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**Bestcare (Whakapai Hauora) Charitable Trust**

**Cultural Impact Assessment**

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**To**

**Palmerston North City Council**

**Aokautere Redevelopment Plan**



*Ka kahutia i te korowai, Te Rangimarie, Te Aroha, Te Whakaiti, Ka Whakapuawai he iwi humaarie  
Spread the cloak of Peace and Love, so shall blossom the people of humility*

Mihi

*Te Mauri o Rangitāne o Manawatū*

*E inoi nei ki ngā whakatipuranga a Tanenuiarangi*

*Kia tū whakapakari me matekitetia mō ngā rā ka*

*Hekemai mō te oranga tinana, oranga wairua*

*Teitei Kahurangi.*

*Whakatuwheratia o hā, me tō hinengaro toro atu*

*O ringa kia awhitia rātau mā i urumai i waenganui i a mātou,*

*Manaakitia te katoa ahakoa tō rātou karangatanga maha*

*Me kaha te tiaki kia pai ai ngā wawata,*

*Ngā moemoea.*

*Kia ū ki ngā whakaarotanga*

*A ō mātou Matua Tupuna.*

*Kia noho tonu a rātou wairua ki runga ki tēnā*

*Ki tēnā mō ake tōnu atu.*

*Ma Ihoa tō tātou piringa me te kaiarahi i runga i to haerenga.*

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## Introduction

The Aokautere Redevelopment Plan seeks to rezone Rural-Residential land to Residential to provide Palmerston North City residents with residential housing development opportunities into the future. The Aokautere Structure Plan will set the conditions for planning of approximately 375ha of land between the foothills of the Tararua Ranges and State Highway 57 (Figure 1). Palmerston North City Council have requested a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) from Rangitāne o Manawātū to inform this plan change. Te Ao Turoa Environmental Centre whom are part of Bestcare (Whakapai Hauora) Charitable Trust, have been commissioned to provide this assessment on behalf of Rangitāne o Manawātū.

The document is presented in three parts:

- Part One introduces the significance of the Aokautere landscape to Rangitāne o Manawātū.
- Part Two documents the Legislative Environment Te Ao Turoa Environmental Centre operates within on behalf of Rangitāne o Manawātū.
- Part Three describes the effect of the Redevelopment Plan on Rangitāne o Manawātū values held with the Aokautere landscape; Te Whanonga Pono a te Taiao o Rangitāne o Manawātū.

