Te Whanganui a Orotū (Ahuriri Estuary)

Key Values
Cultural
Recreation
Ecology (wildlife, fisheries)
Landscape (scenic, geological features)

Table 1: List of publications reviewed

Year	Name	Author
1987	Wetlands of National Importance to Fisheries	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
1992	Te Whanganui-ā-Orotu, Traditional Use and Environmental Change, customary usage report, Wai 55	P. Parsons
1994	Conservation Management Strategy (volume II) for Hawke's Bay Conservancy 1994 – 2004.	Department of Conservation
1995	Te Whanganui-ā-Orotu report, Wai 55	Waitangi Tribunal Report
1996	Waiohiki Land Claim, Wai 168	R.C Pewhairangi
1996	A Directory of Wetlands in New Zealand	Department of Conservation
2004	Potential Water Bodies of National Importance	Ministry for the Environment
2004	Potential Water Bodies of National Importance for Recreation Value	Ministry for the Environment
2004	The Mohaka ki Ahuriri Report, Wai 201	Waitangi Tribunal Report
2004	Ahuriri Estuary Environmental Evaluation	Bioresearches
2006	Areas of Significant Conservation Values: HB Coastal Marine Area (HBRC Report Number 4203 - Draft)	Hawke's Bay Regional Council
2012	Submission from Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga on Proposed Plan Change 5 to the RPS	Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga
2012	Magical Places – 40 Wetlands to Visit in New Zealand	Department of Conservation
2013	Maungaharuru-Tangitū Hapū Deed of Settlement + Documents Schedule	Maungaharuru-Tangitū Hapū and the Crown
2014	Ahuriri Estuary: Contact Recreation and Food Gathering Review	Hawke's Bay Regional Council
2015	Tūtaekurī Awa Management and Enhancement Plan	Ngā Hapū o Tūtaekurī
2016	New Zealand Geo-preservation Inventory	Geological Society of New Zealand

2016	Mana Ahuriri Deed of Settlement + Documents Schedule	Ahuriri Hapū and the Crown
2016	The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species	Global Species Programme, various scientists and partners worldwide
2017	Sewage may not have poured into Napier estuary if city outfall pipe was bigger	Stuff.co.nz
2017	Ahuriri Information Sheet (TANK)	Hawke's Bay Regional Council
2017	Napier City Council releases sewage into Ahuriri Estuary due to heavy rain	Stuff.co.nz
2017	Thousands of litres of tallow bulk storage spills into estuary	Stuff.co.nz
2018	Ahuriri Estuary Walking Track Information Sheet	Department of Conservation
2018	Cultural Values Table	Hawke's Bay Regional Council

Discussion

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to assist the RPC members to determine whether any of the values of the Ahuriri Estuary are outstanding for the purposes of the Hawke's Bay Regional Council's outstanding water body plan change.

2. This report presents the summarised findings of the values attributed to the Ahuriri Estuary in those documents referred to in Table 1, above. For clarification, Te Whanganui a Orotū and Ahuriri Estuary are used interchangeably in this report.

Overview

3. Te Whanganui a Orotū is 470 hectares in size and is frequently referred to as a 'national treasure', predominately because of its wildlife and fishery values.

4. The Ahuriri Estuary supports 29 species of fish and contains a 160 hectare wildlife sanctuary which provides an important feeding and resting area for over 70 species of water birds, some of which are critically endangered. It is a significant wetland along the east coast of New Zealand and its wildlife and fisheries habitat is recognised as being nationally significant. The estuary's unique geological history makes it a nationally important example of tectonic processes.

5. Historically, the Tutaekurī and Esk Rivers flowed into Te Whanganui a Orotū which was predominately freshwater and significantly larger at 3,840 hectares in size. In 1931, the Napier earthquake lifted the land by up to two metres and exposed around 1300 hectares of original lagoon. This combined with a significant amount of drainage and reclamation reduced the lagoon to its current size. Much of the estuary's margin is contained by man-made stop-banks and the Tutaekurī and Esk Rivers were diverted away from the estuary some time ago.

6. The Ahuriri Estuary is a significant recreational resource, providing for a number of recreational activities including swimming, boating and bird watching. A number of cycle pathways surround the estuary. In the past, the estuary has provided significant food gathering opportunities however current information suggests the shellfish is unsafe for human consumption.

7. The estuary is surrounded by urban, farmland and industrial uses, with the majority of Napier City's stormwater being discharged untreated into the estuary. On very rare occasions (i.e. a typical intense rain events), untreated wastewater is discharged into the estuary's inlet. Monitoring suggests that the water quality and ecology of the estuary environment are affected by the poor quality of water in the urban drains that flow into the estuary. There is a build-up of chemicals stored in the estuary's muds from decades of industrial contamination.

8. The Ahuriri Estuary is listed as a Significant Conversation Area in the Regional Coastal Environment Plan and has been identified as one of the six environmental hotspots by Hawke's Bay Regional Council, with funding allocated towards improving the area. In 2017, the Napier City Council released the Ahuriri Estuary and Coastal Edge Masterplan which seeks a healthy and vibrant Ahuriri Estuary. In 1996, the estuary was recognised as meeting the Ramsar Sites Criteria which identifies Wetlands of International Importance.

Location

9. Te Whanganui a Orotū is situated directly alongside the city of Napier. It is located within the Ahuriri catchment which is approximately 13,128 hectares in size.

10. The Ahuriri Estuary is divided into several management areas. The area from Pandora Bridge to the Embankment Bridge is referred to as the 'Lower Estuary', the area from the Embankment Bridge to immediately upstream of the confluence with the Taipo Stream is referred to as the 'Middle Estuary' or 'outfall channel' and the area above the confluence with the Taipo Stream is referred to as the 'Upper Estuary'. The area seaward of the Pandora Bridge is known as the Inner Harbour and is not identified as part of the estuary.

