

Report to Hearings Commissioner(s) on Resource Consent Application to Northland Regional Council

CULTURAL EFFECTS—A RESPONSE

Tena tatou,

I am Dr Mere Kepa. I have over 30 years' experience in opposing Crown agencies developing their heavy industries on 1000 acres of land confiscated from the Te Parawhau Hapu, namely, Te Poupouwhenua, the headland at the entrance to the Whangarei harbour (1). In the mid-90s, I was called "home" to Takahiwai by a cousin, the late Dawson Rata. He was concerned that "they were doing things"! However, Dawson could not clarify for me "they" or the "things they were doing". What I observed was that nature was beginning to vanish from Maori life as a direct experience of Te Poupouwhenua, so Dawson's "things" emerge in the world as opposition to nature threatened. Accordingly, in the mid-nineties, my father, the late Tiakiriri Kepa and his cousin-brother, the late Henare Maki Pirihi opposed the proposed construction and operation of the deep-water port at Te Koutu, Marsden Point, Te Poupouwhenua in a case prepared by an imminent RMA consultant.

On 9 July 2024, I, among others, was emailed the *Decisions on applications for resource consents made under the Resource Management Act 1991 by Northport Limited* advising that the Commissioners:

... have refused consent to this proposal. This is due to the proposed reclamation in its current form. The reasons for this are **the significant adverse effects on cultural values of tangata [sic] whenua** and on the loss of recreational values and public access to and along the coastal marine area (CMA). In regard to these two matters, the proposal is **not consistent** with a number of the relevant objectives and policies of the statutory planning documents, and does not meet Part 2 of the Resource Management Act (RMA).

On 12 July, I, among others, was emailed Alister Hartstone's, *Report to Hearings Commissioner(s) on Resource Consent Application to Northland Regional Council* where the planner advised that:

While acknowledging that the underlying land, being part of the historical Poupouwhenua Block, is subject to claims and a history of alienation, the documentation provided is not read as directly opposing the proposal. The applicant is responding to the cultural concerns raised and provided for the recommendations made in the CEA and Te Parawhau Hapu Korero, and this is considered sufficient in this case to suitably address any cultural concerns. On that basis, any cultural effects arising from the proposal are considered to be *minor* subject to implementation of the recommendations made in the consultation documents.

Although, the planner has visited the site, and the applicant is *responding to the cultural concerns* ... they have none of the interests of the late Tiakiriri and Henare, that is, Taketake Maori, indigenous knowledge of Te Poupouwhenua. The position is a case study of cultural imbalances—Maori and Pakeha— that result in contrasting notions of beauty and nature. At this moment, the contrasting notions of nature and the:

provision of the garden being accommodated as part of the detailed design phase for the wetland on Site 3,

are two assessments of cultural effects on nature that lie side by side, their divergence explained by two different, and differently deficient ways of life.

Naku noa na,

(Dr) T. Mere. A Kepa



Chair

Takahiwai Maori Committee. Est. 1977

Ahikaaroa

Te Parawhau Hapu & Te Patuharakeke o Te Parawhau Hapu.

13 July 2024.

References

1. *Waitangi Tribunal Report 2022. WAI 1040 Te Rangatiratanga me Te Kawanatanga Pre-Publication* (page 1883).