

BEFORE THE

Waikato Regional Council Hearing Commissioners

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

of the Proposed Waikato District Plan of Waikato District Council

**STATEMENT OF RUKUMOANA SCHAAFHAUSEN
ON BEHALF OF WAIKATO-TAINUI IN RELATION TO THE
OVERVIEW OF EVIDENCE IN HEARING**

30 September 2019



**Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated
PO Box 648
HAMILTON**

Kia whaikorooria ki te Atua

Kia whakahoore i te Kiingi Tuuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero Tuawhitu

Waikato te Awa, Waikato te Iwi

rire, rire, hau, pai maarire!

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Teenaa koutou katoa, my name is Rukumoana Schaafhausen and I am named after my marae, Rukumoana, based in the heart of our tribal boundary of Ngaati Hauaa in Morrinsville. I serve as the Kaahui Ariki Maaori King's Representative, and Chair Te Arataura, the executive board of Waikato-Tainui and consider it a privilege to be in this position, navigating our future alongside our marae and whaanau and alongside the leadership of Waikato District Council.
- 1.2 The nation is awaking to the critical importance of water, our environments, and how we develop and manage that impact - for the benefit of the many whaanau who are connected to this region and reside here. In the midst of nation-wide Governmental reform like the Action for Healthy Waterways release, Wai 2575 Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry, Oranga Tamariki reform, Treasury's Living Standards Framework, the Waitangi Tribunal Stage 2 Report on the National Freshwater and Geothermal Resources Claims (Wai 2358) and calls for Climate Change awareness, there is more accountability than ever on how we continue to be kaitiaki, good stewards, for now and the future.
- 1.3 In the midst of growth and urban development in our region, we are confronted in an intensified manner as we seek to be kaitiaki of our environment while also being at the forefront of change.
- 1.4 We acknowledge Mayor Allan Sanson and Chief Executive Gavin Ion for their leadership as we continue to partner in outworking our tribal aspirations for our people living in the Waikato District Council area. It is the voices of our marae and whaanau of our Iwi which we speak for today. The local voices who manage the intricate balance of developing for the future, while considering impact and identity – who we are as a people and what that means for decision-making and plans.
- 1.5 Our Five-year Plan provides milestones towards Whakatupuranga 2050 which we seek to see reflected in the Waikato District Plan, supporting the tribal strategy for the cultural, social and economic advancement of Waikato-Tainui.

2. WAIKATO RIVER

2.1 I wanted to start today by setting the scene and providing some context about the importance of the relationship with the River and Waikato-Tainui as a people. I will ask that we now play a small video clip.

2.2 I want to first acknowledge those Kaumatua and Kuia in the video, who also proposed changes to the way the Waikato District was shaped, urging the community to consider the long-term lens of the River's health and concerns in the integrity of Food production, as they spoke of the concern for the lack of watercress growing by the River. As the nation's number one export which continues to build the economy of the nation and the region, the health of our waterways should be considered important to us all.

2.3 One of our rangatira and kaumaatua, Pumi Taituha summed up our relationship with our awa, noting:

“The Waikato River is a living ancestor. It is part of us. Our River, symbolises a tuupuna, it is the name from which our tribe derives its identity and the issues that affect our River ultimately affects the tribe and its people” – Naa Pumi Taituha

2.4 The River's health is a key focus of our marae and the many whaanau who reside in Waikato District Council rohe – recognising the inextricable link to the health of its people, the health of the economy particularly focused on food production, and subsequently the wellbeing of the Waikato Region.

3. TE TURE WHAIMANA – VISION AND STRATEGY FOR THE WAIKATO RIVER

3.1 The Vision and Strategy was redress to Waikato-Tainui (and to other river iwi) to improve the management of freshwater and ensure all iwi, water users and the community share a desire for the continual improvement to the quality of freshwater in the Waikato over time in a way that improves the health and wellbeing of people but also our social, cultural and economic prosperity as a region.

3.2 Restoration and protection, health and wellbeing, integrated management, avoidance of cumulative effects, precautionary approach, maintenance of our relationships, all have been part of our mana whakahaere tikanga and practice for generations.

3.3 As noted in our submission, we speak to the request for setbacks consistent with the vision and strategy as urban growth and development takes place at a rapid pace, and as blueprints are carried out for Huntly, Mercer and Pookeno.

- 3.4 It is now our responsibility, to ensure we can give future generations to come, a healthy river, healthy communities, and responsible ways of managing a critical resource like water.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF OUR LANDS

- 4.1 Like water, we are connected to whenua through our past and future aspirations. The impact of the raupatu on the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of Waikato-Tainui was a key motivator in advancing the first settlement in Aotearoa. It is therefore important to develop clear and explicit plans for managing the development of land that support ongoing aspirations across the tribal landscape as set out in Whakatupuranga 2050 and our Five-Year Plan, supporting the tribal strategy for the cultural, social and economic advancement of Waikato-Tainui.
- 4.2 While we subscribe to our own environmental standards contained in Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao, our submission also speaks to the development of our lands. We hold considerable aspirations in determining and then implementing across the district our own environmental standards in line with our Five Year plan, which we continue to discuss and advocate through our Joint Management Agreement with Council, including water access for our marae and the necessary infrastructure.
- 4.3 Our marae are the heartbeat of our Iwi and to develop self sufficient marae requires the ability to develop these lands, which our submission notes.
- 4.4 We seek to ensure that the objectives, policies, principles and intent of the Tangata Whenua chapter is provided for across the plan. This will allow for greater mana motuhake for our marae.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 I would like to conclude with the words of our King Tuheitia, Pootatau Te Wherowhero Tuawhiti – urging us to consider a better way that protects our future.

“Today, you must usher in a new way, a better way, a more effective and efficient way of doing our business and discharging our duties to our people and to the generations to come” – Kiingi Tuheitia.

- 5.2 Waikato-Tainui aspirations for our environment, for our awa and for the many families here in the Waikato District are reflected in Te Ture Whaimana, Our Five-Year plan and our Environmental plan – Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, and Tai Ao. It is our ambition to lead and influence the Waikato District Council to also hold our aspirations for this region. In order for these plans to have the meaningful impact that our people and environment deserve, we seek your support of our submission on the proposed plan.