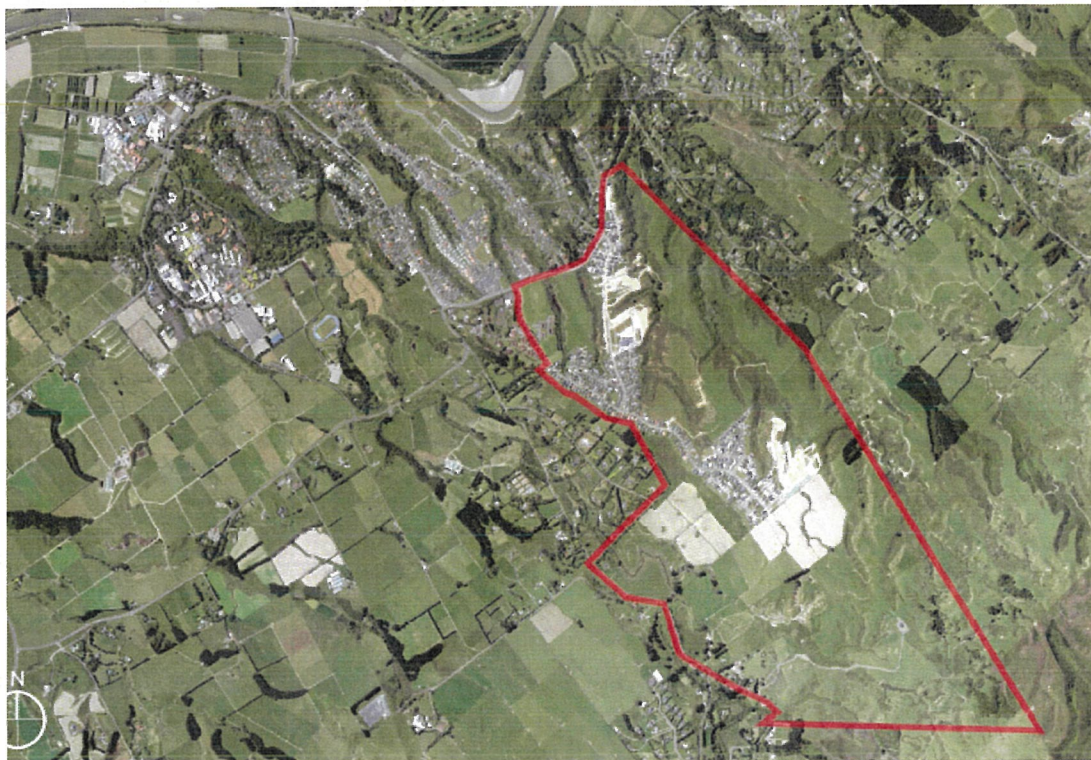


Figure 1: Aokautere Redevelopment Plan area

## Part 1: Landscape Context

Aokautere is part of a wider landscape known as Ahuaturanga. Ahuaturanga is named after Te Ahu a Turanga Peak that sits above Te Āpiti, near the Saddle Road in the Ruahine Range. The Ahuaturanga Block was acquired by the Crown in 1964 at a size of approximately 250,000 acres. Native Reserves were set aside for Rangitāne during the sale of Ahuaturanga to the west and east of Aokautere.

Aokautere was one of the earliest sites of settlement for Rangitāne o Manawatū. The Rangitāne chiefs, Tawhakahiku and Mangere, descendants of Whātonga, entered the Manawatū through Aokautere after meeting resistance from Ngāti Mamoe in the hills of Te Āpiti. The chiefs likely traversed the present route of Aokautere-Pahiatua Road to enter the area.

Aokautere Pā was situated on the eastern bank of the Manawatū River and was named in honour of the Rangitāne chief Te Aokautere who lived in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Te Aokautere has close links with the Whakarongo area, the chief having raised Whakarongo as a whāngai and niece.

Numerous historic Rangitāne settlements are connected with Aokautere including Te Motu o Poutoa, Te Kuripaka, Makomako, Ti Rakau, and Turitea Pā. The area was strategic for communication in the wider Manawatū. Residents of the lower terraces seasonally trekked into the Tararua Ranges for hunting and gathering. It is believed they travelled through the gullies of Aokautere. Within the lower terraces of Aokautere were extensive kumara cultivations and Māori gardens of karaka; a series of kumara pits and Karaka Grove are extant and protected till this day. Accidental discoveries of bones, adzes and oven stones have occurred over the years following pākeha settlement.

Esler notes the prominence of Black Beech, now functionally extinct, in the Aokautere area. Black Beech was estimated to cover around 526ha based on the distribution of remaining stumps at an altitude between 90 and 275 meters. The forest provisioned Rangitāne with a plentiful supply of tui, kereru, kakapo, kaka, and among the streams fish and eels; karaka groves brought the birds in close for snaring and were an important supply of starchy food for the leaner winter season.

## Part 2: Legislative Environment

### *Mana Whenua*

The concept of mana whenua is a key concept to understanding the environmental management philosophies of Māori. Mana whenua as defined by the Resource Management Act (1991) is the customary authority exercised by

an iwi in an identified area. It is the authority to control and manage a traditional area or resource in relation to prescribed customary and cultural practices. The authority is obtained through the relationship of the people and their ancestral connection to the land. Rangitāne have maintained their position as mana whenua of the area associated with Aokautere for over five hundred years. Rangitāne are the only Iwi that have this relationship with the project area.

### *Wāhi tapu*

It is the view of Rangitāne o Manawatū that their wāhi tapu are highly interconnected (rather than being a specific site with a specific set of coordinates). This generates a broad cultural landscape where the described travelling tracks, temporary and permanent shelters, resource collecting areas, urupā, natural features and forces are described within an area instead of a specifically defined set of coordinates that contain archaeological evidence. The wairua of these sites and wider area remains strong to this day and into the future, thus Rangitāne o Manawatū see the entire Aokautere Redevelopment Area as a wāhi tapū. It is the responsibility of Rangitāne o Manawatū as mana whenua and thus kaitiaki to oversee and protect not only specific sites but also accidental discoveries, the natural features, and intangible forces present within the area.

### *Taonga, Whenua me te Wai Māori*

Contained within the Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Claims Act 2016 is a list of statutory acknowledged areas including the Manawatū River and its tributaries. The statement made by Rangitāne o Manawatū concerns their cultural, historical, spiritual, and traditional association with the waterways and provides a legislative means in which the iwi can be involved in management decisions. Consideration of the proposed plan changes impact on Rangitāne o Manawatu cultural, historical, spiritual, and traditional association requires careful consideration so to avoid issues the iwi has experienced with historical urbanisation within Palmerston North and its contribution to significant diminishment of their values.

### *Mauri; Kaitiakitanga*

Section 6(e) of the Resource Management Act 1991 describes the need to recognise and provide for the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga; section 7(a) provisions that kaitiakitanga must be had particular regard to; and section 8 provides that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are to be taken into account.