11. Figures 1 and 2 below show the extent of the Ahuriri Estuary and its location in Hawke's Bay.

Figure 1: Extent of Ahuriri Estuary

Figure 2: Location of Ahuriri Estuary

*Cultural values**

12. Three Treaty settlement entities have customary linkages to Te Whanganui-ā-Orotu - Ahuriri Hapū, Ngāti Pāhauwera and Maungaharuru –Tangitū.

13. For the Ahuriri Hapū, Te Whanganui-a-Orotū has always held an elevated status, with its own mauri, wairua and spirituality. It is central to their existence and identity. It is named after the ancestor Te Orotu, who was a descendant of the great explorer and ancestor Māhu Tapoanui, who is the very beginning of the Ahuriri people.

14. Ngāti Pāhauwera regularly travelled between Mohaka and Te Whanganui- a -Orotū, which was a significant mahinga kai for them. A Ngāti Pāhauwera pā and kāinga are located at the northern end of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū and graves of Ngāti Pāhauwera ancestors are located on islands previously in Te Whanganui-a-Orotū.

15. Maungaharuru Tangitū also state an association with Te Whanganui-a-Orotū; the estuary was a vitally important fishing and resource-gathering area for hapū.

16. The area around Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was a very important source of food and was heavily populated. Consequently numerous sites of cultural, historic and archaeological significance are situated around what was its shoreline.

17. From the earliest of times it was highly prized for its enormous food resources and its access to major river systems and forest areas. In the lake were extensive shellfish beds and fishing grounds; in the rivers and streams, eels and freshwater fish. It was known as 'a place of abundance' for freshwater fish, shellfish, and birds and much prized as a food resource by the people.

* The HBRC and authors of this report are aware there are numerous areas, including waterbodies, where two or more iwi groups have agreed, shared interests and/or contested overlapping claims within the Hawke's Bay region. The information presented in this report is not intended to imply any exclusive rights over particular waterbodies for one or more iwi groups, nor does it confirm the validity of the claims of any group(s) over that waterbody. The information is solely for the purpose of recording important cultural and spiritual values identified by iwi groups in the region as sourced from existing published documents.

18. It was also known as Te Maara a Tawhao (the garden of Tawhao) by Ngāti Kahungunu, Tawhao being the chief who imposed a tapu on it. So greatly was it valued through the generations that songs were sung, poetry composed and dances created in praise of its productiveness.

19. Archaeological evidence confirms that Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was an important place to live. Excavations indicate settlement dates between the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, with very early settlement on Roro o Kuri - somewhere between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Surrounding the harbour are 11 recorded pā, some extensive in size. Extensive middens exist in this area.

20. The pā at Te Pakake was a communal gathering place in times of trouble. Ngāti Hinepare, Ngāti Mahu, Ngāti Parau, Ngāti Hawea and Ngāti Kurumokihi are all recorded as having occupied the pā when under threat of invasion. After the Waikato and Hauraki tribes attacked Te Pakake in 1824, the people of Heretaunga went into exile at Mahia peninsula. This invasion caused large scale devastation to the local people. They remained in exile until after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. No pā and kāinga in use prior to the exodus were re-occupied upon their return because they had blood spilt on them and they were now urupā and tapu.

21. Attachment 1 contains a more detailed explanation of the cultural values associated with Te Whanganui-a-Orotū.

Recreation values

22. The Ahuriri Estuary is easily accessible by large numbers of people, making it a highly valued recreational resource in Hawke's Bay.

23. The lower estuary features broad tidal flats and shallow channels with a partial impoundment area known as Pandora Pond, which is a small sheltered area that has been extensively developed to allow a range of recreational activities to take place.

24. Recreational use of the lower estuary area is quite intensive and includes swimming, boating, fishing, birdwatching, photography and food gathering. A number of walkways and cycle pathways have been developed around the upper and lower estuary making it popular for walking, running and biking.

25. The middle reaches of the estuary is generally undisturbed by water sports due to the lengthy periods in which tides expose large areas of mudflats. As a result, it attracts shorebirds and is popular for bird-watching. Recreational pursuits on the upper estuary are restricted to bird-watching and duck shooting.

26. The water quality of the Ahuriri Estuary is fair to poor, meaning a number of the contact recreational activities can be compromised by the presence of elevated bacterial concentrations that have the potential to cause illness. The estuary was closed intermittently during 2018 for swimming and boating activities.

27. In the past, Te Whanganui a Orotū was a rich food source with cockles and flounder commonly gathered from the area. However, due to the inflow of stormwater derived from the surrounding industrial and urban area, and the associated toxins, the estuary is not currently regarded as a safe food-source.

28. In 2004, the Ahuriri Estuary was recognised as a Potential Water Body of National Importance for recreation by the Ministry for the Environment.

Ecology values

29. The Ahuriri Estuary is the most significant wetland along the coastline of the North Island between East Cape and Wellington. Despite extensive modification, reclamation and discharges, it continues to provide a wide diversity of habitat and an extremely diverse range of ecological communities, all contained within a relatively small area.

30. There are five smaller wetlands, around 175 ha in size which are part of the greater Ahuriri wetland complex. These wetlands are located within reclaimed land near the estuary and are considered to contribute significantly to the overall ecological value of the area.

31. The Ahuriri Estuary has very important wildlife values and is highly rated in the 'wetlands of ecological and representative importance', and the 'sites of special wildlife interest' databases held by the Department of Conservation.

32. Notably, in 1996 the Ahuriri Estuary was identified as meeting the Ramsar Sites Criteria which is part of an intergovernmental treaty and used to assist countries to identify wetlands of international importance.

