hapū from Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rangitāne Tamaki Nui a Rua. The road through Te Apiti and now Te Ahu a Turanga are following very similar routes as what Rangitāne ancestors once regularly travelled.
4. At the centre of the landscape is Te Apiti. Wai mauri is enhanced through Te Apiti and though the impacts on this process is one of my main concerns about the project, they will be addressed in subsequent planning phases. I am comfortable with the ngāhere offset package as it stands understanding that our kaitiaki will have the opportunity to identify further effects as a result of the construction and its wider footprint on the landscape. It is the intention of Rangitāne to negotiate biodiversity projects to contribute to a net positive biodiversity gain. If granted, the designation will not pass directly through any known Rangitāne waahi tapū, however Rangitāne expect evidence of their

tupuna to be uncovered as a result of the extensive proposed earthworks. Rangitāne o Manawatū do not support the addition of a cycle and footpath to the road as part of this designation process. The Project has been assessed by Rangitāne as a road without considering pedestrian access to the area. The addition of cycle and walkways would require a thorough analysis by Rangitāne to identify adverse cultural impacts and appropriate mitigations.

Opportunities

5. Contemporary ability to practice culture in this landscape will be enhanced as a result of the Project. Rangitāne generally have limited access to most of Te Apiti except for a few walks and reserves on the fringes that are maintained by local Councils. This Project has offered an opportunity for Rangitāne to build upon their relationship with Te Apiti, the Ruahine ranges and their taonga. The opportunity to harvest resources from the ngāhere and pākihi, host wānanga for our rangatahi, share cultural narratives, and just be in their amazing spiritual area is a benefit that cannot be summed. Te Ahu a Turanga Highway Project has the potential to restore a missing piece of culture for Rangitāne. TMI and NZTA are committed to seeing this happen.

Kaitiakitanga

6. Te Ao Turoa are a centre of environmental specialists that undertake kaitiaki activities and also training of Rangitāne kaitiaki. Specialists include a pest control expert and experienced support team, Growsafe certified staff, a team with large scale restoration experience including seed collection, propagation management and planting, as well as terrestrial, aquatic and cultural monitoring expertise.
7. Mana whenua must have an important role to play in environmental offset and in environmental monitoring. I am leading the high level planning component, alongside others, for physical restoration offset works. This work will feed into the alliance and provide a pathway for environmental best practice and culturally sensitive restoration to be at the heart of the Project. This is an example of how the Cultural and Environmental Design Framework has presented itself on the ground. Our approach will also feed into the Construction Environmental Management Plan. Construction activities have a high chance of introducing weeds to significant areas and providing invasion populations and pathways. Rangitāne Kaitiaki will be monitoring this issue on the ground during the Project. A holistic monitoring and landscape rehabilitation program will be overseen by Rangitāne o Manawatū within the designation area.

8. Kaupapa Rangitāne requires kawa to be upheld. Kawa are ultimate principles, the Cultural Environmental Design Framework is designed to capture kawa. This approach is different to New Zealand law which sets minimum standards to be achieved. Rangitāne o Manawatū are comfortable with the ecological conditions as they stand, we acknowledge that the full suite of measures will develop over time and that this should be considered when setting bottom limits for this NOR. Further works could include species translocations, holistic pest and weed control programs, and the investing of resources in linkage corridors/stepping stones to other regionally placed sites to achieve the net positive biodiversity requirement.
9. The only way we will be able to deliver a net biodiversity gain is to demonstrate this over time. The RoM Cultural Health Monitoring program will need to demonstrate a gain in taonga diversity and abundance to suite this requirement. Our approach to determining enhancement actions at this stage needs to be flexible and non-specific, first we need to determine the limiting factors in this landscape. It may be predation, isolation from the surrounding landscape, habitat quality or something else. The ultimate aim of the RoM Cultural Health Monitoring program is to capture this information and turn it into restorative actions, which Rangitāne Kaitiaki will then undertake.
10. Rangitāne Cultural Impact Assessment (**CIA**) will be a living document. It will set out our specific kawa and tikanga, and will be updated over time to reflect our adaptive approach to the project. We will provide a minimum of annual Cultural Health Monitoring results for up to twenty sites, a further desktop assessment of all waahi tapu including but not limited to waahi tapu contained in the Tangata whenua cultural values assessment; a full analysis of effects on mauri of Te Apiti. Rangitāne CIA shall contribute to evidence of a positive overall effect of the Project and will guide our recommendations on a final effects package for both terrestrial and freshwater.
11. Impact on the mauri of the Manawatū River and individual tributaries is of high concern to Rangitāne o Manawatū. Extensive monitoring of waterways will be required and should be undertaken by both mana whenua and aquatic ecologists. Rangitāne concerns about this will be addressed in a subsequent planning phase.
12. Rangitāne are working with NZTA to fulfil their role as kaitiaki. They have attended all water sampling occasions, have attended site visits, undertaken karakia on commencement of drilling Ruahine, have been undertaking seed collection for restoration and high level restoration planning. It has been

