

The logo for Te Awa Koiora is a rectangular box with a vertical gradient from light grey at the top to dark grey at the bottom. The text 'Te Awa Koiora' is centered in the lower half of the box in a white, italicized serif font.

Te Awa Koiora

SL 1 - Stage 1 Cultural Values and Effects Assessment

Prepared For:
Southern Links 1 Consortium

Prepared By:
Pouwhenua Consultancy Limited on
Behalf of the SL 1 Tangata Whenua
Working Group

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Southern Links 1 (SL1) is a strategically identified growth area located on the south-western edge of Kirikiriroa Hamilton, extending towards the Waikato–Waipaa territorial boundary. The wider Southern Links1 programme has been identified to accommodate future residential, industrial, transport and supporting infrastructure required to meet Hamilton City's long-term growth requirements. As the first substantive stage of the programme, the Stage 1 proposal establishes the framework for future development across the wider Southern Links 1 area.

The Southern Links 1 area is also recognised as a culturally significant landscape. The relationship between tangata whenua and this landscape is reflected through its whenua, waterways, natural systems and historical associations, which continue to inform the exercise of mana whakahaere and the consideration of future land use and environmental management. These relationships provide an important context for understanding the cultural values associated with the proposal.

This Cultural Values Assessment has been prepared to support the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. It focuses on the Mexted Residential and Industrial North developments and considers the proposal within the wider Southern Links 1 landscape. The assessment identifies cultural values associated with the project area, considers the proposal's potential implications, and provides recommendations to support informed decision-making. Although prepared for Stage 1, it also establishes a consistent cultural framework to guide future stages of the Southern Links programme.

1.2 Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group

The Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG) was established to coordinate the collective involvement of the participating hapuu throughout the planning and development of the Southern Links 1 programme. The Working Group comprises representatives of Ngaati Wairere, Ngaati Maahanga, Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Hauaa, Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura and Ngaati Apakura, with the support of Waikato-Tainui.

The hapuu maintain longstanding ancestral, cultural and environmental relationships with the Southern Links 1 area, its waterways, landscapes and natural resources. These relationships are recognised through the Waikato-Tainui Treaty settlement framework, including the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995 and the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010. The hapuu continue to inform the exercise of mana whakahaere, kaitiakitanga and the protection, restoration and sustainable management of the natural environment.

The SL1 TWWG provides strategic cultural oversight throughout the planning and assessment of the Southern Links programme. Working alongside the applicants and technical specialists, the Working Group delivers cultural direction, technical review and guidance to ensure cultural values, maatauranga Maaori and the aspirations of the mana whenua hapuu are appropriately considered throughout project planning, design development and technical assessment.

Since its establishment, the SL1 TWWG has maintained ongoing involvement across successive stages of the Southern Links 1 programme, providing continuity in cultural oversight and a consistent approach to the assessment of cultural values across the wider Southern Links 1 area.

While this is a collective Cultural Values Assessment for the Southern Links 1 Fast Track Stage 1, each hapuu maintains its own cultural narratives, histories and relationship with the landscape.

1.3 Purpose of the Cultural Values Assessment

The purpose of this Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) is to articulate and assess the cultural values, interests and aspirations represented by the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG) in relation to the Southern Links 1 (SL1) Stage 1 substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, comprising the Mexted Residential and Industrial North developments.

Prepared from the cultural authority of the SL1 TWWG, this assessment provides the cultural evidence base through which the proposal is evaluated. It documents the values, relationships and responsibilities that define the cultural landscape, assesses the potential effects of the proposal on those values, and identifies measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse cultural effects while recognising opportunities to protect, restore and enhance cultural outcomes.

The assessment is founded upon maatauranga Maaori as the knowledge system through which the SL1 TWWG understands and exercises its enduring relationships with the whenua, wai and wider taiao. Informed by whakapapa, tikanga and the responsibilities of kaitiakitanga, it recognises that cultural values extend beyond individual sites or features to encompass the interconnected environmental, spiritual, historical and customary relationships that sustain the mauri of place. This assessment is further informed by the collective knowledge of the SL1 TWWG and the statutory, policy and planning framework applicable to the project area, including Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato, Waikato-Tainui settlement legislation, the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan and relevant hapuu environmental management documents.

This CVA forms an integral component of the broader assessment of the proposal. Read alongside the supporting technical assessments and statutory planning documentation, it ensures the values, knowledge systems and cultural responsibilities of the SL1 TWWG hapuu are meaningfully integrated into project planning, decision-making, implementation and the long-term stewardship of the project area.

1.4 Scope of Assessment

This assessment has been prepared having regard to the information available at the time of writing, including project plans, technical reports, site visits, workshops, engagement undertaken between the applicants and the SL1 TWWG, and other supporting documentation relevant to the proposal. The report also draws upon maatauranga Maaori, the collective knowledge and experience of the hapuu, and the cultural, environmental and intergenerational outcomes identified through the SL1 TWWG engagement process.

The scope of this report includes consideration of:

- Mana whenua values, interests and associations relevant to the project;
- The relationship between tangata whenua and the natural environment, including whenua, wai and indigenous biodiversity;
- Potential implications arising from the proposal;
- Opportunities for avoidance, mitigation, remediation, restoration and environmental enhancement;
- Cultural recognition and implementation, and monitoring opportunities; and
- Recommendations relevant to project design, management measures and consent conditions where appropriate.

This report has been prepared at both strategic and project-specific levels and should be read alongside the supporting technical assessments for the proposal. Its findings and recommendations reflect the information available at the time of preparation and may be refined as further information emerges through future planning, design, consenting and implementation processes.

2. Project Description

2.1 SL1 Overview

SL1 is part of a wider growth area on the south-western edge of Kirikiriroa Hamilton. The broader SL1 Growth Cell covers approximately 440 hectares and has been identified for future residential, industrial, transport and infrastructure development. It is associated with the proposed Hamilton Southern Links Transport Corridor and forms part of the city's long-term urban growth strategy for its southern extent.

The wider SL1 framework provides for a staged approach to development incorporating residential neighbourhoods, industrial land, transport infrastructure, stormwater management systems, wetlands, ecological corridors, open space networks and associated servicing infrastructure. The area occupies a strategic position between existing urban development and future growth areas and is intended to contribute to future housing, employment and infrastructure needs within Hamilton.

For the purposes of this assessment, consideration has been given to the wider SL1 context, recognising that the current Fast Track application forms part of a broader staged development programme occurring across the Southern Links area.

2.2 Stage 1 Development

The current substantive application relates to Stage 1 of the wider SL1 Growth Cell and comprises two development areas known as Mexted Residential and Industrial North. Together, these development areas comprise approximately 106–110 hectares of land and represent the first substantive stage of development within the wider SL1 programme.

In addition to the proposed residential and industrial development, Stage 1 is supported by associated infrastructure and servicing approvals required to facilitate the wider Southern Links Growth Cell. This includes a separately authorised municipal water take from Te Awa o Waikato, enabling the provision

of potable water to the wider SL1 Growth Cell through Hamilton City Council's existing water supply network. The associated water take formed part of an earlier engagement process with the Southern Links Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG), resulting in the development of a project-specific Memorandum of Understanding that established a framework for ongoing engagement, cultural input and freshwater management throughout the staged development programme. The Stage 1 proposal forms the first substantive stage of this wider development programme.

2.2.1 Mexted Residential

The Mexted Residential component comprises approximately 46 hectares of land currently utilised predominantly for rural farming activities. The proposal provides for the development of a residential community comprising approximately 945 residential units, together with supporting neighbourhood amenities, open space areas, stormwater infrastructure, wetlands, ecological corridors and associated servicing infrastructure.

The residential area incorporates a range of housing typologies and densities, neighbourhood reserves, pedestrian and cycle connections, local road networks and a neighbourhood commercial node intended to provide small-scale retail and service activities for future residents. The proposal also includes ecological restoration initiatives, stormwater treatment and attenuation devices, riparian planting and protection of upper tributaries associated with the Mangakootukutuku catchment.