33. Ecological values associated with the Ahuriri Estuary are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Fish

34. The Ahuriri Estuary is classified as a nationally significant fisheries habitat. Within Hawke Bay, the Ahuriri Estuary provides a diverse habitat and is the most important estuary in terms of fisheries production. It provides nursery habitat, spawning habitat and feeding areas and is used by species migrating between freshwater and the sea. In the late 1980s it was under consideration for marine reserve status.

35. The estuary makes a significant contribution to Hawke's Bay marine fisheries, supporting approximately 29 species of fish at some stage during their life cycle. Some species (e.g. short finned eel, kahawai, grey mullet, yellow-bellied flounder, stargazer and parore) use the area for feeding, and around 11 species use the area as a nursery or spawning ground. These include commercially important species such as yellow bellied flounder, grey mullet, sand flounder, common sole, and yellow-eyed mullet.

36. In 1987, the Ahuriri Estuary and Westshore lagoons were identified as a wetland of national importance to fisheries and allocated a Category A (outstanding) rating for fisheries. The wetland met the following five criteria:

    - A unique or diverse assemblage of fish species
    - A biologically or scientifically important fishery or fish habitat
    - A particularly good example of a specific type of fishery or fish habitat
    - A remnant or regionally representative wetland with significant fisheries values
    - A nationally important non-salmonid fishery, including commercial and traditional Māori fisheries.

37. In 1996, the Department of Conservation identified the Ahuriri Estuary as meeting the Ramsar Sites Criteria which identifies wetlands of international importance. In respect to native fish the report notes:

    - The estuary supports 29 species of fish which adds to the estuary's special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of the region
    - The estuary has special value as a breeding ground and nursery for a number of species of fish.

Wildlife

38. The Ahuriri Estuary contains a 160 hectare wildlife refuge which protects the areas between the Southern Marsh, Westshore Lagoon and the estuary from the low level bridge to Pandora Pond. The Department of Conservation manages the wildlife sanctuary which is highly ranked as a Site of Special Wildlife Interest (SSWI) in their database.

39. The Ahuriri Estuary is used by over 70 species of waterbirds, 17 of which migrate here every year from the Artic. Of particular note are the Australasian bittern and the black billed gull which are globally endangered, and the New Zealand Dabchick (Grebe), which is globally near threatened. The estuary regularly supports over 1% of the regional population of Caspian tern.

40. The Wrybill is also present at the Ahuriri Estuary. The Wrybill is special, being endemic to New Zealand and the only species of bird in the world with a beak that is bent sideways one way. Other notable species which use the estuary are the Royal spoonbill, white faced heron, grey teal, New Zealand marsh crake, blackfronted dotterel, Pacific reef egret, banded dotterel, far eastern curlew, Asiatic whimbrel, American whimbrel, Siberian tattler, sharp-tailed sandpiper, red-necked stint, Caspian tern and little tern.

41. The following map, Figure 3, shows the 12,000 km flight of the eastern bar-tailed godwits which migrate to New Zealand every year from Alaska. The godwits fly nine days straight and when they land on New Zealand shores they need food almost immediately.

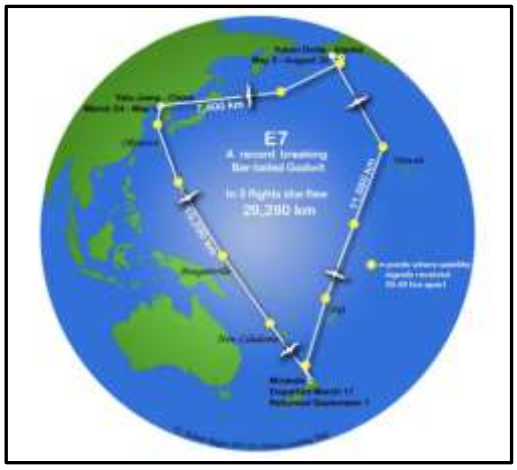

Figure 3: Flight of the eastern bar-tailed godwits

42. In 1996, the Department of Conservation identified the Ahuriri Estuary as meeting the Ramsar Sites Criteria, which identifies wetlands of international importance. With regard to waterbirds the report notes:
    - The Estuary supports appreciable numbers of three globally threatened species of birds, the New Zealand grebe, New Zealand dabchick (Grebe), Australasian bittern and the Wrybill
    - The estuary supports a very diverse fauna, including 55 species of birds which adds to the estuary's special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of the region
    - The estuary is of special value as a wintering area for migratory shorebirds
    - The estuary regularly supports over 1% of the regional population of the Caspian tern.

Flora

43. The Ahuriri Estuary is highly modified and does not support any plant or plant communities of importance or rarity. For these reasons, the area is described as being of 'moderate botanical interest'.

44. The margins of the estuary support a salt-marsh herbfield of *Zostera*, glasswort, and shore pimpernel, with *Juncus* and *Leptocarpus* rushland on higher ground.

45. The native shore-line communities in the lower estuary are in a healthy state. A small remnant stand of the saltmarsh ribbon wood *Plagianthus divaricatus* survives in the lower estuary, and serves as a reminder of the far more extensive areas present prior to the 1931 earthquake and subsequent reclamation. This is of local importance because of the low occurrence of this species throughout Hawkes Bay.

46. In the upper estuarine section, extending northwards from the Taipo stream confluence, there are substantial remnants of the once extensive wetlands that bordered Ahuriri Lagoon.

47. The native communities in the Westshore Pond, Northern Pond and adjacent areas contain the aquatic plant *Ruppia polycarp*a and *R. megacarpa.* These ponds potentially may be one of the best sites for these uncommon plants in the North Island.