agreed between NZTA and Rangitāne that kaitiaki will be present during all ecological monitoring occasions going forward, will participate in ecological site scouts and species translocations, will be present during ground breaking earthworks to oversee tikanga matters and accidental archaeological discoveries, and will undertake an on-going cultural health monitoring program.

COMMENTS ON SECTION 42A REPORT

Ecology

13. I have significant concerns that a range of submitters in this consenting process seek to lock in regimented agreements of how we will reach a net terrestrial biodiversity gain. This project is in its infancy, and regimented guidance on the “how” and defining early set goals risks stifling our ability to react to potential impacts or opportunities that will arise that we have not accounted for at this early stage, and for perspectives to shift as we learn more about this landscape. It is certain that we have not identified all the cultural and environmental impacts and considered the full footprint of this project. To ever claim we have the answers at such an early stage in a project this large would be in ignorance. It should be recognised by these submitters that Rangitāne are the Kaitiaki of this area, this area contains Rangitāne past, present and future. Rangitāne will seek the best environmental outcomes guided by our partnership approach.
14. Rangitāne do not seek an exact like for like replacement of species compositions, and we strongly oppose one being implemented. This is a pure western science approach that does not account for the value mātauranga Māori can bring to restoring significant landscapes and enhancing values beyond what a “like for like” approach could provide. It is acknowledged internationally that indigenous land management techniques are key to sustainable and diverse ecosystems, and an indigenous approach to restoration will significantly contribute to a net positive outcome for biodiversity. Te Apiti has been impacted by colonisation, deforestation and land use change, and what species are present now are not an adequate representation of the potential ecosystem value. For example the threatened northern rātā (*Metrosiderous robusta*) is absent from the designation zone. It was not identified in any ecological assessments or in the offset planting list. Rangitāne have a historical account of the western area in dramatic full bloom of crimson flowers. Discounting Rangitāne mātauranga for an exact like for like scenario would miss out on the opportunity to reintroduce locally

extinct species to the area, and to capitalise on cultural ecosystems that once had high taonga presence and functional values.

15. Rangitāne support the need for a focus on invertebrates but question whether an Invertebrate Management Plan would be the best outcome given our lack of understanding of the general invertebrate taxonomy. Culturally focused research on invertebrate biodiversity resourced by NZTA would be desirable. This will be a negotiation point by Rangitāne.

Freshwater

16. We share Logan Brown and others' concern about the short-medium term impact of sediment discharge on all streams within the designation catchments. Especially regarding local species extinctions and reduced ability to recolonise because of the state of ecological health of the Manawatū catchment. Rangitāne will address their concerns with the alliance in subsequent planning phases.
17. Rangitāne do not support the use of values in Schedule B of the Horizons One Plan. They do not account for Rangitāne values for waterways in the Manawatū catchment.
18. Unfortunately because the One Plan is not able to reflect Rangitāne kawa or tikanga in any of their discharge consenting and water quality protection rules because Iwi values are precluded in each individual rule, we have little faith our concerns around stream values will be addressed as part of the Horizons Regional Council consenting process. Rangitāne o Manawatū will be undertaking Cultural Health Monitoring (**CHM**) within all of the high value streams, according to Rangitāne values. We will be negotiating culturally appropriate protection and waterway enhancement dependant on the cultural impact to all streams in the rohe of Rangitāne with the alliance.