2.2.2 Industrial North

The Industrial North component comprises approximately 60 hectares of land currently utilised for a mixture of rural and associated activities. The proposal provides for the establishment of industrial land, associated infrastructure, transport connections and servicing networks intended to support future employment and industrial growth within the southern Hamilton area.

The proposal includes bulk earthworks, ground improvement works, stormwater treatment and attenuation infrastructure, transport upgrades, utility servicing and associated development infrastructure. Stormwater management measures include wetlands, treatment devices and detention systems intended to manage runoff generated by future industrial activities.

Key Project Components

The Stage 1 proposal includes:

- Residential development and associated neighbourhood amenities;
- Industrial development land and supporting infrastructure;
- Wetlands, stormwater treatment and attenuation systems;
- Ecological corridors, riparian planting and restoration initiatives;
- Roading, walking and cycling connections;
- Bulk earthworks and ground improvement works;
- Water, wastewater and stormwater servicing infrastructure; and
- Open space and neighbourhood reserve areas.

3. Cultural Assessment Framework

3.1 Integrated Cultural Assessment Methodology

This Cultural Values Assessment has been prepared using an integrated cultural assessment methodology developed by the Southern Links Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG). The methodology combines maatauranga Maaori, the collective cultural knowledge of the SL1 TWWG and multidisciplinary technical assessments to evaluate the cultural implications of the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

Rather than reviewing technical assessments independently, the methodology reconciles them collectively through a cultural lens, recognising the inseparable relationships between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata. This approach enables the proposal to be assessed as a single cultural landscape while identifying opportunities to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects and strengthen positive cultural and environmental outcomes.

The assessment methodology has included:

- Review of the substantive application, statutory planning framework and supporting technical assessments.
- Site investigations and field observations within the project area.
- Participation in project workshops, engagement meetings and technical discussions.
- Application of maatauranga Maaori and the collective cultural knowledge of the SL1 TWWG.
- Cultural reconciliation of multidisciplinary technical assessments.
- Development of cultural outcomes, recommendations, mitigation measures and consent condition guidance.

3.2 Maimai Aroha o Kiingi Taawhiao

The Te Awa Koiora Framework is founded upon the enduring philosophy expressed through the Maimai Aroha o Kiingi Taawhiao, the lament recited by Kiingi Taawhiao from the summit of Pirongia following the invasion of Waikato and the subsequent confiscation of Waikato lands under the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863. As Kiingi Taawhiao looked across the confiscated lands of the Waikato Valley, he reflected upon the awa, the maunga, the maara kai and the ancestral landscapes from which Waikato had been forcibly alienated through raupatu.

Despite the loss of land and displacement of the people, the Maimai Aroha reaffirmed the enduring relationship between Waikato, the whenua, the awa and future generations. Today, it continues to provide the philosophical foundation of the *Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao – Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan* and underpins the cultural values and responsibilities reflected throughout this Cultural Values Assessment.

3.3 Te Awa Koiora Framework

The 'Te Awa Koiora Framework' has been developed by the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG) as the cultural framework for assessing the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal. It takes its name from the words of the Maimai Aroha:

Tooku Awa Koiora me oona pikonga he kura tangihia o te maataamuri

The river of life, each curve more beautiful than the last.

The framework draw on Te Awa o Waikato as its guiding metaphor, recognising that the relationships between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata are inseparable. Through this lens, the proposal is considered as a single cultural landscape, enabling technical assessments to be reconciled with mana whenua values and informing the cultural outcomes and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment.

3.4 He Piko, He Taniwha – Framework Structure

The structure of the Te Awa Koiora Framework is informed by the enduring Waikato whakatauakii He Piko, He Taniwha, which recognises that every bend (*piko*) of Te Awa o Waikato was traditionally a place of leadership, guardianship and responsibility. Historically, each piko represented an ancestral landscape where people lived, cultivated maara kai, gathered resources and maintained enduring relationships with the whenua and the awa. The taniwha symbolises the enduring presence, mana and kaitiakitanga exercised over these places.

Drawing upon this philosophy, the Te Awa Koiora Framework is organised around four interconnected piko and one enabling pou. Each piko represents a relationship that collectively defines the Southern Links 1 cultural landscape, while Pou Mana Whakahaere provides the governance and implementation mechanism through which those relationships are upheld throughout the life of the proposal.

Table 3.1 – The Four Piko and Pou Mana Whakahaere

Piko	Enduring Relationship	Assessment Focus
Piko Wai	Relationship with Wai	Recognition, protection, restoration and enhancement of freshwater systems and their mauri.
Piko Whenua	Relationship with Whenua	Recognition and protection of the ancestral landscape, cultural heritage and the relationship of mana whenua with the whenua.
Piko Taiao	Relationship with Taiao	Restoration and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity, ecological systems and the wider natural environment.
Piko Tangata	Relationship with Tangata	Recognition of cultural identity, wellbeing, maatauranga and intergenerational relationships with place.
Pou Mana Whakahaere	Relationship through Mana Whakahaere	Recognition of mana whenua responsibilities in governance, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and the exercise of kaitiakitanga.

3.5 Mauri – The Unifying Principle

Mauri is the unifying principle of the Te Awa Koiora Framework. It is the life force that exists within all living things and binds together the relationships represented by the four piko. The health of wai cannot be separated from the health of the whenua, the taiao or the wellbeing of tangata. Together, these relationships express the collective mauri of the Southern Links1 landscape.

Accordingly, the framework seeks to understand how proposals influence the mauri expressed through each piko and identify opportunities to strengthen those relationships through planning, design, implementation and long-term stewardship.

Supporting the four piko is Pou Mana Whakahaere, recognising that enduring cultural outcomes are achieved through active kaitiakitanga, meaningful partnership and the ongoing exercise of mana whenua responsibilities.

Figure 3.1 – Te Awa Koiora Framework

Figure 3.1 illustrates the Te Awa Koiora Framework, showing how the four piko are unified through Mauri and supported by Pou Mana Whakahaere. The following sections apply this framework throughout the Cultural Values Assessment.

Te Awa Koiora Framework

WAIKATO TANIWHARAU, HE PIKO HE TANIWHA

*'Waikato of a Hundred Chiefs,
on every bend there is a chief'*

He Piko He Taniwha acknowledges the spiritual and cultural significance of the piko within the Waikato.

Each bend of the awa have been places of occupation, māra kai, gathering, teaching and leadership, where kaitiakitanga has been exercised for generations.

Te Awa Koiora Framework adopts the piko as a cultural organising principle. Just as each bend of the awa is connected to the next, the four relationships are interconnected through mauri and together sustain the wellbeing of the whole landscape for present and future generations.



Te Awa Koiora At a Glance

The framework is structured around four enduring relationships (piko) and one enabling pou.



Piko Wai

Recognise and provide for:

the relationship with wai and the protection, restoration and enhancement of freshwater systems and the mauri of the receiving environment for future generations.



Piko Whenua

Recognise and provide for:

the relationship with whenua, cultural heritage, landscapes and the enduring connection of mana whenua with place for future generations.



Piko Taiao

Recognise and provide for:

the relationship with taiao, restoring and protecting ecological integrity, biodiversity and the natural environment for future generations.



Piko Tangata

Recognise and provide for:

the relationship with tangata, cultural identity, wellbeing, mātauranga and intergenerational connections with place for future generations.

Pou Mana Whakahaere

Provides the governance and implementation framework that gives practical effect to the aspirations of the four piko through partnership, kaitiakitanga and long-term stewardship for present and future generations.

Mauri connects the four piko;
Pou Mana Whakahaere gives effect to them.

