

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kia ora koutou

Ko Stella August tōku ingoa and I am here today on behalf of the Kairakau Lands Trust.

Sorry I am not there in person. I would have liked to have been there today as I did prefer giving evidence at the hearing kanohi ki te kanohi. I am also sorry for the late written copy of my submission, after numerous edits it was only finished late last night.

Today I will discuss the following submission point.

Mapping, Miscellaneous and Other Matters

Submission Point	Plan Chapter	Provision
S84.016	District-Wide Matters	Natural Environment Values

2.0 PART 2: DISTRICT-WIDE MATTERS NATURAL ENVIRONMENT VALUES

SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS (SNAs), OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURES (ONFs) AND HIGH NATURAL CHARACTER AREAS (HNCs)

- 2.1 The Kairākau Lands Trust has 1500 hectares of Māori freehold land from the Kairakau Block that passed through the Native Land Court in 1869. This land has always been in Māori ownership and has survived various attempts by the colonial government (and others) to acquire from us our land. Only 5% of all land in New Zealand is owned by Māori and only 4% of land is owned by Māori in Hawkes Bay.
- 2.2 Ties to whenua are critical for the health and wellbeing of Māori (spiritual, emotional, physical, and cultural). After 168 years of leasing our land, in 2021 we began farming our land. It has taken us this long to have the capacity and capability to do this.
- 2.3 Let's talk a bit about the history of our land. In order for us to retain our land, as we couldn't secure finance to develop it, we had to lease it. Other people benefited from farming our land. The people who leased our land didn't do on our land what they did on their own land. They did the bare minimum to get what they wanted from our land. For example, they only erected boundary fences and did little internal fencing or subdivision of paddocks. They cleared indigenous vegetation and farmed only the productive land. Capital development was minimal. Our land was farmed but much Māori land was left undeveloped.
- 2.4 We are just starting to change the ongoing effects of colonisation. Now the benefits from our land goes to us as the landowners. We are upgrading fences and subdividing paddocks. We are installing reticulated water systems and fencing off waterways. We are planting unproductive land in trees and retiring land to plant native vegetation or allow it to regenerate naturally. We have Nga Whenua Rahui covenants (on designated areas I may add) and we have a comprehensive environment plan. We are kaitiaki.

- 2.5 It is extremely frustrating. Only in the last few years we have seen the implementation of proposal for national policy statements that say we must recognise the significance of this or that such as indigenous biodiversity, outstanding landscapes or features or the quality of our water. These things have always been important to tangata whenua. We fenced off the cliffs at Kairakau more than 10 years ago. We did that, it was our decision. Yet we are told that the interests of the general public are greater than ours as traditional owners of our land. Why should the view of other people or the benefit to others of those cliffs at Kairakau come before our view and the benefits to us as the ancestral landowners.
- 2.6 We have protective measures in place. We applied for Nga Whenua Rahui covenants to protect an area of bush and native habitat for an indigenous beetle. We did that, it was our decision. Yet we are told that land that was once not worth clearing the native vegetation off because it was unproductive, now apparently, has value for all New Zealanders.
- 2.7 We are putting more protective measures in place. We are working with HBRC on other areas of our land that we feel should be protected. We are doing that, it was our decision.
- 2.8 We have a responsibility to those who have been, those who are here and those who will come. We have an obligation to utilise and develop our land to meet the needs of our owners, present and future but we are being told what we can and cannot do on our ancestral land. We have so little land left, and these restrictions are prohibitive.
- 2.9 Please don't get us wrong. Natural features and landscapes are inherently important to us as Māori. Many feature as a part of our cultural identity and whakapapa. But the features that remain on our whenua remain ours to manage as that is our role. And the landscapes and features that are not in our ownership remain ours too, but we need to work with others to protect those ones.
- 2.10 Please don't get us wrong. Indigenous flora and fauna are inherently important to us as Māori. This is integral to our health and wellbeing, past, present and future. But on our ancestral whenua, this is our job as kaitiaki of our land that has been passed down to us from our ancestors who first set foot here 700 years ago.
- 2.11 We have a story, but that story isn't told by a desktop-based mapping assessment.
- 2.12 Others in New Zealand have used the words 'land grab' and 'land SNAtch' and we feel these designations (SNAs, ONFLs and HNCs) on our land, land where we have suffered the ongoing effects of colonisation, but land where we are now changing that, is;-
- 1) unnecessary
 - 2) annoyingly ironic
 - 3) unfair, and
 - 4) taking away our rights.
- 2.13 We note a comment made by the Consultant Ecologist that 'No specific information is provided in relation to the ecological values or boundaries of the SNAs identified on the property' and therefore, recommends no changes are made to the SNA delineations unless further specific information is provided. We want to point out that we are not here to discuss

ecological values or boundaries. We are here to highlight the injustice and unfairness of this section of the plan.

- 2.14 For these reasons, we should not have these designations on our land.
- 2.15 We understand that the relevant section/s in the PDP was drafted using the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) of November 2019. Subsequently NPSIB exposure draft was released in June 2022. This NPSIB is not currently Government Policy yet the CHBDC PDP is attempting to implement it.
- 2.16 Both versions advocate for local authorities to engage meaningfully and consult with tangata whenua early in the process (among many other considerations). However;
- 2.16.1 No representative of the Trust attended any of the community meetings.
- 2.16.2 The Trust did have two hui with Council in 2019 during the informal stage of the PDP process to discuss several issues and concerns but SNAs, ONFLs and HNCAs were only mentioned briefly.
- 2.16.3 As we indicated at the last hui with Council in December 2019 and as a part of our submission, we wanted to hui with Council about this topic as we felt we did not have enough information to understand the significance or implications of this section of the PDP. We still feel this way.
- 2.17 As tangata whenua, as Māori who have retained ancestral land, as a Treaty partner, we do not believe we have been given the opportunity to engage and consult with the Council regarding this section of the plan.
- 2.18 We understand the methodology for assessing areas was flawed and that few areas have been ground-truthed.
- 2.19 The s42A report asks for feedback on the new proposed policy ECO-P10. We do not wish to provide feedback on this policy as we feel this section of the plan needs thorough and meaningful consultation with tangata whenua where we can engage and participate fully in the process to ensure that our views and interests are recognised and addressed by the PDP.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer questions.