Recreation

19. Rangitāne are comfortable that access from one end of the highway to the other for cyclists and walkers is not an appropriate scope for this Project, that this would benefit a narrow group in our community and it could have unintended cultural consequences such as community access to waahi tapu and burial grounds. We are comfortable with expanded consideration for cyclists and pedestrians at each end of the route, but firmly oppose a full route across the Ruahine Ranges without proper consultation and

discussion with mana whenua. The full route should not be granted as part of this designation process.

20. Tourism opportunities in this Project should build upon a Rangitāne narrative with benefits first directed back to Rangitāne. This would align with Treaty obligations by all Councils and NZTA for this area. The risk continues to be a tourism and recreation zone in Te Apiti, a particularly significant Rangitāne landscape that is dictated by community aspirations. I disagree that the opportunity to enhance tourism and recreation has been missed, it is just being negotiated through a different channel than what our District Councils would prefer. Tourism benefits from this Project should build Rangitāne Rangatiratanga rather than aim to enhance an already well organised and resourced pākehā community.

Social Impact

21. Rangitāne agree that the community should have a say on matters that affect them. Rangitāne do not support community conclusion in the detailed design process, incorporation of Rangitāne design is vital in this project to fulfil the CEDF, and give effect to Rangitāne o Manawatū Treaty Settlement Act 2016.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE PANEL DIRECTED TO RANGITĀNE

If appropriate, please identify any other water courses within the NOR where Rangitane kaitiaki reside

22. There are further undisclosed tohu, gateways to the spiritual world, and burial grounds, but no spiritual kaitiaki that I or any of my contacts in Rangitāne are aware of.

Are any of the areas of scrub identify in the ecological assessment as being likely to be cleared areas of mutton bird scrub? If so, if appropriate, please identify on a plan

23. Yes, scrublands on hillslopes and ridgelines will be removed. Defining mutton bird scrub is difficult as the species have very wide range of habitat types (to the point you can't rule out any type of habitat except for maybe freshwater, solid rock and scree) they utilise for breeding. The more open vegetation that would have occurred on Wharite peak would have been preferred, and this is where mutton bird are recorded.

Given the importance of Te Apiti itself, how do you believe the old SH3 route should be treated?

24. Rangitāne wish for the erosion of roadside and cliff face into Te Apiti to be minimised to reduce impact on waahi tapū and the Manawatū River.

Given the importance of Parahaki Island, are Rangitane satisfied with the proximity of the proposed bridge and that the effects of it on the island and river can be suitably mitigated?

25. This question should be directed to the Trustees of Parahaki Island.

The ecological assessment identifies Ashhurst Domain as a suitable location for mitigation planting. How does Rangitane view this given the location of Otangaki Pa within the domain?

26. The restoration of surrounding lowland forest would support the cultural health of Otangaki.

Please clarify whether the trails mentioned traversing the ridge are to the north or south of Te Apiti.

27. Rangitāne trails exist to the north and south of Te Apiti. The trail highlighted in the tangata whenua values assessment referred to a trail north of the designation and south of the Saddle Road. Public access and lookouts north and south of the designation should be decided upon with close consultation with Rangitāne.

In relation to the sub-options A-F for the western end of the NOR considered in the DBC, are any of these routes preferential compared to the proposed in terms of cultural effects?

28. Development of the Saddle Road was the preferred option of Rangitāne to reduce environmental and cultural impact due to the pre-existence of the Saddle Road.

CONCLUSION

29. There will be significant ecological impacts created by Te Ahu a Turanga Highway. Our main concerns are for the mauri through impact on wai-Māori. Rangitāne concerns about impacts will be addressed on an ongoing basis through a partnership approach with NZTA and the subsequent alliance. I am comfortable with where the terrestrial offset is sitting currently, and the requirements for each of the Ecological Management Plans and Landscape Management Plan; with the understanding that our dynamic partnership

approach with NZTA will allow us to oversee and negotiate further mitigation and enhancement work to ultimately gain a net biodiversity outcome, especially in lowland alluvial forest type, wetlands and streams. This Project offers Rangitāne the opportunity to reconnect with their ancestral lands. TMI are committed to upholding Rangitāne duty as kaitiaki, and overseeing the Project from beginning to end.

Siobhan Lynch-Karaitiana

8 March 2019