4. Cultural Context and Historical Landscape

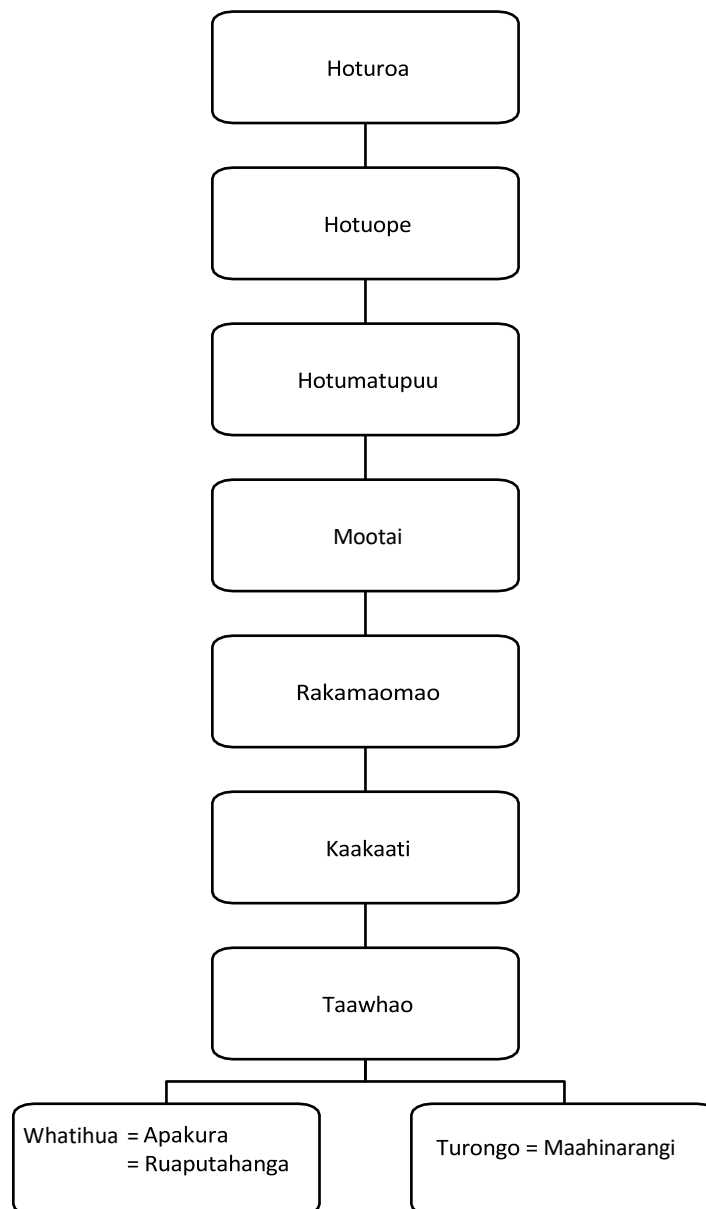
4.1 He Whenua Tuku Iho – The Ancestral Landscape

The Southern Links 1 Stage 1 project area forms part of the wider ancestral landscape occupied by Waikato tribes, particularly **Ngaati Maahanga, Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Wairere, Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura, Ngaati Hauaa and Ngaati Apakura**. For countless generations, this landscape has sustained the physical, cultural, spiritual and economic wellbeing of mana whenua through its waterways, fertile soils, wetlands, forests and interconnected systems of customary resource use. It is not simply a collection of waterways, wetlands or archaeological sites, but a living cultural landscape shaped by enduring relationships between *Te Awa o Waikato*, its tributaries, the whenua and the taiao.

The whakapapa of this landscape begins with the arrival of the **Tainui waka** under the rangatira **Hoturoa**. Following the migration from Kaawhia, his descendants established enduring relationships with the whenua and waterways throughout Waikato. Over successive generations, these relationships became embedded in the landscape through occupation, cultivation, trade, environmental stewardship and the exercise of mana whakahaere. A key tuupuna within this whakapapa is the rangatira **Taawhao**, whose descendants through **Whatihua** and **Tuurongo** established the principal ancestral lines from which the hapuu of the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group descend.

Through the tikanga of tuku whenua, Taawhao entrusted responsibility for parts of the ancestral landscape to his sons, establishing enduring relationships between whakapapa and whenua that continue to shape the cultural identity, responsibilities and customary interests of the hapuu today. Although each hapuu holds its own histories, traditions and understandings of tribal boundaries, these relationships have never existed in isolation. Instead, they reflect centuries of intermarriage, customary occupation, shared resource use and collective stewardship across this whenua.

Figure 4.1 – Whakapapa of Taawhao, Whatihua and Tuurongo



The whakapapa of **Whatihua** and **Apakura** further establishes the enduring relationship of Ngaati Apakura with the inland landscapes of Waikato, whose customary interests extend throughout Oohaupoo, Rukuhia, Rangiaowhia, Te Awamutu, Pirongia, Ngaaroto, Paa te Rangi and the surrounding wetland systems. These relationships are reflected in the well-known whakataukii:

"Whatihua ki tai, Apakura ki uta."

This whakataukii acknowledges the complementary relationships between the coastal domains associated with Whatihua and the inland area occupied by the descendants of Apakura. Together, these ancestral relationships illustrate that the whenua and wai associated with the Southern Links 1 project area formed part of a continuous cultural landscape characterised by interconnected wetlands,

waterways, paa, kaainga, maara kai and established ara tuku iho linking inland settlements with the wider Waikato and west coast.

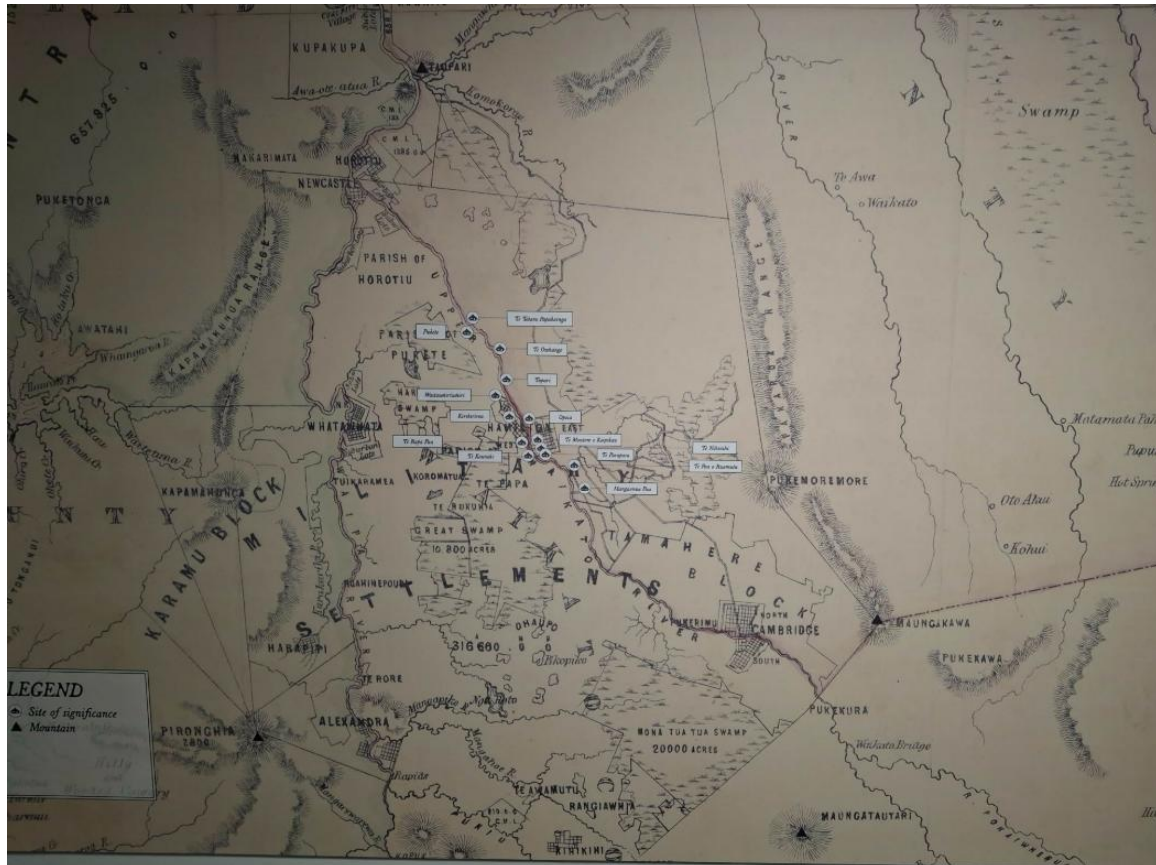
The whakapapa relationships between **Ngaati Maahanga**, **Ngaati Tamainupoo**, **Ngaati Wairere**, **Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura** and **Ngaati Hauaa** demonstrate the shared ancestry and enduring interconnectedness of the hapuu. The union of **Tamainupoo** and **Tuukotuku**, the daughter of the great rangatira **Maahanga**, the birth of **Wairere** and the naming of *Te Awa o Waikato*, and the subsequent marriage of the daughters of Wairere to the rangatira **Koroki**, from whom **Hauaa** descends, each represent pivotal events that strengthened relationships between neighboring hapuu while reinforcing collective responsibilities for the protection and stewardship of the ancestral landscape.

