

In the Environment Court
At Auckland

ENV-2025-AKL-000162

I te Kōti Taiao o Aotearoa
Ki Tāmaki Makaurau

Under the	Resource Management Act 1991 (the RMA)
In the matter	of an appeal under Clause 14(1) of the First Schedule of the Act
Between	TE RUUNANGA O NGAATI MAHUTA KI TE HAUAARU Appellant
And	WAITOMO DISTRICT COUNCIL Respondent

NOTICE OF PERSON'S WISH TO BE PARTY TO PROCEEDINGS

22 August 2025

Notice of person's wish to be party to proceedings

To: The Registrar
Environment Court
Auckland

And to: Waitomo District Council

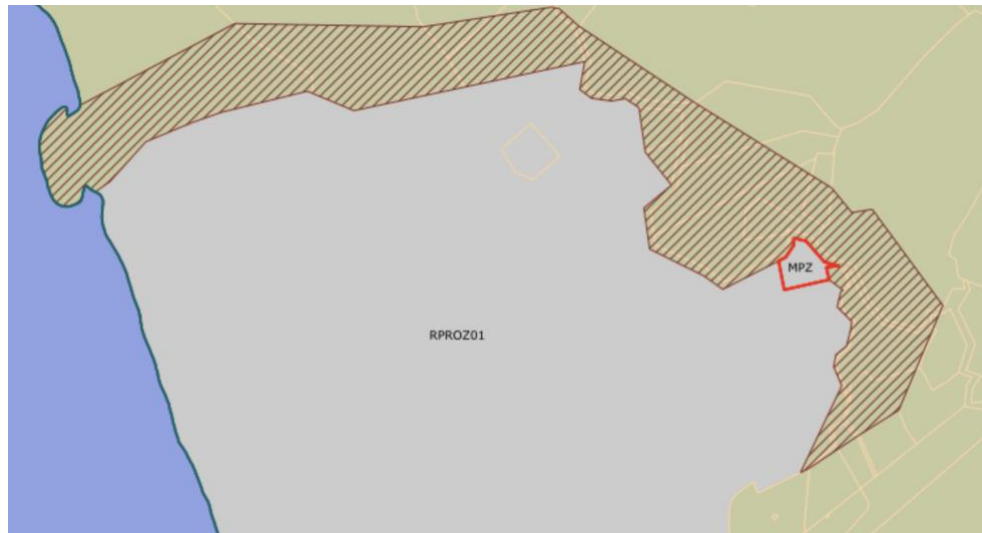
And to: Te Ruunanga o Ngaati Mahuta ki te Hauaaauru

INTRODUCTION

1. The Te Kooraha Marae Trustees (the **Trust**) wishes to be a party to the appeal ENV-2025-AKL-000162 by Te Ruunanga o Ngaati Mahuta ki te Hauaaauru (the **Appellant** / **TRONM**) against part of the decision of Waitomo District Council (the **Council** / the **Respondent**) on the Proposed Waitomo District Plan (the **Proposed Plan**) (the **Appeal**).
2. The Trust did not make a submission on the Proposed Plan. The Trust has an interest in these proceedings that is greater than the interest of the general public under section 274(1)(d), because its trustees and beneficiaries are members of the hapuu represented by TRONM, and because it is a mandated representative of mana whenua and a kaitiaki of Maaori Freehold Land directly affected by the provisions under appeal. As mana whenua, the Trust holds responsibilities of rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga in relation to its lands, waters, and taonga. The provisions under appeal affect the use, development, and protection of our land and marae, including potential papakaainga, access to customary resources, and safeguarding of waahi tuupuna and waahi tapu. These provisions constrain the reasonable use and development of this land, and any adverse effects would impact the Trust and its beneficiaries, as mana whenua, more significantly than the general public.
3. The Trust is not a trade competitor for the purposes of section 308C or 308CA of the RMA.