48. The saline arm extending west from Westshore Pond, represents a kind of habitat not very common in New Zealand. Its most characteristic plant *Puccinellia fasciculate* is not a native species. The northern pond extension (up into airport land) contains sea-rush and native herbfield.

Invertebrates

49. Thirty-three species of invertebrates have been recorded in the Ahuriri Estuary, including: three species of bivalves, the most abundant being the cockle *austrovenus stutchburyi*; seven gastropods including whelk *Cominella glandiformis* and hornshell *Zeacumantus lutulentus*; six crustaceans, the most common being the tunnelling mud crab *Austrohelice* crassa; 14 polychaete worms, the most numerous being *Aonides trifidus* and *Scolecolepides*; and one nemertine worm.

50. The aquatic infauna sampling indicates there is low diversity and abundance of organisms in the upper estuary area. This appears to be because these waters are in an enriched (trophic) state, with a significant

amount of sediment and contaminants flowing in through the small streams. There is a plentiful supply of algae and plankton that flourish in the enriched waters of the estuary.

51. The invasive fanworm *(Ficopomatus enigmaticus*) is a risk to native marine species and is thriving in the upper estuary and is fast becoming prolific in the estuary waters. In 2017, reefs of tube worms were restricting water flow between the upper and the lower estuary and 216 tonnes of tubeworms were removed by Hawke's Bay Regional Council staff.

52. In 1996, the Department of Conservation identified the Ahuriri Estuary as meeting the Ramsar Sites Criteria, which identifies wetlands of international importance. The report specifically notes that the estuary supports 33 species of invertebrates which adds to the estuary's special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of the region.

Landscape / scenic values

53. The Ahuriri Estuary is located in an urban landscape situated directly alongside the city of Napier, adjacent to a number of industrial and urban areas. There is a network of well-formed tracks around the lower estuary and associated wetland areas. Photographs of Te Whanganui-a-Orotu are contained in Attachment 2.

54. The estuary is a long, narrow estuary with its wide range of fresh to salty, shallow to deep, and sandy to muddy habitats. The estuary is relatively shallow, with about 60% of its bed being exposed at low tide.

55. The Ahuriri Estuary is identified in the Napier District plan as an area possessing value as a significant landscape.

Geological features

56. In 1931, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit Hawke's Bay instantly lifting the land by 1 - 2 metres and exposing about 1300 hectares of the original Ahuriri Lagoon. As a result, the area has been significantly studied and is considered to be a nationally important example of tectonic processes.

57. The Hawke's Bay Regional Coastal Environment Plan identifies The Ahuriri Estuary as being a nationally important example of tectonic processes, with the former floor of the lagoon, and uplifted channel fossils specifically identified as having Significant Conservation Values (SCA).

58. In 2004, the Ahuriri Estuary was recognised as a Potential Water Body of National Importance for geodiversity features by the Ministry for the Environment.

59. The National Geo-preservation Inventory, which identifies and ranks geological features according to their relative significance, classifies the following features of the Ahuriri Estuary as nationally significant:

    - Ahuriri Lagoon 1931 uplifted seafloor and islet: Small islet from pre-1931 now sitting in the middle of uplifted farmed grassland which was formerly the intertidal lagoon floor
    - Ahuriri Lagoon uplifted entrance channel fossils. Best illustration of 2.5 m of uplift during the 1931 Napier Earthquake, in the form of in-situ bivalues (ruditapes) in life position in channel bottom gravelly sand now exposed at high tide level.

Naturalness/intactness of waterbody

60. The Ahuriri Estuary is a remnant of a much larger lagoon. There have been major changes within the Ahuriri Estuary which pre-1931 was predominately freshwater and approximately 3,800 ha hectares size. Historically the Tutaekuri and Esk Rivers previously discharged into the lagoon.

61. In 1931, the Napier earthquake lifted the land by two metres and exposed around 1,300 hectares of original lagoon. This combined with a significant amount of modifications through drainage and reclamation has reduced the lagoon to its current 470 hectare size.

62. Much of the margin of the estuary is contained by man-made stop-banks, and the Tutaekurī and Esk Rivers, which originally flowed into the estuary have been diverted away. The approaches to the Pandora Bridge constrict tidal flow into and out of the estuary, delaying and muting tidal influences. Pandora Pond was artificially created when sediment was excavated in 1977 to provide fill for the cargo handling area in the Port of Napier.

63. In the upper estuarine section there are substantial remnants of the once extensive wetlands that bordered Ahuriri Lagoon.

Water Quality

64. Water quality in the estuary has been monitored for a number of years. During this time, monitoring indicates that water quality in the lower estuary is generally 'fair' for contact recreational purposes. An active swimming warning is currently in place for Pandora Pond which states 'Caution Advised'.

65. A 'fair' grading and a 'caution advised' warning indicate the waters are generally suitable for swimming. However, overall the site has a moderate infection risk and elevated bacteria concentrations can occur at times and caution is required during periods of heavy rain or when the water is discoloured.

66. During the summer of 2017/18, the lower estuary was closed intermittently due to levels of faecal indicator bacteria that exceeded national guidelines for contact recreation. Investigations are continuing as to the cause, however generally faecal contamination of the estuary is associated with stormwater inflows, runoff from industrial sites, rural land uses and direct deposition of faeces by the high numbers of birds.

67. The water quality of the upper estuary is in an enriched (trophic) state. Sediment and contaminants flow in through the small streams (such as the Taipō Stream), degrading the habitat for marine life and birds.