These whakapapa relationships extend well beyond the Southern Links Stage 1 project area. Collectively, the ancestral interests and responsibilities of the hapuu span from the western coastline of Kaawhia, across the fertile lands of Waikato, through Korongaa Maatua naa Puuhaanga (Koromaatua), Kirikiriroa and Cambridge, and eastward towards the Kaimai ranges. Throughout this landscape, rivers, wetlands, forests, cultivation areas, paa, kaainga and ara tuku iho sustained thriving communities while reinforcing whakapapa, whanaungatanga and the collective exercise of mana whakahaere and kaitiakitanga.

Historically, the Southern Links 1 area occupied an important position within this wider cultural network. The project lies within the **Waitaawhiriwhiri** and **Mangakootukutuku** catchments, two significant tributary systems that ultimately discharge into Te Awa o Waikato, the tupuna awa of the Waikato people. These catchments, together with numerous unnamed tributaries, puna, wetlands and peatlands, formed an organised hydrological and cultural system that sustained both ecological function and customary life. The health of these upper catchments has always been inseparable from the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato, reinforcing the principle that the protection of headwaters, tributaries and wetlands contributes directly to the protection and restoration of the wider awa.

The wider landscape supported an extensive network of paa, kaainga and centers of occupation strategically located to provide access to fertile soils, freshwater, wetlands and established travel routes.

Figure 4.2 – Traditional Settlement Areas Within and Surrounding the Southern Links Landscape



Together, these settlements show that the Southern Links 1 landscape formed part of a highly connected network of occupation rather than an isolated locality. Rivers, wetlands, puna and ara tuupuna linked neighboring communities, supporting the movement of people, customary resources and knowledge while maintaining whakapapa relationships and reinforcing collective responsibilities for stewardship of the wider landscape.

The western extent of the project area is also situated within the traditional whenua known as **Korongaa Maatua naa Puuhaanga (Koromaatua)**, an area of enduring significance to **Ngaati Maahanga**. Koromaatua comprised an important center of occupation characterised by numerous kaainga, cultivation areas, waahi tapu, urupaa and established ara tuku iho, reflecting generations of customary occupation, hereditary authority and spiritual leadership. Extending across Temple View, Glenview, Peacocke, Mangakootukutuku, Waitaawhiriwhiri, Whatawhata and Te Awa o Waikato, Koromaatua forms part of the wider cultural landscape in which waterways, wetlands, ridgelines and ancestral places collectively express the enduring relationships maintained by mana whenua with the whenua and wai.

The Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments sustained extensive customary resource use throughout successive generations. Wetlands supported abundant tuna, manu, harakeke, raupoo and medicinal plants, while streams and tributaries provided freshwater fisheries and reliable water supplies. Indigenous forests supplied timber, birds, berries, weaving materials and rongoaa. The fertile terraces adjacent to these waterways became centers of intensive maara kai, with seasonal harvesting

and environmental management guided by tikanga and maatauranga Maaori. Collectively, these resources also supported trade and the exchange of customary goods between neighboring settlements throughout the wider landscape.

The productivity of this landscape was sustained through a sophisticated understanding of the natural environment developed over many generations. The traditions of **Whakaotirangi**, the wife of **Hoturoa**, recognise her role in bringing from Hawaiki knowledge of kumara cultivation, seasonal planting practices and environmental stewardship throughout Waikato. Her knowledge of soils, seasonal cycles and cultivation techniques laid the foundation for extensive maara kai, enabling successive generations to cultivate the fertile alluvial terraces that characterise much of the Southern Links 1 project area.

Tangata whenua further enhanced these naturally productive soils through the deliberate incorporation of kirikiri, charcoal and sand to improve drainage, soil warmth and cultivation. The resulting Maaori modified soils, together with borrow pits, storage pits and associated archaeological features, remain evidence of sophisticated environmental knowledge and engineering developed over many centuries. Archaeological investigations undertaken throughout Kirikiriroa continue to identify these features, confirming the extensive occupation and horticultural use of the wider landscape.

The above is reflected in the tongi of **Kiingi Taawhiao**:

"Te koopuu maania o Kirikiriroa me oona maara kai – he whenua momona."

This acknowledgement of Kirikiriroa as a land of abundance reflects more than the productivity of its soils. It recognises the reciprocal relationship between mana, whenua and wai, where the health of the environment sustained the wellbeing of the people, and where tikanga and maatauranga Maaori guided the sustainable use of natural resources for present and future generations.

Although the landscape has undergone significant transformation following the invasion of Waikato in 1863, the subsequent raupatu, wetland drainage, agricultural development and urban expansion, its cultural significance has not diminished. The whakapapa relationships between the SL1 hapuu and the ancestral lands and resources remain intact and continue to guide the exercise of mana whakahaere, kaitiakitanga and environmental stewardship today.

Accordingly, the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal must be understood not as a development within an isolated site, but within a living collective component where the relationships between **Te Awa o Waikato**, the **Waitaawhiriwhiri** and **Mangakootukutuku** catchments, the whenua, the taiao and the mana whenua remain inseparable. These enduring relationships provide the cultural foundation for this Cultural Values Assessment and establish the lens through which the technical assessments are reconciled using the Te Awa Koiora Framework.

Given the collective nature of this Cultural Values Assessment and the cultural sensitivity of some hapuu information, this section establishes a shared cultural framework rather than attempting to comprehensively document all hapuu narratives and cultural associations with the whenua. This collective framework is expected to be supplemented by subsequent Cultural Advice Documents prepared by mana whenua, which may provide more detailed hapuu-specific narratives, whakapapa, waahi tuupuna, cultural landscape interpretation, design guidance and other culturally sensitive

information to inform detailed design, management plans and future stages of the Southern Links 1 development.

Additional broader historical narratives and hapuu-specific koorero are also contained within the Appendices to this Cultural Values Assessment. These appendices provide further insight into the histories, traditions and cultural associations of the respective hapuu, and should be read alongside this assessment to support a broader understanding of the ancestral landscape and the collective cultural values that underpin the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

5. Legislative, Treaty Settlement and Cultural Planning Framework

The Southern Links Stage 1 proposal is located within a landscape of cultural significance to the hapuu represented by the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group (SL1 TWWG). The cultural authority reflected in this Cultural Values Assessment derives from the hapuu and their marae, whose relationships with the whenua, waterways and taiao pre-date both the resource management system and the Treaty settlement framework.

