

**ENVIRONMENT COURT OF NEW ZEALAND  
WELLINGTON REGISTRY**

**I MUA I TE KOOTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA  
TE WHANGANUI-A-TARA**

**ENV-2023-WLG-000005**

**Under** the Resource Management Act 1991

**In the matter of** the direct referral of applications for resource consent and notices of requirement under sections 87G and 198E of the Act for the Ōtaki to North of Levin Project

**By** Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF TE KORORANGI HAKARAIA  
ON BEHALF OF NGĀTI WEHI WEHI IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION BY  
WAKA KOTAHI NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORT AGENCY**

Dated: 4 July 2023

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*Tū ake rā taku waka Tainui  
I tōna takotoranga ki Hani rāua ko Puna  
I Te Ahurei ki Kāwhia Moana  
Rere atu te peka a Whatihua  
Ngā pōtiki a Uenuku ki Maungatautari  
Ki Te Kaokaoroa A Pātetere  
Tū ana ko Kauwhata, te matua a Wehiwehi e!  
Pāwharatia te puku o te ika e Mokowhiti,  
E Te Whetu, e Horopāpera, e Te Pohotīraha  
E Te Honoiti ki Te Mua O Te Ūpoko O Te Ika  
Ki te maru o Tararua e tū nei  
Ki ngā wai whakahekeheke a Waikawa, a Manakau, a Manga Huia, a Takapū, a  
Manga Pīrau  
Ki waenga, tū ana ko Tikorangi, ko Waikōkōpu, ko Manga Nanao hei hono waewae  
ki Tūkorehe  
Ka tū ko Huritini, ko Kahuwera ngā roto, ko Te Waiōrongomai, ko Kōpūherehere,  
ko Waitawa  
Hei hono waewae ki Maiōtaki, ki Kapumanawawhiti  
Kia ara mai taku kainga ko Manga Pīrau  
Kia waewae tātahi ake au ki Ōkākā ki Te Pā O Te Rauparaha,  
Nānā i tōkia te Manakau ki te whenua  
Papatairite atu ki ōku whare  
Ko Kauwhata, ko Kōtare, ka tū ki uta ki Kete Māringi  
Ki Te Kōtahitanga, ko Tamatātai i ngā repo ki Patupaiārehe  
Ko Te Rangitāwhia, ki Whakahoro, ki Te Uāwhaki  
Kia whakakōpau mai ki te whare o Namatahi e tū pīnaki ana ki Wharekauri  
Te whare a Tokowhitu a Ihaka Ngāpari  
Ka whakahingahinga ai ki te whenua kia ara ake ai ko Wehiwehi te matua whare,  
ko Patiharuru te wharekai te hoa rangatira o Wehiwehi, a ngā uri a Ngāti Wehiwehi  
A Ngāti Te Ihiihi, a Ngāti Te Rangitāwhia, a Ngāti Tamatātai, a Ngāti Pīhaka, a  
Ngāti Pareahotea  
I te maru o ngā puke maioro a Poroporo, a Pikiwahine, a Hanawera, a Pukehou ki  
runga  
E kokoia e ara e!*

## INTRODUCTION

1. I am **Te Kororangi Hakaraia**, a descendant of our eponymous ancestor Wehi Wehi after whom our Iwi, Ngāti Wehi Wehi, is named.
2. I am authorised to give this evidence on behalf of Ngāti Wehi Wehi, an affiliated Iwi of Ngāti Raukawa, in relation to the application of Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency (**Waka Kotahi**) for resource consents and notices of requirement for designations (**NoRs**) in respect of the Ōtaki to north of Levin highway Project (**Ō2NL Project** or the **Project**).
3. Ngāti Raukawa (through its hapū and affiliated Iwi – including Ngāti Wehi Wehi) are an Ō2NL Project Partner, having worked closely with Waka Kotahi on the development of the Project from its inception. This has included participating in the shaping of the Ō2NL Project route selection and corridor refinement, communicating its values associated with Ō2NL environment and its position in terms of environmental effects of the Project, and continuing to work in partnership with Waka Kotahi as the Project moves through the consenting process.
4. As part of this work, Ngāti Wehi Wehi also prepared a Cultural Impact Assessment (**CIA**) dated October 2022.
5. Ngāti Wehi Wehi acknowledges the partnership it has with Waka Kotahi (as affiliated Iwi of Ngāti Raukawa) and the journey ahead together.
6. My evidence will:
  - (a) provide an overview of the historical background, rohe and mana whenua interest of Ngāti Wehi Wehi;
  - (b) discuss our engagement, and Project Partnership, with Waka Kotahi and our support for the Project;
  - (c) summarise the Project's cultural effects from the Ngāti Wehi Wehi perspective; and
  - (d) discuss ways in which we believe those cultural effects can be mitigated, including through Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**) conditions.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, ROHE AND MANA WHENUA INTEREST**