Values Summary

Overarching Value	Sub-value	Description	Outstanding Yes/no	Comments
Cultural	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Recreational	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Ecological	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Landscape	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Natural Character	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Attachment 1

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū – Cultural Values Report

Ahuriri Estuary – Pre Earthquake

Key Cultural Values
Spiritual values
Wāhi Tapu, wāhi taonga, wai tapu
Mahinga kai, Pā tuna
Pā, Kāinga
Rohe boundary

Table 1: List of documents reviewed

Year	Name	Author
1992	Te Whanganui-a-Orotū, Traditional Use and Environmental Change, Customary Usage Report, Wai 55.	Patrick Parsons
1995	Te Whanganui-a-Orotū report, Wai 55	Waitangi Tribunal
1996	Waiohikī Land Claim, Wai 168	Roy Casey Pewhairangi
2004	Wai 201: The Mohaka ki Ahuriri report	The Waitangi Tribunal
2006	Areas of Significant Conservation Values: HB Coastal Marine Area (HBRC Report Number 4203 - Draft)	Hawke's Bay Regional Council
2007	He Moemoea mō Te Whanganui-a-Orotū: A Vision Plan and Health Assessment for the Napier Estuary	Landcare Research
2010	Ngāti Pāhauwera Deed of Settlement Documents	Ngāti Pāhauwera and the Crown
2012	Submission from Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga on Proposed Plan Change 5 to the RPS	Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga
2015	Environment Court Decision: NKII vs HBRC	Environment Court
2015	Mana Ake - Nga Hapu o Heretaunga – An Expression of Kaitiakitanga	Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga
2016	Maungaharuru-Tangitū Deed of Settlement Documents	Maungaharuru-Tangitū and the Crown
2016	Heretaunga Tamatea Deed of Settlement Documents	Heretaunga Tamatea and the Crown
2016	Ahuriri Hapū Deed of Settlement Documents	Ahuriri Hapū and the Crown
2017	Mai Te Matau a Māui ki Tangoio Assessment of Cultural Values Report: Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy 2120	Aramanu Ropiha
2018	Cultural Values Table	Hawke's Bay Regional Council

1. Introduction *

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to assist the RPC members to determine whether any of the cultural values associated with Te Whanganui-a-Orotū are outstanding for the purposes of the Hawke's Bay Regional Council's outstanding water body plan change.

This report presents the summarised findings of the cultural values attributed to Te Whanganui-a-Orotū in those documents referred to in Table 1, above.

The report summarises the cultural values associated with Te Whanganui-a-Orotū into a series of categories. It is recognised that isolating the values into categories can be problematic from a Māori worldview and many of the values are part of a narrative that doesn't fit neatly into categories. However, the intention is not to take a reductionist or isolated approach to cultural values but to try and gain an appreciation of their significance and the level of detail available to progress a plan change. In preparing the reports, it became obvious that all of the waterways are part of a wider cultural landscape that weaves people and the environment into a rich history of cultural and spiritual association.

Ultimately, the Regional Planning Committee will need to decide what the appropriate threshold is for outstanding cultural values. Any objectives, policies or rules that are proposed to support outstanding waterbodies will be subject to scrutiny and potential challenges by those who may be affected by a plan change.

Importance

Three Treaty settlement entities have customary linkages to Te Whanganui-a-Orotū - Ahuriri Hapū, Ngāti Pāhauwera and Maungaharuru –Tangitū.

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū is a place of great cultural and spiritual significance to the Ahuriri Hapū - one of six large natural groups negotiating the settlement of Ngāti Kahungunu Treaty of Waitangi claims. It is central to their existence and identity. It is named after the ancestor Te Orotū, who was a descendant of the great explorer and ancestor Māhu Tapoanui, who is the very beginning of the Ahuriri people.

Ahuriri hapū has a long history of settlement in Te Whanganui-a-Orotū; it's significance is conveyed in song and story, reciting the names of ancestors, kaitiaki and events. The hapū of Ngāti Parau, Ngāti Hinepare, Ngāti Tu, Ngāti Mahu, Ngāi Tawhao, Ngāi Te Ruruku, Ngāti Matepu all lived on the shores of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū.

The area around Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was a very important source of food and was heavily populated. Consequently numerous sites of cultural, historic and archaeological significance are situated around what was its shoreline.

Ngāti Pāhauwera describe Te Whanganui-a-Orotū as a 'taonga' referred to in their tribal whakatauki, karanga, and waiata. Ngāti Pāhauwera regularly travelled between Mohaka and Te Whanganui-a-Orotū, which was a significant mahinga kai for them. A Ngāti Pāhauwera pā and kāinga are located at the northern end of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū and graves of Ngāti Pāhauwera ancestors are located on islands previously in Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. The area is significant as a boundary of their tipuna Te Kahu o Te Rangi.

Maungaharuru–Tangitū (another entity negotiating the settlement of Ngāti Kahungunu Treaty of Waitangi claims) also state an association with Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. The estuary was a vitally important fishing and resource-gathering area for the hapū.

TANK Group

The TANK Group has been working since 2012 on land and water management issues for the Tutaekurī, Ahuriri, Ngaruroro and Karamū catchments. Its purpose is to recommend limits and measures for a workable plan change. TANK's collaborative membership includes more than 30 groups, representing Tāngata Whenua, primary sector, councils and environmentalists.

The TANK group has been progressing a cultural values framework, identifying values and attributes to characterise water quality.

* The HBRC and authors of this report are aware there are numerous areas, including waterbodies, where two or more iwi groups have agreed, shared interests and/or contested overlapping claims within the Hawke's Bay region. The information presented in this report is not intended to imply any exclusive rights over particular waterbodies for one or more iwi groups, nor does it confirm the validity of the claims of any group(s) over that waterbody. The information is solely for the purpose of recording important cultural and spiritual values identified by iwi groups in the region as sourced from existing published documents.