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu are recognised as beneficiary hapuu and marae under the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995. Although Waikato-Tainui was established as the collective governance entity to administer and implement the Treaty settlement framework on behalf of its beneficiary marae and hapuu, the cultural authority and mana whenua reflected in this Cultural Values Assessment remain with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. This assessment has therefore been prepared by, and on behalf of, those hapuu, while acknowledging the ongoing role of Waikato-Tainui in advancing the cultural, environmental and governance aspirations of the Raupatu settlements.

This chapter outlines the principal legislative, Treaty settlement and cultural planning instruments that inform this Cultural Values Assessment. Together, these instruments recognise the status of mana whenua, establish the statutory and policy framework for managing Te Awa o Waikato and its catchments, and provide the legislative context for assessing the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal alongside the Te Awa Koiora Framework and supporting technical assessments.

Table 5.1 – Legislative and Planning Framework

The following statutory instruments, Treaty settlements and planning documents have informed the preparation of this Cultural Values Assessment.

Instrument	Purpose	Relevance to this CVA
Fast-track Approvals Act 2024	Legislative framework for the assessment and determination of the proposal, including consideration of Treaty settlements and Te Ture Whaimana.	Establishes the statutory decision-making framework for this application.
Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995	Settlement of historical raupatu claims and establishment of the statutory settlement framework recognising beneficiary marae and hapuu.	Establishes the settlement framework and governance arrangements relevant to mana whenua hapuu.

Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010	Settlement recognising the relationship of Waikato with Te Awa o Waikato and establishing co-governance and river restoration arrangements.	Gives statutory recognition to Te Ture Whaimana and the restoration of the Waikato River.
Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (Vision and Strategy)	Primary direction for the protection and restoration of the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River.	A principal assessment framework for freshwater, receiving environment and cultural outcomes.
National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management	National direction for freshwater management, including Te Mana o Te Wai.	Relevant to freshwater management and receiving environment assessment.
Waikato Regional Policy Statement and Waikato Regional Plan	Regional statutory planning framework.	Relevant regional policy context.
Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao – Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan	Waikato-Tainui environmental planning document expressing cultural values, objectives and implementation expectations.	Principal iwi planning document informing cultural assessment and technical reconciliation.
Southern Links Tangata Whenua Working Group – Te Awa Koiora Framework	Collective cultural assessment framework developed for SL1 TWWG hapuu.	Provides the integrated cultural assessment methodology applied throughout this report.

5.1 Treaty Settlement Framework

The contemporary relationship between mana whenua and the Southern Links 1 footprint is shaped by whakapapa, tikanga and Treaty settlements. These settlements acknowledge the historical injustices experienced by Waikato and provide statutory mechanisms to recognise and give effect to the enduring relationship of mana whenua with their ancestral lands, waterways and taonga.

The Treaty settlement process acknowledges the historical grievances of Waikato iwi and hapuu and establishes a statutory framework for recognising historical settlements, cultural redress, governance arrangements, environmental management responsibilities and ongoing settlement mechanisms. Collectively, these settlements enable the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to continue exercising mana whakahaere, participate in environmental decision-making, and contribute to the protection, restoration and enhancement of ancestral lands and waterways.

For the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal, the principal Treaty settlement instruments comprise:

- Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995;
- Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010;

Together, these settlement instruments provide the statutory context for this Cultural Values Assessment. They recognise the enduring relationship of mana whenua with the project area, establish governance and implementation mechanisms for giving effect to settlement outcomes, and provide the legislative foundation for redress mechanisms relevant to the Southern Links 1 proposal, including

Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato, co-governance and co-management arrangements, statutory acknowledgements and other cultural mechanisms.

The following sections outline each of these settlement instruments and their relevance to the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

5.2 Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995

The *Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995* gives legislative effect to the settlement of historical raupatu claims arising from the invasion of Waikato and the confiscation of approximately 1.2 million acres of Waikato land by the Crown under the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863. The Act acknowledges the profound injustice of raupatu and its enduring cultural, social, environmental and economic consequences for Waikato hapuu and marae. It also provides financial and cultural redress and establishes the statutory framework through which Waikato's relationship with its ancestral lands, resources and taonga continues to be recognised and progressively restored.

The Act recognises the beneficiary hapuu and marae identified in section 7 and establishes the governance framework for implementing Treaty settlement responsibilities and mechanisms on their behalf. While Waikato-Tainui administers the collective settlement framework, cultural authority and mana whenua responsibilities remain with the beneficiary hapuu and marae, who continue to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere within their respective rohe.

The settlement also establishes practical mechanisms that continue to strengthen the relationship between tangata and whenua. These include opportunities for beneficiary hapuu and marae to progressively reconnect with former Crown lands through settlement mechanisms such as the Right of First Refusal (RFR), reflecting the enduring Waikato principle:

I riro whenua atu, me hoki whenua mai
As land was taken, so too should land be returned.

Although the historical effects of raupatu cannot be undone, the settlement framework provides an important statutory foundation through which the SL1 TWWG hapuu continue to engage in environmental planning, resource management, governance, and decision-making. It is through these contemporary roles that SL1 mana whenua continues to give practical effect to the aspirations of the settlement by protecting, restoring, and enhancing the wellbeing of the whenua, wai and taiao for present and future generations.

5.2.1 Beneficiary Hapuu and Mana Whakahaere

Section 7 of the *Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995* identifies the beneficiary marae and hapuu for whom the settlement was negotiated. For the purposes of the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal, the Waikato Raupatu claimant hapuu represented through the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group comprise:

- Ngaati Maahanga
- Ngaati Tamainupoo
- Ngaati Wairere

- Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura
- Ngaati Hauaa
- Ngaati Apakura

These hapuu maintain enduring customary relationships, responsibilities and obligations to their ancestral lands, waterways and taonga through the statutory settlement framework established under the Act. The Act also provides for Waikato-Tainui to administer and implement the settlement on behalf of beneficiary marae and hapuu, establishing the collective governance framework through which many aspects of the settlement are carried out.

Notwithstanding these governance arrangements, the exercise of mana whakahaere continues to reside with the beneficiary hapuu and marae. Accordingly, this Cultural Values Assessment has been prepared from the perspective of the hapuu exercising mana whakahaere and customary responsibilities as kaitiaki, contributing to the planning, protection, restoration and long-term stewardship of the Southern Links 1 landscape.

5.3 Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010

5.3.1 Waikato River Settlement

The *Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010* (Waikato River Act) builds upon the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995 by giving legislative effect to the settlement of the outstanding Waikato River claims. The Wai 30 claims relating to the Waikato River were excluded from the 1995 Raupatu settlement to enable separate negotiations with the Crown, recognising the unique cultural, spiritual and environmental significance of Te Awa o Waikato to Waikato. Negotiations recommenced in 1999 culminating in the Waikato River Deed of Settlement in 2009 and the enactment of the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010.

5.3.1.1 Key Outcomes of the Waikato River Settlement

The *Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010* establishes a comprehensive statutory framework for the restoration, protection and future management of Te Awa o Waikato. Central to the settlement is the recognition that the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River is inseparable from the health and wellbeing of Waikato and the communities that depend upon it. Accordingly, the settlement moves beyond historical redress by establishing enduring governance, management and funding arrangements that support the restoration and protection of the Waikato River for present and future generations.

To give effect to these objectives, the settlement establishes several key statutory mechanisms, including:

1. Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato as the primary direction-setting document for the Waikato River and activities within its catchment;
2. The establishment of the Waikato River Authority as the co-governance entity responsible for promoting and supporting the restoration and protection of the Waikato River, including the administration of the Waikato River Clean-up Fund;

- | |
|--|
| 3. Co-management arrangements between iwi and local authorities, including the development of Joint Management Agreements (JMAs) to facilitate shared decision-making and integrated management of natural and physical resources; |
| 4. Statutory recognition of mana whakahaere, acknowledging the relationship of Waikato with Te Awa o Waikato and providing for the active participation of mana whenua in environmental governance and resource management; and |
| 5. A collaborative framework that promotes partnership between the Crown, local authorities and mana whenua in achieving the long-term vision for the Waikato River. |
| 6. The Development of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao), providing the principal iwi environmental planning document for implementing the aspirations of the Waikato Raupatu and Waikato River settlements. |

Collectively, these mechanisms provide the statutory foundation for implementing the aspirations of the Waikato River Settlement. They also establish the legislative context within which the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal is to be considered, recognising that activities occurring within the Waikato River catchment should contribute towards the restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato.