### **Introduction**

7. The Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga tribal area stretches from south of Te Horo, through to Ōtaki, the Horowhenua, and Manawatū up to the Rangitīkei River. Ngāti Wehi Wehi are one of ten Iwi/hapū of Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga (including Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki on behalf of Ngāti Kapu; Ngāti Hikitunga; Ngāti Huia ki Poroutawhao; Ngāti Huia ki Mātau; Ngāti Kikopiri; Ngāti Ngarongo; Ngāti Pareraukawa; Ngāti Takihiku; Ngāti Tukorehe and Ngāti Wehi Wehi) who are mana whenua for the area traversed by the Ō2NL Project.
8. Ngāti Wehi Wehi has prepared a CIA for the Ō2NL Project. This is attached to Waka Kotahi's applications.
9. Our CIA set out important details of central importance to these applications, including on our rohe, our interests in the whenua through which the Ō2NL Project traverses, our cultural values and the issues of concern to Hapū. Although this brief of evidence emphasises particular matters (including from the CIA), the matters of interest or concern to Ngāti Wehi Wehi are in no way limited to those emphasised matters. This brief of evidence must be read in conjunction with our CIA, which sets out our concerns in more detail.

### **Te Kotahitanga o te iwi o Ngāti Wehi Wehi – historical background**

10. Te Kotahitanga o te iwi o Ngāti Wehi Wehi is made of up of five hapū: Ngāti Tamatātai, Ngāti Te Ihiihi, Ngāti Te Rangitāwhia, Ngāti Pihaka and Ngāti Pareahotea. We are often simply referred to as Ngāti Wehi Wehi.
11. Ngāti Wehi Wehi is an affiliated iwi of the Confederation of Ngāti Raukawa, Te Atiawa and Ngāti Toa Rangatira collectively known as ART. Ngāti Wehi Wehi people descend from the crew members of the great voyaging waka Tainui which travelled from Raiatea in French Polynesia to Rarotonga, then on to Aotearoa/New Zealand, first making landfall at Whangaparaoa. Ngāti Wehi Wehi ancestors first settled around Maungatautari, in the northern Waikato district. From there they spread out to include those lands of Te Poi, Ōkauia, Kokako and Ōkoroire.
12. In the early 1820s, a taua of Ngāti Wehi Wehi warriors, together with their close Ngāti Kauwhata relations made their way south, invading the Rangitikei-Manawatū area along the way.

13. It was on this hīkoi south that Ngāti Wehi Wehi gained a reputation as a fighting people of some prominence, killing and capturing people in the Manawatū under tīkanga māori, the result of which led to the capture of Hinetiti, a Rangitāne woman of high rank. Ngāti Wehi Wehi then proceeded to the mouth of the Manawatū by canoe where they went south to link up with their kin at Ōtaki.
14. Shortly after these raids took place, Ngāti Wehi Wehi, Ngāti Kauwhata and Ngāti Raukawa made peace with the people of Manawatū. Ngāti Wehi Wehi then moved back to live at the Manawatū where their chief Te Whetu married the former high ranking Rangitāne wahine captive Hinetiti. Ngāti Wehi Wehi settled both sides of the river as far as the mouth of the Ōroua. They also took possession of the rich food resources of the Taonui swamp.
15. Rangitāne traditions say that Ngāti Wehi Wehi were gifted the lands of Tiakitahuna, Tūwhakatupua, Taonui and Ōroua because of the marriage of Te Whetu to Hinetiti, however it is quite clear that Ngāti Wehi Wehi and their allies were the dominant military power in the district and could easily have occupied the land by force had they found it necessary to do so.