2. Spiritual Values

For the Ahuriri hapū, Te Whanganui-a-Orotū has always held an elevated status, with its own mauri, wairua and spirituality.

Moremore

Moremore is the kaitiaki of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū, and known as the guardian of the people occupying the shores of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū who are his descendants. The appearance of Moremore warned people of dangers and reinforced the customs practiced by the old people. The law of Moremore was always observed.

Moremore lived in a cave in the sea just off Sturm's Gully. His mother, Pania, is identified with the same locality. A characteristic of Moremore was his ability to appear in any guise such as a shark, stingray or octopus. Because of his descent from the sea taniwha Tangaroa, he had command of the forces of the deep.

An incident linking Pania and Moremore to the 1931 earthquake highlights the importance of these ancestors in the lives of the people. According to Kurupai Koopu, when they started blowing up Pania's Rock in about 1929, Pania was angry with them and Moremore was seen in a form that he had never been before - that of a completely black shark with no tail. On the morning of the 1931 earthquake, Moremore was seen by old Wereta Te Kape inside the Ahuriri Heads. Two young men saw him too. One raised a rifle and fired at him. Shortly afterwards the great quake struck.

The Tareha family were decedents of Moremore and enjoyed special privileges when gathering kaimoana from his cave. However, the special rights enjoyed by the Tareha's to kaimoana near Moremore's cave were balanced by the sacrifice that accompanied it - Moremore's right to the firstborn son of each generation, who was claimed by Hinewera, the lady of the sea.

There are many traditional customs surrounding Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. Older tribe members were very religious and strictly observed certain customs, such as using new flax baskets at the start of each fishing season, saying a karakia before anyone entered the water, not gathering shellfish during menstruation, or eating shellfish on the beach while anyone was still in the water. If Moremore appeared while you were out in the water you had to abandon your catch.

The island Tapu Te Ranga was a sacred place where certain tohi or baptismal rites were performed.

3. Wāhi tapu, wāhi taonga

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū contained islands where people lived and camped while on fishing expeditions, as well as wāhi tapu and urupā.

Te Roro o Kuri (dog's brains) was the biggest island in the lagoon, an octopus-shaped island which had ancient pā sites on almost every tentacle. It is wāhi tapu.

After the invasion of the Waikato and Hauraki tribes (outlined in section 7), the people of Heretaunga remained in exile at Nukutaurua until after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. No pā and kāinga in use prior to the exodus were re-occupied upon their return because they had blood spilt on them and they were now urupā and tapu.

4. Mahinga kai

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was a significant mahinga kai resource. From the earliest of times it was highly prized for its enormous food resources and its access to major river systems and forest areas. In the lake were extensive shellfish beds and fishing grounds; in the rivers and streams, eels and freshwater fish. It was known as ‘a place of abundance' for freshwater fish, shellfish, and birds and much prized as a food resource by the people. It was also known as Te Maara a Tawhao (the garden of Tawhao) by Ngāti Kahungunu, Tawhao being the chief who imposed a tapu on it. So greatly was it valued through the generations that songs were sung, poetry composed and dances created in praise of its productiveness. It was the most valuable part of the patrimony.

Different parts of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū favoured different types of kaimoana and natural markers were used to indicate different fishing grounds. There were tribal fishing zones, communal fishing areas and ancestral zones, which various sub-tribes with ancestral and occupational rights felt free to fish.

The traditional Māori view of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was that of a fresh-water or brackish-water lagoon which had to be opened occasionally when the waters from the streams feeding it caused the water-level to rise to a point that menaced their homes and cultivations situated on the low ground bordering the lake. Māori

tradition relates how openings to the sea were made at Keteketerau and Ruahoro near Petane, and at Ahuriri near Mataruahou (Scinde Island). While the lake was open to the sea certain sea-fish would enter, but the main catch was of fresh-water fish.

5. Pā, Kāinga, ara

Archaeological evidence confirms that Te Whanganui-a-Orotū was an important place to live. Excavations indicate settlement dates between the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, with very early settlement on Roro o Kuri - somewhere between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Surrounding the harbour are 11 recorded pā, some extensive in size. Extensive middens exist in this area.

Te Whanganui-a-Orotū contained islands where people lived and camped while on fishing expeditions. Te Roro o Kuri (dog's brains) was the biggest island in the lagoon, an octopus-shaped island which had ancient pā sites on almost every tentacle.

Two of these pā, Otiere and Otaia, had a long history in tribal warfare before the exodus to Mahia. Ngāti Hineterangi and Te Hika O Te Rautangata were the principal inhabitants of the island pā until around 1760-1780. From around 1760 – 1820 Ngāti Hineterangi, Te Hika 0 Te Rautangata, Ngāi Te Ruruku, Ngāti Tu, Ngāti Hinepare and Ngāti Mahu all occupied the pā.

Kouturoa, Tiheruheru and Ohuarau were the principal settlements of Ngāti Hinepare and Ngāti Mahu on the shores of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū between 1810 and 1824. Tiheruheru was known as a canoe landing with the kāinga located directly on the hill above. Ohuarau and Kouturoa were fortified pā at the southern entrance to Kouturoa Bay, just east of Tiheruheru, respectively. Kouturoa is within the boundaries of the Whareranga Native Reserve and the fortified earthworks are still visible.

The pā at Te Pakake was a communal gathering place in times of trouble. Ngāti Hinepare, Ngāti Mahu, Ngāti Parau, Ngāti Hawea and Ngāti Kurumokihi are all recorded as having occupied the pā when under threat of invasion.

Pukemokimoki was a fortified pā, with a canoe landing place near, located at south-western end of Mataruahou (Napier Hill).

Figure 1: Ahuriri harbour and roadstead in the 1850s. Shows a pā and small Pākehā settlement.