5.3.2 Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato

The most significant outcome of the *Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010* was the establishment of Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River). Developed jointly by Waikato and the Crown, Te Ture Whaimana provides the overarching vision and strategic direction for the restoration, protection and enhancement of the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato and its catchment for present and future generations.

Te Ture Whaimana is recognised by Parliament as the primary direction-setting document for the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers and all activities occurring within their catchments that may affect those rivers. Its statutory status extends beyond that of a conventional planning document. It prevails over any inconsistent provisions contained within National Policy Statements, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and National Planning Standards, is deemed to form part of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement, and all regional and district plans affecting the Waikato River catchment are required to give effect to its provisions.

Te Ture Whaimana occupies a unique position within the statutory planning hierarchy for the Waikato River catchment. Rather than sitting alongside other national, regional and local planning instruments, it provides the primary strategic direction from which those instruments must be interpreted and implemented. This statutory hierarchy is reinforced through section 8 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, recognising the continued primacy of Te Ture Whaimana within contemporary resource management and fast-track decision-making processes. Accordingly, Te Ture Whaimana has been applied as one of the principal statutory assessment frameworks throughout this Cultural Values Assessment, providing the benchmark against which the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal has been reconciled alongside the Te Awa Koiora Framework and the supporting technical assessments.

5.3.3 Vision and Strategy

The overarching purpose of *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* is to restore and protect the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River for present and future generations. It recognises that the wellbeing of the river is inseparable from the wellbeing of the people, the whenua and the wider environment, and establishes an integrated catchment approach to managing the natural, physical, cultural and spiritual resources connected to Te Awa o Waikato.

The Vision and Strategy acknowledges the special relationship between the Waikato people and the Waikato River, and seeks to restore the mana and mauri of the river through collaborative governance, integrated management and active restoration. It promotes sustainable resource use while recognising that environmental, cultural, social and economic wellbeing are interdependent and must be considered collectively when making decisions affecting the river and its catchment.

The principal outcomes sought through Te Ture Whaimana include:

- Restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato;
- Protecting and enhancing the mauri of the Waikato River and its tributaries;
- Recognising and providing for the relationship of Waikato with the river and the exercise of mana whakahaere;
- Adopting an integrated catchment management approach that recognises the interconnected nature of whenua, wai, taiao and tangata; and
- Ensuring that decision-making contributes positively to the wellbeing of present and future generations.

These outcomes align closely with the *Te Awa Koiora Framework* developed for this Cultural Values Assessment. Both recognise the interconnected relationships between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata, with the restoration and enhancement of mauri forming the central objective. Accordingly, Te Ture Whaimana provides a key statutory benchmark against which the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal has been assessed throughout this report.

5.3.4 Relevance to the Southern Links Stage 1 Proposal

The Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal sits within the wider Waikato River catchment and includes activities that may affect the health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato* through water abstraction and the management of connected receiving environments. Water for the development will be sourced from *Te Awa o Waikato*, while stormwater will be managed within the Mangakootukutuku and Waitaawhiriwhiri catchments before ultimately discharging back to the Waikato River.

The proposal also affects headwater streams, tributaries, wetlands and riparian areas that contribute to the ecological and cultural health of these catchments. As part of the wider Waikato River system, these receiving environments reinforce the intrinsic connection between the health of *Te Awa o Waikato* and the condition of its tributaries, wetlands and surrounding whenua.

The proposal should be assessed within the broader Waikato River catchment, rather than only its immediate development footprint. This reflects that water abstraction, management and discharge,

together with the protection and enhancement of receiving environments, all contribute to the health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato* and the aspirations expressed through *Te Ture Whaimana*.

5.3.5 Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)

The *Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)* (Taiao Plan) is the principal environmental planning document of Waikato-Tainui, providing cultural policy direction and guidance for the management, protection and restoration of the natural environment throughout the Waikato rohe. Building upon the aspirations of the Waikato Lands and Waikato River settlements, the Taiao Plan gives practical expression to *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* by identifying the environmental outcomes, principles and expectations of Waikato-Tainui in relation to resource management and environmental decision-making.

The Taiao Plan has also been developed and reconciled with the *Maimai Aroha o Kingi Taawhiao*, ensuring that the enduring values, aspirations and environmental philosophy expressed by Kiingi Taawhiao continue to guide contemporary environmental management. In doing so, the Plan adopts an integrated approach that recognises the interconnected relationships between wai, whenua, taiao and taangata, promotes the exercise of mana whakahaere, protects and enhances mauri, and seeks to achieve positive environmental outcomes for present and future generations.

The Taiao Plan provides guidance across a broad range of environmental matters relevant to the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal, including freshwater management, wetlands, biodiversity, indigenous vegetation, cultural landscapes, infrastructure development, stormwater management, climate resilience, and the protection of sites and areas of cultural significance.

Accordingly, the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan provides an important cultural and policy framework for this Cultural Values Assessment. Together with *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* and the *Te Awa Koiora Framework*, it informs the assessment of the technical investigations and the development of cultural outcomes and recommendations for the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

5.3.6 – Southern Links 1 Stage 1 Integrated Cultural Assessment Methodology

This Cultural Values Assessment therefore adopts an integrated assessment methodology that reconciles the findings of the Southern Links Stage 1 technical investigations against three complementary cultural and statutory assessment frameworks. Collectively, these frameworks provide the integrated cultural assessment methodology applied throughout this Cultural Values Assessment.

The three assessment frameworks applied throughout this Cultural Values Assessment comprise:

- **Te Awa Koiora Framework** – Developed specifically for this Cultural Values Assessment to provide a culturally grounded framework that recognises the interconnected relationships between *Piko Wai*, *Piko Whenua*, *Piko Taiao* and *Piko Tangata*, with *Mauri* binding each component together and *Pou Mana Whakahaere* providing the governance foundation through which the aspirations of Kiingi Taawhiao are realised.
- **Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato** – Providing the primary statutory direction for the restoration, protection and enhancement of the health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato*

and its catchment, together with the exercise of mana whakahaere and the wellbeing of present and future generations.

- **Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)** – Providing the principal cultural policy framework of Waikato-Tainui, giving practical expression to the aspirations of the Treaty settlements, Te Ture Whaimana and the Maimai Aroha o Kiingi Taawhiao through contemporary environmental management.

The relationship between these assessment frameworks and the technical investigations undertaken for the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal is illustrated below.

6. Integrated Cultural Reconciliation Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to undertake an integrated cultural reconciliation of the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal, drawing upon the principal technical investigations prepared in support of the project and reconciling their findings through a cultural lens. Rather than duplicating or critiquing the technical assessments undertaken by the project specialists, this Cultural Values Assessment considers how the technical evidence informs the cultural values, aspirations and outcomes of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

6.1 Cultural Values and Aspirations

Drawing upon the whakapapa, historical associations and contemporary responsibilities outlined in section 4 of this report, the following cultural values collectively underpin the assessment of the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

For mana whenua, the Southern Links 1 landscape is valued because it:

- Forms part of an ancestral cultural landscape inherited through whakapapa;
- Contributes to the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato through the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments;
- Contains interconnected wetlands, waterways, forests and productive whenua that have sustained generations of occupation;
- Supports the exercise of mana whakahaere and kaitiakitanga by hapuu;
- Contains ancestral settlements, ara tuku iho, waahi tuupuna and archaeological landscapes;
- Provides opportunities to strengthen ecological restoration, freshwater health and cultural identity
- Supports the intergenerational wellbeing of mana whenua through environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes.