The Horizons Regional Council One Plan, Chapter 2, Objectives 2.1A supports the need for regard of mauri: “To have regard to the mauri of natural and physical resources to enable hapū and Iwi to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing; and kaitiakitanga”; and Objective 2.1B provides for kaitiakitanga:

*“Kaitiakitanga must be given particular regard and the relationship of hapū and Iwi with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wahi tupuna) must be recognised and provided for through the resource management process”.*

The Māori version of Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi states that tribes have status and authority over their tribal lands, waterways and taonga species forever more. Thus, Rangitāne o Manawatū have strong interests in how all native species, tribal lands and waterways will be affected, and in ensuring that their protection and enhancement is provided for.

#### *Palmerston North City Council District Plan review*

#### Section 2: City View Objectives

OBJECTIVE 15: Active engagement from tangata whenua within resource management decisions.

OBJECTIVE 16; The historic heritage of the City is researched, identified and preserved within the context of sustainable management.

OBJECTIVE 17; The natural and cultural heritage features of the City are preserved and enhanced, including the margins of the Manawatu River and sites of significance to tangata whenua.

OBJECTIVE 18. The characteristics and values of outstanding natural features and landscapes are: a. protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development; and b. managed in a manner where all subdivision, use and development directly affecting them avoids significant adverse cumulative effects.

#### Section 17: Culture and Natural Heritage.

##### B. Sites and Objects of Cultural and Natural Heritage Value to Tangata Whenua

OBJECTIVE 1: To facilitate the Tino Rangatiratanga and Kaitiakitanga of Tangata Whenua in relation to sites and objects of cultural and natural heritage value to Tangata Whenua.

The impact of the Aokautere Redevelopment Plan on Rangitāne o Manawatū values are considered in Te Whanonga Pono a te Taiao o Rangitāne o Manawatū and are ultimately grounded in legislation provisions of the Resource Management Act (1991), Palmerston North City Council District Plan, Treaty of Waitangi, and Rangitāne o Manawatū Settlement Claims Act (2016).



## Te Whanonga Pono a te Taiao o Rangitāne o Manawatū

### *Tino rangatiratanga*

Tino rangatiratanga is absolute sovereignty and self-determination, having ownership, rights, control over, and possession of Māori lands, waters, and taonga. Article Two of the Treaty guarantees Māori tino rangatiratanga, which is fundamental to Maori wellbeing. The Māori version of the Treaty of Waitangi, Article 2 states that tribes have status and authority over their tribal lands, waterways and taonga species for forever more. Thus, Rangitāne o Manawatū have strong interests in how all native species, tribal lands and waterways in Aokautere will be affected by the proposed urbanisation, and in ensuring that their protection and enhancement is provided for. This CIA is a means in which Rangitāne o Manawatū can have their Tino Rangitiratanga recognised and provided for.

- Overall, the Aokautere Redevelopment Plan seeks to retire and protect gully systems through establishing reserve status, protecting existing indigenous vegetation plots, and undertaking indigenous plantings. Rangitāne o Manawatū are supportive of this approach. The iwi must be consulted if any native vegetation clearance is to be undertaken as a result of urban development in Aokautere.
- The primary conduit of gully restoration in the Aokautere and Turitea areas is Green Corridors. While Rangitāne o Manawatū and Green Corridors overall have similar aspirations for enhancing biodiversity and water quality, Rangitāne o Manawatū see it as important to have mana whenua representation on the Green Corridors committee to ensure that restoration is being undertaken in a culturally appropriate manner. Rangitāne o Manawatū must also be offered their own opportunities to undertake restoration in this area as a priority.

### *Tangata Tiakitanga- Rangitāne-nui-a-rawa*

A Tangata Tiaki is a guardian or caretaker. It is the processes and practices people of Rangitāne o Manawatū take in protecting the environment and sites of significance for future generations. Tangata Tiakitanga is the undertaking of Tiakitanga with a Rangitāne philosophical approach. Rangitāne o Manawatū responsibilities require tangata whenua to guard over all aspects of the natural world, which were created by the Atua children of Ranginui and Papatūānuku.

- Rangitāne o Manawatū as mana whenua require the opportunity to be involved in planting, pest control and other associated environmental management activities within Aokautere.
- Rangitāne o Manawatū require any perched culverts leading to permanent or intermittent upstream sites within Aokautere redevelopment area or downstream of the redevelopment area to be rectified.



## *Manaakitanga*

Manaakitanga is the ability to express hospitality to manuhiri (guests), the community and whānau. In contemporary resource management demonstrating manaakitanga ensures that there is a healthy environment for all living things and that kai is available for traditional gatherings to host guests.