6. Conflict

The island pā - Te Iho o Te Rei, Otaia and Otiere were the location of a number of significant battles including the great battle called Otoparuparu at Otaia River, the battle of Te Kaipo (after which twenty posts were set with the heads of the people slaughtered), and the battle at Te Iho 0 Te Rei, where the musket or pu was first experienced in Hawkes Bay. Because of the numbers killed in the fight on Te Iho o te Rei, one hapū still carries the name Ngāti Matepu, or 'death by the gun'.

These pā were abandoned when the people of Heretaunga went into exile at Mahia peninsula, after the Waikato and Hauraki tribes attacked Te Pakake in 1824. The battle of Te Pakake caused large scale devastation to the local people.

The Waikato and Hauraki tribes, together with others came to Ahuriri with one thousand warriors, and besieged the pā of Te Pakake in revenge for the death of Tukorehu's son, Te Arawai, killed at Roto A Tara.

So disastrous was the defeat, that the most important Hawke's Bay chiefs – including Takamoana, Tareahi, Paora Kaiwhata (who was then only a child), Te Hapuku, Tiakitai, and Kurupo Te Moananui – were all captured in battle. All but Chief Tiakitai fled the area 18 months later when they were released.

The people of Heretaunga remained in exile at Nukutaurua until after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. No pā and kāinga in use prior to the exodus were re-occupied upon their return because they had blood spilt on them and they were now urupā and tapu.

7. Rohe boundary

A Ngāti Pāhauwera pā and kāinga are located at the northern end of Te Whanganui-a-Orotū and graves of Ngāti Pāhauwera ancestors are located on islands previously in Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. The area is significant as a boundary of their tīpuna Te Kahu o Te Rangi.

8. Archaeology

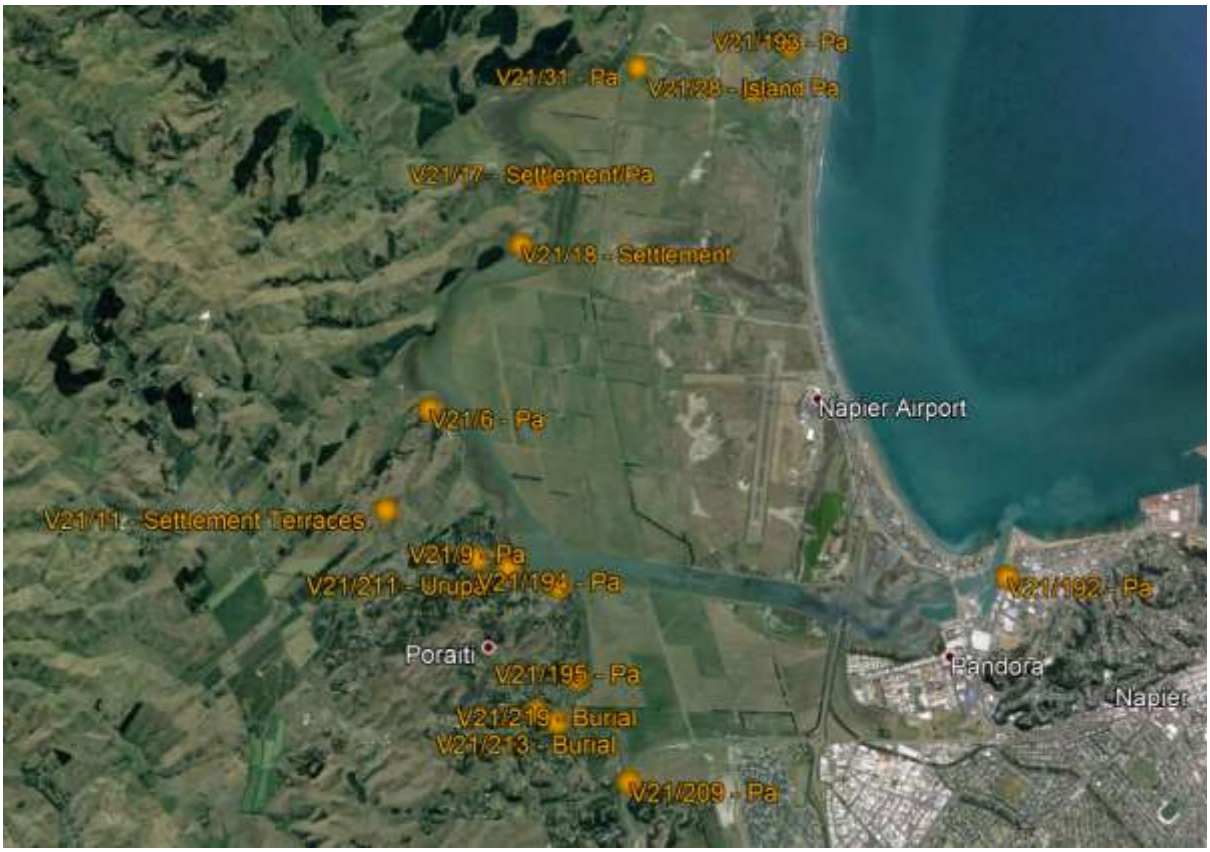

Figure 2: Archaeological Sites around Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. Please note, many middens, pits, and terraces are not shown for easier viewing.