These values collectively inform the application of the *Te Awa Koiora Framework* throughout the technical reconciliation and provides the primary cultural framework for evaluating the proposal. Its four interconnected Piko — Piko Wai, Piko Whenua, Piko Taiao and Piko Tangata — establish the overarching assessment structure, recognising that environmental wellbeing and the wellbeing of people are intrinsically connected through mauri and supported by Pou Mana Whakahaere.

Figure 6.1 – Integrated Cultural Reconciliation

Figure 6.1 Integrated Cultural Reconciliation Methodology

This figure illustrates how technical evidence is culturally reconciled through the Te Awa Koiora Framework using Te Ture Whaimana and the Taiao Plan as the principal assessment criteria.

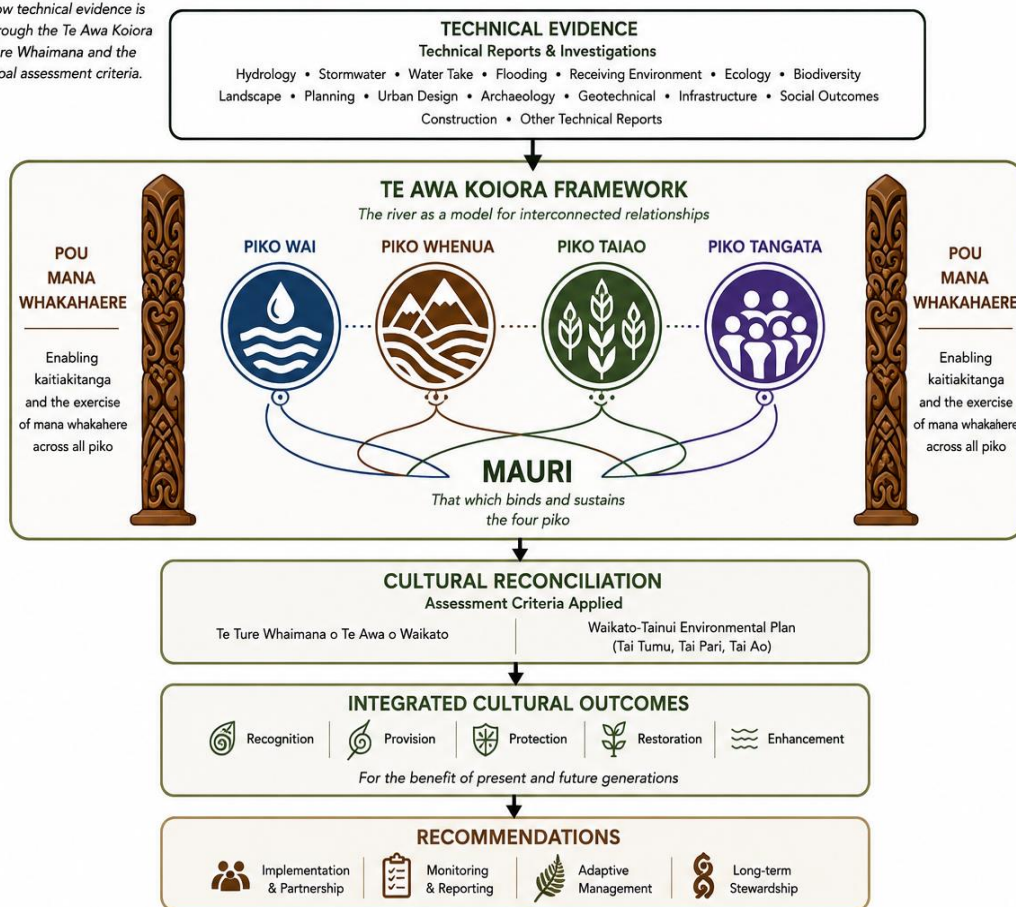


Figure 6.1 illustrates the integrated cultural reconciliation methodology adopted throughout this Cultural Values Assessment. The methodology is structured around the four interconnected piko of the Te Awa Koiora Framework, with each piko drawing upon the relevant technical evidence to inform the cultural assessment.

Within each piko, the relevant technical findings are reconciled through a cultural lens against the principles and outcomes of *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* and the *Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumū, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)*. Together, these documents provide the principal statutory and cultural policy criteria for assessing how the proposal contributes to the restoration and protection of *Te Awa o Waikato*, supports the exercise of mana whakahaere, and advances the cultural, environmental, social and intergenerational aspirations of the SL1 hapuu.

The assessment extends beyond the identification of potential cultural effects to also identify opportunities for positive cultural, environmental, social, economic and intergenerational outcomes arising from the proposal.

Table 6.1 identifies the principal technical evidence informing each piko of the Te Awa Koiora Framework and provides the primary assessment structure adopted throughout the following sections.

Table 6.1 Te Awa Koiora Technical Reconciliation Table

Te Awa Koiora Piko	Principal Technical Evidence	Primary Cultural Assessment Focus
Piko Wai	Water Take, Hydrology, Stormwater, Flooding, Receiving Environment, Wetlands, Water Quality	Te Awa o Waikato, catchment health, mauri of wai, water quality, hydrological connectivity, wetlands, aquatic ecosystems, receiving environments and long-term water resilience.
Piko Whenua	Planning, Landscape, Urban Design, Geotechnical, Archaeology, Earthworks, Infrastructure	Whenua, cultural landscapes, whenua use, waahi tapu and waahi taonga, archaeological values, urban form, cultural design, land stewardship and the exercise of mana whakahaere.
Piko Taiao	Ecology, Indigenous Vegetation, Biodiversity, Wetlands, Restoration Strategies, Riparian Planting	Ecological integrity, indigenous biodiversity, habitat protection, restoration opportunities, ecological resilience, native flora and fauna, and enhancement of the natural environment.
Piko Tangata	Planning, Urban Design, Infrastructure Planning, Community Outcomes, Project Delivery	Mana whakahaere, housing opportunities, procurement, employment, cultural monitoring, cultural design, naming, community wellbeing, partnerships, education, recreation and intergenerational outcomes for the SL1 hapuu.

Note: Individual technical investigations may inform more than one piko of the Te Awa Koiora Framework. Accordingly, the technical evidence has been considered holistically, with each piko representing the primary cultural lens through which the relevant findings have been reconciled.

Each Piko assessment applies a consistent reconciliation methodology to ensure technical investigations are considered through a cultural lens and assessed against the aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. This approach enables the technical evidence to be progressively reconciled with maatauranga Maaori, the statutory direction of *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato*, and the cultural outcomes sought through the *Te Awa Koiora Framework*. Each assessment is structured as follows:

1. **Technical Review** – Summarises the relevant technical investigations and identifies the principal findings, opportunities and potential effects associated with the proposal.
2. **Cultural Reconciliation** – Reconciles the technical findings with the cultural values, history, customary relationships and aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, identifying matters of cultural significance and opportunities to recognise, protect, restore and enhance cultural outcomes.
3. **Alignment with Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan** – Evaluates the extent to which the proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and the relevant objectives, policies and outcomes of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao).

4. **Piko Recommendations** – Presents culturally informed recommendations developed through the reconciliation process to guide detailed design, implementation, mitigation, monitoring, adaptive management and, where appropriate, future resource consent conditions.

6.2 PIKO WAI

Within Te Ao Maaori, all freshwater and coastal waters originate within the domain of Tangaroa, whose mauri flows through the interconnected network of puna, wetlands, koawa, awa and ultimately *Te Awa o Waikato*. Through whakapapa, mana whenua share this inherited mauri with the natural world, recognising that the health and wellbeing of wai are inseparable from the health and wellbeing of whenua, taiao and tangata. The relationship between Tangaroa and Papatuaanuku therefore reflects the life-supporting systems on which both the environment and mana whenua depend.