#### **Ngā marae o Ngāti Wehi Wehi**

16. Ngāti Wehi Wehi people first settled near the coastline and along the south side of Waikawa River. There used to be a lagoon at the mouth of the river named, "*Manga Pirau*", in which the river was shared at that time, by Ngāti Wehi Wehi and Ngāti Tūkorehe hapū, as the Ōhau river and Waikawa river then joined at Manga Pirau lagoon. This lagoon was named Manga Pirau, as was the stream that flowed into it from the Huritini lagoon further south.
17. "*Manga Pirau*" means a tributary stream in which the water is contaminated/unpalatable, due to extensive surrounding raupō swamps which provided decaying vegetation. Ngāti Wehi Wehi built their first settlement, which was named Manga Pirau Pā, between the river mouth and the Manga Pirau lagoon. Its position beside streams, rivers and sea guaranteed a plentiful supply of food. However, during a massive earthquake in 1885 the lagoon was completely drained.
18. Later, a second Ngāti Wehi Wehi settlement called Kauwhata Pā was established at the top of the first hill to the west, along Waikawa beach road. Kauwhata Pā, was named after the father of Wehi Wehi. The Pā comprised

a carved Whare Rūnanga and had three carved Whare Puni: Papamapere, Manawaroa and Hotumako.

19. Kauwhata Pā eventually became an open kāinga that spread out across the present road as far as the Manakau stream. Food was plentiful with the bush providing birds and the river and swamps providing eels. Across the road from the kāinga was the Paretu burial ground.
20. To the west of this burial ground existed the Kai a Te kowhitiwhiti flats which abounded in grasshoppers. These made excellent fish bait when threaded to thin strands of flax fibre. A second burial ground belonging to Ngāti Te Rangitāwhia, lay across the river at a site called Patupaiarehe, believed to be supernatural spirit beings. Two more Ngāti Te Rangitāwhia kāinga existed on the northern side of the river. Tuparikura lay a little upstream from the burial ground and Tahua was further upstream.
21. Kete Maringi Pā was the third settlement of Ngāti Wehi Wehi people. It was established in a clearing on the south bank of the Manakau stream, slightly west of the present junction of Takapu and Waikawa Beach roads. This was near the stream and the bush line. A track linked the Manga Pirau, Kauwhata and Kete Maringi Pā. Kete Maringi was not a large block of land, and so it was inevitable the hapū would need to relocate to expand.
22. Kōtare was another populated Pā of Ngāti Wehi Wehi situated at the junction of the Waikawa and Pekapeka roads where there are two tōtara trees. (Kōtare is the father of Kauwhata and Tukorehe and grandfather of Wehi Wehi).
23. Another settlement, known as Kotahitanga Pā, contained a fully carved whare Rūnanga. It belonged to the Ngāti Tamatātai people and was located several hundred metres southwest of the present day Wehi Wehi Pā. The wharenuī was used to host local dances for the Manakau community and the school was re-located there while work was being carried out at the Manakau School, but it fell into disrepair after it was blown down in a gale in 1936.
24. In 1882 the Wellington-Manawatū Railway Company Ltd was established under the Railways Construction and Land Act 1881. The Railway Company was contracted by the Government of the day to construct a rail line from Wellington to Palmerston North, which it completed in October 1886. Incidental to this development was the movement of local Māori from their

wetland abodes to re-establish themselves on the banks of waterways in the near vicinity of the newly constructed railway line.