- Rangitāne o Manawātū support the overall proposal to increase housing density in Aokautere. Ensuring whānau have access to more affordable housing in the future is extremely important. Rangitāne o Manawātū request PNCC demonstrate to Rangitāne o Manawātū and the Resource Management Commisioner how the proposed structure plan will support provisioning of affordable housing in Palmerston North.

## *Wairuatanga*

Wairuatanga is a Māori framework that acknowledges the coexistence of the physical and spiritual dimensions. Wairuatanga is an energy force that connects all aspects of life including the environment. Mana whenua continue to support the essence of wairuatanga through karakia, rituals and cultural practices.

- Rangitāne o Manawātū would like the opportunity to undertake karakia/ on site blessings of new stages of the housing development.
- It is essential to Rangitāne o Manawātū that their ancestors live on through the landscape. Rangitāne o Manawātū would like to work with developers and PNCC to agree new street and reserve names; would like opportunities to express cultural narratives and artworks in some of the reserves to be created.

## *Mauri*

Mauri is the life force of all living and non-living things. Mauri is the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. It is used in assessing ecosystems subject to human 'development', any damage or contamination to the environment will affect the mauri that it possesses.

- Urbanisation in Aokautere will heighten potential for discharge of contaminants to water during construction and from ongoing traffic and residential uses. Water quality and mauri is generally poor within gully systems due to high levels of sedimentation, likely from previous housing development and poor stormwater runoff management. Downstream gullies need to be monitored during earthworks to ensure that deposited sediment does not increase beyond the level of current impact. Rangitāne o Manawātū support the use of rain gardens to capture the first flush of contaminants in all new developments. The iwi does not support any new direct discharges of stormwater to gully systems.

- Urbanisation impacts taonga species and mauri as a result of long-term traffic and light effects on native species, clearance of habitats, soil disturbance, the introduction of mammalian predators such as cats and dogs, and introduction of invasive garden plants. Rangitāne o Manawatū would like to see an integrated pest control strategy for Aokautere gully systems developed in consultation with Te Ao Turoa Environmental Centre to ensure cultural impacts in the terrestrial realm are compensated and provided for.

### *Taonga*

Taonga are tangible and intangible components of Te Ao Māori. Taonga is anything that is of value or treasured including places, people, language, objects, flora and fauna.

- Development has been occurring within Aokautere without consultation with mana whenua for a number of years. Rangitāne o Manawatū are concerned accidental discoveries may be missed without trained staff on site to oversee the breaking of earth. Rangitāne o Manawatū would like provisioning for the presence of a cultural monitor on site during initial earthworks, to have their Accidental Archaeological Discovery Protocol included as a required part of any earthwork's consents, and to be part of the induction process of workers undertaking earthworks on site.

### *Mātauranga Māori*

Mātauranga Māori is the knowledge, comprehension, or understanding of everything visible and invisible existing in the universe. Pūrākau and maramataka, forms of mātauranga Māori, comprise knowledge generated using methods and techniques developed independently from other knowledge systems.

- Rangitāne o Manawatū have records of species that once existed in Aokautere. These species compositions should be considered during restoration of gully systems, during planting of parks and reserves, and in wetland treatment systems. Rangitāne o Manawatū require seed used in restoration to be eco-sourced from the Tararua Ranges or closest appropriate population if species have become locally extinct. Pioneer planting for Beech Forest succession should be required in Aokautere.
- If any translocation of species is to occur Rangitāne o Manawatū must be part of this process.

### *Taonga tuku iho*

Taonga tuku iho is the intergenerational transmission of Mātauranga Māori. Taonga are handed down from generation to generation.

- Rangitāne o Manawatū would like the opportunity to share the cultural narrative of settlement and historic ecology in the area through integration into reserve management.

### *Ritenga*

Ritenga are everyday rituals and practices that sustain the well-being of people, communities and natural resources. Everything is balanced between regulated and de-regulated states; tapu is to be restricted or sacred with specific associated tikanga; rahui is to temporarily restrict; and noa is relaxed or unrestricted. Appropriate protocols such as karakia (prayer) can shift the regulation of states from being tapu to noa in appropriate situations.

- Rangitāne o Manawatū would like the ability to put a tapu on an area of reserve or waterway if an accident or unwanted event occurs.

### **Conclusions**

There is the potential for significant impacts on Rangitāne o Manawatū values, culture and relationship with Aokautere as a result of the proposed Redevelopment Plan. Outlined in this CIA are means of mitigating and providing for cultural impacts based on the information provided to Rangitāne o Manawatū at the time of this assessment. Rangitāne o Manawatū look forward to working with PNCC to further understand what this redevelopment plan means for the Aokautere landscape, and in executing measures to mitigate the cultural impacts of urbanization in this area.

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