9. Statutory Acknowledgement Area of Interest

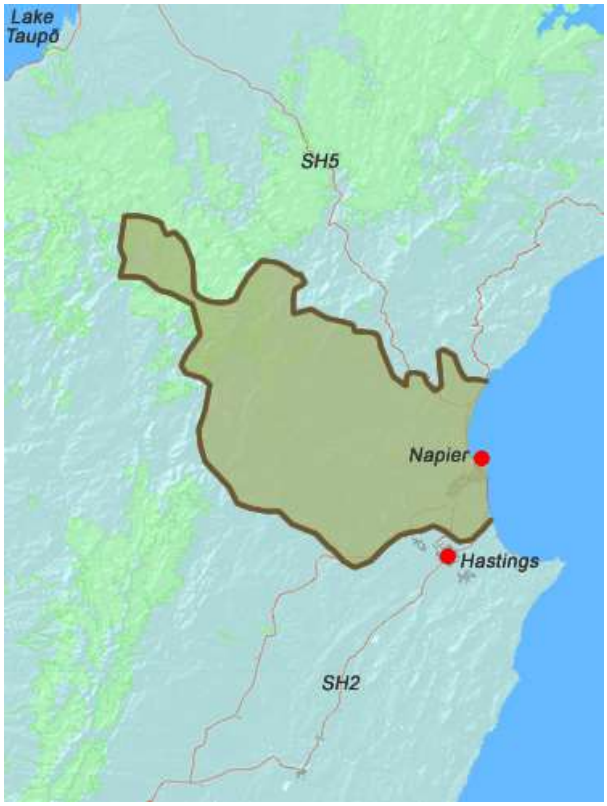

Figure 3: Ahuriri Hapū Area of Interest

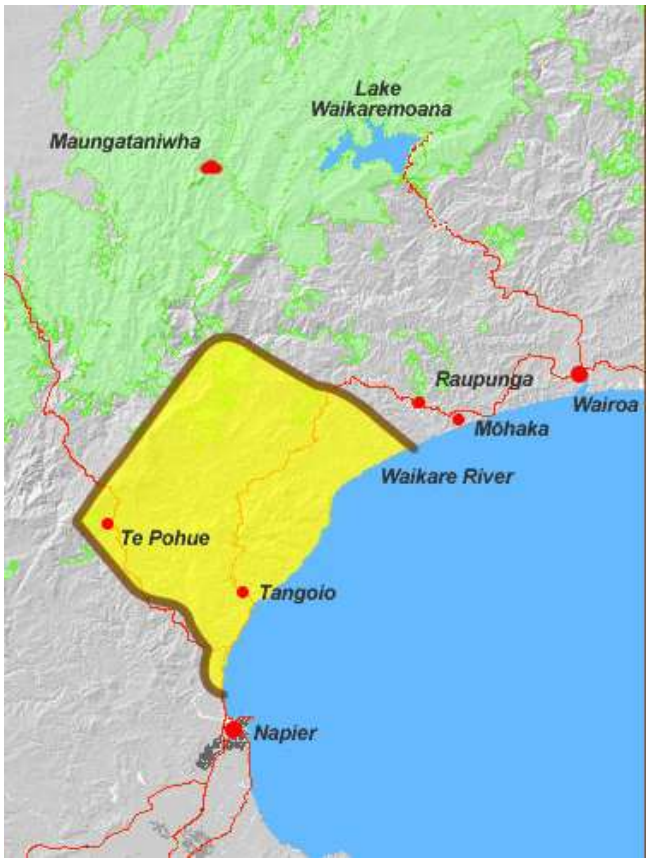

Figure 4: Maungaharuru-Tangitū Area of Interest

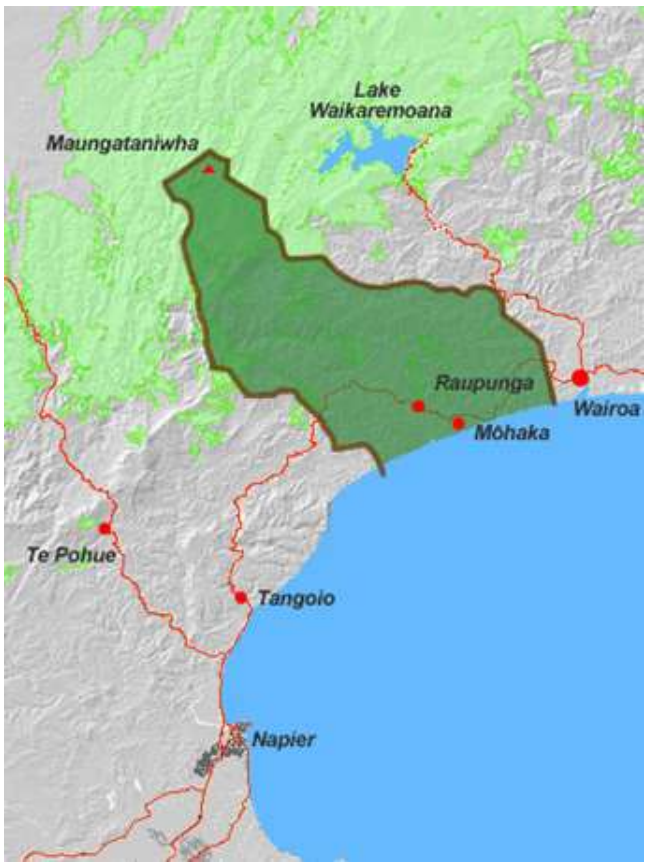

Figure 5: Ngāti Pāhauwera Area of Interest

10. Resource Management Plans

The following tables list any relevant resource management plans developed by iwi/hapū, the regional council or territorial authorities. The tables include any specific provisions that apply to Te Whanganui-a-Orotū. They do not include all of the general policies or rules that may apply. Water quality and water quantity provisions have been included as it is recognised that these aspects can significantly impact on cultural values.

Regional Coastal Environment Plan
Stock Management Areas – Upper Ahuriri Estuary Estuary is within Significant Conservation Area 1 (SCA12)

Attachment 2:

Photographs - Te Whanganui-a-Orotū