25. Te Kotahitanga Marae was re-established at Manakau on the banks of the Mangahuia Stream that runs west from the northern end of the Hanawera Range. Strategically located just east of the current railway line the marae would have provided easy access to life-sustaining resources. In former times when the area was under heavy virgin bush, the huia bird (now extinct) was plentiful at the head of the Mangahuia stream — hence the name, 'tributary of the huia.'
26. Hanawera means 'to scorch by the heat of a fire'. One kōrero states that a chieftainess while warming herself at a fire, scorched her sacred cloak. The damage to valued garments in this manner seems to have been extremely common in past times, yet provided a significant enough reason for the naming of large geographic features, such as hill-ridges. In this case, the intense tapu and mana of the nobility of past times may have justified it. The northernmost knob of Hanawera is named Pikiwahine.
27. Kōrero obtained from Ngāti Wehi Wehi states that "*on that knob a woman was once beheaded and eaten*". A raiding party from the Pahiatua district crossed the Tararua range via the old Māori trail, and captured at Kete-maringi pā, a chief's daughter and her mōkai, who were visiting from the neighbouring Te Matau pā. They carried their captives to the knob on Hanawera, and there the chief's daughter was killed and eaten. The mōkai vanished into the bush (which then clothed the ridge) and scrambling down the eastern side, followed the Waikawa River downstream to Te Matau pā where she related the fate of her mistress. A taua set out, caught up with the Pahiatua raiders who were nearing their home on the farther side of the mountains, and slaughtered them.
28. Just south of these two knobs is a saddle situated on the trans-Tararua war-trail that was used in the foregoing story. Old ovens have been sighted near the Waikawa River, just behind Hanawera Ridge and another behind the Poroporo Ridge, a little farther north. Pikiwahine knob is the name of the steep conical hill forming the northern terminus of Hanawera foothill ridge at Manakau. This place, according to Manahi te Hiakai, of Whakahoro (Manakau) and chief of Ngāti Wehi Wehi, was a favourite bird-snaring spot. The tree or trees on which the snares were set could easily be climbed and

the snares were therefore frequently attended by women of the hapū, hence the name, which means 'climbing woman'.

## **Awa**

29. The historic coastal wetlands and waterways ranging from Lake Waiwiri / Papaitonga to as far south as the Waitohu stream was once teeming with exotic wildlife and native plants. The abundance and accessibility to life-sustaining resources were more than adequate to sustain the Māori populace of the day. They used the wetland flax plant for clothing and mats and for trade with European visitors who used it to make rope. The wetland raupō plant was used to thatch the walls and roof of whare dwellings and the underground roots could be eaten and the pollen was used for making bread and porridge. Wetland animals, fowl and fish, especially tuna (eels) were a valued food supply and the wetlands were also a source of traditional rongoā medicines and muka dyes.
30. Wai ora, tangata ora, mauri ora is a cultural expression that recognises the relevance of good clean water in relation to good health and the spiritual wellbeing of people. Māori have long held the view that Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) was raised up from the watery depths to provide for and sustain life here on Earth. Water is precious and a gift from Papatūānuku's larder of life-sustaining provisions. The inherent belief that waterways, including lakes and rivers, possessed a spiritual essence or mauri life force thus invoked deep-rooted respect and desire to act responsibly around waterways; especially in areas known to be frequented by a guardian taniwha. Taniwha were Papatūānuku's waterway guardians deserving of the greatest of respect when encroaching on and into their domain.
31. Known locally as Mukukai, the preserve of this particular taniwha was the coastal waters and wetlands of Horowhenua/Kapiti. Protocols involving karakia and other ritual offerings were necessary for appeasement and always preceded any undertaking involving Mukukai's watery domain. Other protocols or tikanga involving the lower reaches of the Kuku, Waikawa and Manakau waterways would have been designated for noa or common activities, like bathing and swimming, while the upper reaches and headwaters were preserved for tapu (sacred or spiritual) activities.
32. There are a number of awa and bodies of water of cultural and historical significance to our iwi, including (but not limited to) those set out in the following paragraphs.

33. The Waitohu Stream, Wairongomai Stream & Lake, Autaha Swamp, Lake Kopu-rehe-rehe, Lake Waitaha, Heart Lake, Huritini Lagoon, Mangahuia Stream, Waiauti / Manakau Stream, Manga-nanao Stream, Manga-pirau Lagoon, Manga-pirau Stream, Nga Karu-o-te-whenua Lagoons, Ōhau River, Ōhau-iti Stream, Kuku Stream, Puke-hinau Lagoon, Puke-rarauhe Lagoon, Puna-i-te-ora Lagoon, Roto-kawau Lagoon, Te Awa o Autaha, Te Hakari Lagoon, Te Kiore Swamp, Te Matua Swamp, Tikorangi Stream, Waikawa River, Wai-kiokio Stream and others were once part of an elaborate wetland eco-system that provided former generations of Ngāti Wehi Wehi with necessary resources to sustain themselves. Thus, all of the above (and others not listed) are deemed to be of historic and cultural significance regardless of whether or not they still exist.
34. The Mangahuia was once solely spring-fed from local springs located on the Hanawera Range, and though the landscape has significantly changed evidence of these springs are still visibly evident today. Mangahuia is a culturally significant stream in that it was a primary source of freshwater for the Kotahitanga Pā inhabitants. Tuna, kōura (freshwater Crayfish), and other fish species were abundant in number and sustained the Kotahitanga inhabitants up until as recently as 1935 when the Pā was abandoned. The Mangahuia Stream was not only used for gathering clean fresh water on a daily basis but was also used as a larder to store live 'run-eel' over the winter months for preparation on a 'when required' basis.