INTEREST IN THE PROCEEDINGS

4. The Trust are mana whenua and administrators of Maaori Freehold Land under Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 identified as Taharoa A1C2 Block in the Proposed Plan. The relevant parcels are shown in Figure 1 below, showing affected areas under the Proposed Plan provisions:



5. Cradled in an area at the southern end of Kaawhia harbour, nestled in a hidden valley, a land of profound significance and ancestral connection, is a special place that stands as a testament to the rich heritage of the mana whenua, the people of the land, Te Kooraha Marae.
6. Ko Oorangiwhao te maunga (Oorangiwhao is the ancestral mountain), ko Te Kooraha me Mitiwai ngā awa (Te Kooraha and Mitiwai are the sacred streams), ko Te Oohaakii te wharenui (Te Oohaakii is the main house), ko Te Arohanui te wharekai (Te Arohanui is the dining house), ko Tuuranga te tuupuna (Tuuranga is the eponymous ancestor), ko te Tahaaroa a Ruapuutahanga te rohe (Tahaaroa a Ruapuutahanga is the area), ko Ngaati Mahuta ki te Hauaauru me Ngaati Rangitaka ngaa hapuu (the tribes are Ngaati Mahuta ki te Hauaauru and Rangitaka), ko Waikato te iwi (Waikato are the people), paimaarire (peace to all).
7. Te Kooraha Marae perpetuates an essence, a mauri, a sacred realm where the wind purifies, the black sands whisper genealogical narratives, and the people embody

the mantle of wardenship. It is a safe haven where ancient wisdom intertwines with contemporary life, leaving an unforgettable impression on all who traverse through the waharoa (gateway).

- 8.** The Appeal establishes that the land is within the TRONM area of interest and will be adversely affected by the provisions under appeal. The Trust received no notification or consultation from Council, nor any information about the significant implications of the proposed rezoning, indicative area overlay, rules, and policies for the use of our land.
- 9.** The Trust is interested in the entire Appeal.
- 10.** The Trust supports all of the relief sought in the Appeal.
- 11.** The Trust is particularly concerned about the provisions bringing cumulative adverse impacts of mining activities such as dust, amenity, and other disturbances, with fewer restrictions and rules, and in closer proximity to our marae and Maaori Land. These potential adverse effects surround and directly impact our marae, yet were introduced without adequate consultation with the Trust as mana whenua.
- 12.** Without limiting the generality of the above, The Trust is particularly interested in the following relief sought by TRONM:

 - a. Inclusion of additional provisions that recognise and provide for the relationship of Maaori with their land (pursuant to section 6(e)). The Trust strongly supports this relief as provisions must better enable mana whenua to exercise rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga over our ancestral lands and marae;
 - b. Amendment to Rule GRUZ-S6 (previously GRUZ-R42) to exempt Maaori Land from the requirements of Rule GRUZ-S6.1;
 - c. Amendment of the Rural Production Zone map and RPROZ-SCHED1 to remove the land previously within the Rural Zone of the Operative Plan, within the TRONM area of interest;

- d. Removal of the Indicative Rural Production Areas overlay and notations, within the TRONM area of interest;
- e. Amendment of policies RPROZ-P4 and RPROZ-P6, and rule RPROZ-R25 in the Decision to the notified version of the provisions; and
- f. Such other orders, relief, alternative and/or other consequential amendments to address the concerns set out in the Appeal.

POSITION ON RELIEF SOUGHT

13. The Trust supports the relief sought in the Appeal by TRONM on the basis that the relief would:

- a. Ensure the Proposed Plan is consistent with Part 2 of the RMA, in particular:
 - i. recognising and providing for the ability of Maaori to connect to our ancestral lands, waters, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga as required under section 6(e);
 - ii. having particular regard to kaitiakitanga as required under 7(a); and
 - iii. by taking into account the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as required by section 8.
- b. More effectively promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources to assist the Council in carrying out its functions to achieve the purpose of the Act;
- c. More effectively manage or enable the efficient and integrated use, development and protection of natural and physical resources;
- d. Ensure the Proposed Plan gives effect to higher order planning instruments in accordance with section 75 of the RMA;

- e. Prevent imposition of restrictions that would render our land as incapable of reasonable use;
- f. Be more effective in ensuring the actual and potential adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated; and
- g. More appropriately achieve the objectives of the Proposed Plan in terms of section 32 of the RMA.

MEDIATION

- 14.** The Trust agrees to participate in mediation or other alternative dispute resolution of the proceedings.

Taituwha King (on behalf of Te Kooraha Marae Trust)

DATED 21 August 2025

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Chair of Te Kooraha Marae Trust



21 August 2025