### **Ngā hononga ki runga ki te whenua**

35. The name Papatūānuku comes from the word papa, meaning "*basis*" or "*foundation*."
36. Whakapapa and kaupapa are two words that are closely related.
37. Whakapapa is commonly used to refer to genealogy, however it literally means "*to lay a foundation*". Whakapapa is the recitation of genealogy or stories that provide people with a foundation or ground of meaning. Whakapapa are ways in which individuals come into interaction with the world, with people, and with life, and might include genealogies or stories about the entire world.
38. The earth gave birth to all life after it emerged from the water. Trees, birds, and humans all grow and are nourished by the land. Māori are born from Papatūānuku's womb and to return there after death. The earth gives birth to

people's emotional, intellectual, and spiritual lives daily, even though it is considered as coming from the land.

39. The interconnected relationship of Ngāti Wehi Wehi with their whenua is at the heart of all things Wehi Wehi. Ngāti Wehi Wehi have occupied their traditional rohe in the Manawatū, Huritini, Waikawa and Manakau areas from pre-Treaty times to the present day.
40. The strength and beauty which lay in the foundation for Ngāti Wehi Wehi is its connectivity through whakapapa to the physical and metaphysical embodiment of mauri (life force).
41. As Kaitiaki of our rohe, dealing with the mauri of our whenua is of the utmost importance; once disturbed, mauri can have a negative effect which can present itself in many ways including sickness in the community. The settling of mauri can only be achieved by a tohunga whose mana, whakapapa and processes are directly linked to the mauri of the land. It is important to Wehi Wehi to exercise kaitiakitanga to protect and maintain the mauri of taonga.
42. Wai māori has the same reverence and essential status as the blood that runs through our veins, wai māori is what runs through the veins of Papatūānuku. Wai māori has the power to lift tapu, and is used when blessing taonga, clearing where of negative space and in the lifting of mākutu (curse).
43. Ngāti Wehi Wehi are concerned about effects of pollutants on health, the environment, and the spiritual values of other taonga. We are concerned about the health effects of the increasing emission of contaminants into the air, depletion of the ozone layer and high levels of solar radiation. To Māori, air is a taonga. Air is viewed as a taonga derived from Ranginui (the sky father). Kōrero tuku iho tells that following the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku (the earth mother) their child Tāwhirimātea fled with Ranginui to his new home in the sky. From there Tāwhirimātea controls the wind and elements. Air pollution degrades and lessens the mauri or life-force of this taonga. Ngāti Wehi Wehi are also concerned about the effects air pollution has on customary resources - plants and animals require clear and pure airways. It also affects the mauri of other taonga, for example plants and animals, as all living things need air and all things share the same air. Native plants provide food and natural medicines. In the past, the only thing that disturbed the natural quality of the air was the cooking fires of tūpuna.

44. Lessened visibility through contaminants into the air along with light pollution is another area of concern when being able to observe the taonga within the domain of Ranginui - the moon, stars and rainbows, are important in Te Ao Māori. The stars are particularly important as they represent the generations that have passed into the night. The movements of the moon and the lunar calendar help tell the time of year for sowing and harvesting. The stars also represent the incredible way in which our tūpuna would navigate the largest body of water on earth, Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (Pacific Ocean).

#### **Our mana whenua interests over our rohe**

45. Without wishing to exclude the interests of other iwi (and noting that Ngāti Wehi Wehi is not asking this Court to determine mana whenua status), the Ngāti Wehi Wehi position is that we hold mana whenua status over the geographical area spanning from the beginning of the Project area in Ōtaki to the middle of the Ohau River. In light of our mana whenua status, it is critical that we be closely involved with any Project works (including design, conditions, construction works, operational matters, mahi toi and any expression of a cultural narrative) that interact with or affect our rohe.
46. This does not, by any means, diminish our voice in respect of other parts of the Project.

#### **Limited Collaboration**

47. As a broader statement, in our view the RMA process, particularly in situations involving competing iwi and/or hapū interests, may prioritise individual iwi perspectives and legal rights over collaborative decision-making or finding common ground.
48. This can hinder opportunities for meaningful collaboration, dialogue, and reconciliation between Ngāti Wehi Wehi, Ngāti Raukawa hapū and Muaūpoko. The emphasis on individual submissions and legal arguments may overshadow the potential for shared cultural values and aspirations to be considered and addressed collaboratively. This extends beyond just the Project's physical works; our cultural values and aspirations must also be included in the Project's narratives. That is key.

## **OUR ENGAGEMENT AND PROJECT PARTNERSHIP WITH WAKA KOTAHI AND SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT**

49. Ngāti Wehi Wehi support the applications lodged by Waka Kotahi. Our support is based on the high trust partnership established with Waka Kotahi to date, and going forward it will rely on and/or be subject to:
- (a) a continuing relationship of mutual trust between the three Project Partners;
  - (b) the consent conditions which, as I discuss below, are still being worked through; and
  - (c) Ngāti Wehi Wehi's involvement through to the completion of the Project and beyond to the maintenance stage and revocation of the current SH1.

### **Project partnership**

50. Ngāti Wehi Wehi have been working in collaboration with Waka Kotahi on this Ō2NL Project, in a Project Partnership developed over a number of years, to find ways to firstly avoid, and then to manage and mitigate, the potential impacts of the Project.
51. For Ngāti Wehi Wehi, building and maintaining wider community relationships at all levels of central, local, and regional governance is critical to the success of this Project Partnership, as is the need to collectively uphold the values and concepts that make up Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as we work to deliver the Ō2NL Project.
52. I also emphasise that although Ngāti Wehi Wehi is committed to being the best Project Partner it can be, and to finding a respectful and constructive pathway forward, during this Project it is of utmost importance that we also maintain our own mana tikanga and kawa on our whenua to complement the future generations of Ngāti Wehi Wehi.
53. We acknowledge that having three Project Partners working together on a large Project traversing a wide landscape can be challenging, and there will be times that opinions differ. However, provided there is a mutual respect, a shared commitment and a clear and fair dispute resolution process established, we are confident that we as Project Partners will be able to deliver a quality project that will have multiple safety, connectivity, social,

economic and cultural benefits for our whānau, hapū, iwi and the wider community.

54. I note that at the time of writing this evidence a formal Project Partnership between iwi and Waka Kotahi is being developed, but is not yet completed or formalised.

### **Engagement to date**

55. To date, the relationship developed between Ngāti Wehi Wehi and Waka Kotahi has been constructive, thanks to a positive and inclusive process of engagement.
56. To ensure that we maintain this positive and constructive process going forward in the Project (that is, through the RMA process, into construction, and beyond) Ngāti Wehi Wehi must have a strong 'voice' and be able to participate in the creation of robust consent conditions, to ensure that they adequately and appropriately provide for our cultural values, our relationship with our ancestral land, water, waahi tapu and other taonga, as well as for our kaitiaki responsibilities and our mana.
57. We are confident that in participating in the Ō2NL Project in this manner, we will be able to ensure Ngāti Wehi Wehi tikanga and cultural values are embedded in Project outcomes, bringing benefits to our people and to the whole community.

## **SUMMARY OF CULTURAL EFFECTS**

### **Introduction**

58. As stated above, this evidence is to be read in conjunction with our CIA, which sets out in detail the key cultural effects of the Project from the perspective of Ngāti Wehi Wehi.
59. As a general statement, we are largely happy with the direction the Project is heading in, however there is one particular matter from the CIA we wish to expand on (noting – as above – that this does not detract from the remainder of the CIA which provides a more detailed picture of our position on the effects of the Project).

## **Planting within Ngāti Wehi Wehi area of interest**

60. As set out in our CIA, the Project will cross several intersecting bodies of water in which Ngāti Wehi Wehi have kaitiaki interest. These include the Waiauti, Manakau, Waikawa, Waikokopu, Kuku and Ōhau awa.<sup>1</sup>
61. The CEDF describes opportunities for additional planting (including rehabilitation planting, the introduction of taonga species, and ecological and natural character mitigation and offsetting) at several sites along the Waikawa Stream.<sup>2</sup>
62. Ngāti Wehi Wehi is supportive of any opportunity for further planting, and the creation of ngāhere, at the Waikawa sites, as well as at Waiauti, Manakau, and all of the tributaries, streams and rivers that are of historical importance to our Iwi (described in the CIA and above in this evidence).
63. We understand that how much planting will be done will depend on how much land is required to be taken for the Project, however we wish to be involved in any discussions going forward relating to planting. This is so that we can ensure that these opportunities for creating ngāhere, and for the rehabilitation, regeneration and recognition of our taonga species are maximised to the greatest extent possible.
64. In particular, the current concept design planting plans proposes a significant area of planting at the Waikawa sites, which we are supportive of. We see this planting as more than just a pretty picture; we want it to be useable; we want to see strong totara and lush ngāhere at Waikawa in 80 years' time for the benefit, use and enjoyment of our future generations.
65. Maximising these opportunities will not only have benefits for those specific sites (in terms of recreation, mahinga kai and rongoā at a safe gathering distance from the highway), but it will also:
  - (a) have flood protection benefits;
  - (b) contribute to broader cultural benefits (such as expression of the site through the mahi toi strategy);

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<sup>1</sup> Page 11 of our CIA.

<sup>2</sup> Page 117 of the CEDF (11 November 2022 version).

- (c) integrate these sites of historical and cultural importance with the broader Project site, including providing connections to the shared use path; and
  - (d) more generally, add to an enhanced overall highway experience.
66. As part of our role as Project Partner, and as kaitiaki over these sites, Ngāti Wehi Wehi also wish to secure access to the Waikawa Stream.
67. Finally, we wish to be involved in discussions around consenting baseline monitoring requirements to ensure we are properly informed on what is being proposed (and the environmental effects of that) and to ensure that what is being proposed will promote the best environmental option available.

### **MITIGATION OF EFFECTS AND CONDITIONS OF CONSENT**

68. While, in principle, we support the Project, the Ō2NL Project traverses our rohe and will carve a scar through Papatūānuku. The construction and operation of the Project will impact on the mauri of our ancestral lands, our sites and water ways, on our taonga, and also on our kaitiaki responsibilities and our mana.
69. Waka Kotahi has prepared a set of draft designation and resource consents conditions (which they have appended to their evidence-in-chief). Ngāti Wehi Wehi consider that the draft conditions as they currently stand at the time of lodging this statement do not yet appropriately reflect the outcomes sought by Ngāti Wehi Wehi, although we will continue to work together to address any unresolved issues.
70. Ngāti Wehi Wehi seek improvements to the proposed conditions that:
- (a) recognise and provide for our cultural values, our relationships with our ancestral lands, water, waahi tapu, and other taonga, for our kaitiakitanga responsibilities, and our mana;
  - (b) address the matters of concern identified in our CIA;
  - (c) embed the CEDF as the framework for delivering and defining Project outcomes, including the Core Principles set out in Chapter 1, the Design Principles set out in Chapter 3, and the Design Response set out in Chapter 4 of the CEDF, and ensure appropriate opportunity is provided for Hapū participation in developing and confirming the CEDF and the Project outcomes that the CEDF delivers;

- (d) ensure appropriate opportunity is provided for Ngāti Wehi Wehi participation in developing and confirming the Project designs, construction management plans, environmental monitoring plans, and any operational management plans, including providing for appropriate opportunity to review and consider any changes that may occur over time to any of these matters; and
- (e) address any other matter of relevance to Ngāti Wehi Wehi, including those described above, that may arise through the RMA process.

71. At this time we are in discussion with Waka Kotahi about their draft conditions. We will provide an update on this matter to the Court at the hearing.

**Te Kororangi Hakaraia**

**4 July 2023**