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments are more than drainage networks or receiving environments. They are living ancestral systems that have sustained mana whenua and tuupuna for generations. From the source puna, through wetlands, koawa and tributaries, to their confluence with *Te Awa o Waikato*, these catchments have supported settlement, mahinga kai, customary harvesting, travel, trade and the sustainable use of natural resources. They also sustain indigenous flora and fauna, taonga species, rongoa Maaori and the wider ecological systems that support cultural and environmental wellbeing.

Not all wai served the same purpose. While many waterways sustained resource use and daily life, puna were also waahi of deep cultural and spiritual significance, used for ceremonies such as tohi, the lifting of tapu, blessings and other tikanga associated with the life cycle of mana whenua. Tangaroa is recognised not only as the atua of wai, but also as the kaitiaki of taonga species and the freshwater environments that depend on healthy, functioning catchments. The health, abundance and resilience of these taonga species therefore reflect the health and mauri of the wai itself.

Despite the extensive modification of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments through raupatu, wetland drainage, channel modification, agricultural development and urban expansion, the cultural significance of these waterways has not diminished. Rather, these cumulative changes have progressively degraded the mauri of the catchments and interrupted the natural relationships between wai, whenua and tangata. The SL1 TWWG Hapuu continues to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere throughout these catchments, recognising an intergenerational responsibility to protect, restore and enhance their mauri for present and future generations.

Within *Te Awa Koiora*, Mauri o te Wai is inseparable from Mauri o te Whenua and Mauri o te Tangata. Healthy wai depends on healthy whenua, while wai in turn sustains taonga species, cultural practices and the wellbeing of mana whenua. This chapter therefore assesses how the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal recognises, protects, restores and enhances the mauri, natural function, quality, quantity, connectivity and journey of wai throughout the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments, while supporting the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

6.2.1 Water Management

6.2.1.1 Technical Review

The Water Management Plan outlines the proposed potable water supply strategy for the Southern Links Stage 1 development. Potable water will be supplied through Hamilton City Council's existing water supply network, with water abstracted from Te Awa o Waikato, treated through the existing municipal treatment system, and distributed throughout the proposed residential, industrial, commercial and community areas.

The proposal identifies the anticipated water demand for the development and incorporates a range of water conservation measures, including low-flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting opportunities, network leak detection and demand management initiatives intended to promote the efficient use of potable water throughout the life of the development. During periods of water shortage, the proposal relies on Hamilton City Council's existing drought management framework and water restriction measures.

Water abstraction volumes will be monitored through the existing water supply network, with ongoing recording and reporting of water use. The proposal also acknowledges opportunities to promote responsible water use and long-term water conservation as the development progresses.

From a cultural perspective, the abstraction of wai from Te Awa o Waikato extends beyond the provision of potable water. It raises broader considerations regarding the mauri of wai, the cumulative pressures placed on the awa through ongoing abstraction, the responsible use of this taonga resource, and the cultural responsibilities associated with its journey from abstraction through to its eventual return to the wider catchment. Accordingly, the proposal should not only demonstrate the efficient use of wai but also recognise that every abstraction from Te Awa o Waikato carries an ongoing responsibility to protect, restore and enhance the mauri of the wai and the interconnected Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments.

6.2.1.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Tangaroa and the Mauri of Wai

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, wai possesses its own mauri and whakapapa through the domain of Tangaroa. The abstraction of wai from Te Awa o Waikato is therefore more than the allocation of a physical resource; it is the temporary use of a taonga that sustains the health and wellbeing of the environment and all living things. The exercise of taking wai carries an ongoing cultural responsibility to ensure that its use respects the mauri of the awa and contributes to the long-term protection and restoration of the wider catchment.

The Journey of Wai

The cultural significance of wai extends beyond the point of abstraction. From a mana whenua perspective, the complete journey of wai should be recognised, from its abstraction from Te Awa o Waikato, through treatment, distribution and use, to its eventual return to the wider catchment. Throughout this journey, wai continues to possess its own mauri and should be managed in a manner

that reflects its status as a taonga, supports its efficient and responsible use, and avoids placing unnecessary pressure on Te Awa o Waikato.

Water as a Taonga

For mana whenua, wai is a taonga inherited through whakapapa from Tangaroa, whose mauri sustains all life. It is through wai that the relationship between Tangaroa, Papatuuaanuku and tangata is expressed, with the mauri of wai nourishing the whenua, sustaining taonga species and supporting the physical, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of mana whenua. The use of wai has therefore always been guided by tikanga, recognising an enduring responsibility to protect its mauri and ensure that its life-giving qualities continue to sustain present and future generations.

Cumulative Pressures on Te Awa o Waikato

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu acknowledges the importance of providing safe potable water that sustains the health and wellbeing of communities. However, every abstraction from Te Awa o Waikato also places an additional demand upon this taonga. While the proposal promotes the efficient use of wai through water conservation and demand management, it is important that abstraction is continually reconciled against the cumulative pressures placed on the awa and the need to protect and restore its mauri. The responsible stewardship of wai therefore extends beyond its abstraction and supply, recognising an enduring obligation to ensure that future generations continue to benefit from a healthy and resilient Te Awa o Waikato.

Kaitiakitanga and Mana Whakahaere

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu continues to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere over Te Awa o Waikato and the interconnected Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments. Ongoing involvement in monitoring, reporting, and reviewing water abstraction provides an important opportunity for mana whenua to participate in the stewardship of this taonga and ensure that cultural values continue to inform future water management decisions.

6.2.1.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan

Assessment Framework

Cultural Reconciliation

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Wai</i>	The proposed Water Management Plan aligns with Piko Wai by promoting the responsible use, conservation, and stewardship of wai throughout the Southern Links 1 development. Water demand management and efficiency measures assist in reducing unnecessary abstraction from Te Awa o Waikato while recognising the interconnected relationship between water use and the long-term health of the wider catchment.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The efficient use and conservation of wai contributes to protecting the mauri of Te Awa o Waikato by reducing unnecessary demand on freshwater resources. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, every opportunity to conserve wai supports the wider restoration of the

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Pou
Mana Whakahaere***

river and reinforces the principle that wai is a finite taonga to be used with care and respect.

Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in the implementation and review of water management measures supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures the cultural values associated with the use, management and stewardship of wai continue to inform project delivery.

***Te Ture Whaimana o
Te Awa o Waikato***

The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by promoting the sustainable use of freshwater resources and reducing unnecessary demand on Te Awa o Waikato. These measures contribute to the long-term restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of the awa through responsible water stewardship.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)***

The proposed Water Management Plan aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by promoting sustainable water use, water conservation and the responsible stewardship of wai. Continued implementation of these measures will further support the long-term protection of the mauri of freshwater resources throughout the wider catchment.

6.2.1.4 Piko Wai Water Management (PW-WM) Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed through the reconciliation of the Water Management Plan with the cultural values, history and relationship of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu with wai. They have also been assessed against the principles of Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan to ensure the proposed water management approach not only addresses technical matters, but also recognises and provides for the protection, restoration and enhancement of the mauri of wai and its interconnected relationship with whenua, taiao and tangata.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
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<i>PW-WM1</i>	Continue to implement water conservation and demand management measures throughout the development to minimise unnecessary abstraction from Te Awa o Waikato.
<i>PW-WM2</i>	Encourage water sensitive urban design and opportunities for rainwater harvesting and non-potable water reuse, where practicable, to reduce reliance on potable water supplies.
<i>PW-WM3</i>	Review water efficiency measures throughout the life of the development to ensure they remain effective and support the sustainable use of wai.

PW-WM4	Recognise the complete journey of wai, from abstraction through to its return to the wider environment, when designing and implementing integrated water management measures.
PW-WM5	Continue to reconcile water management practices with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan as the development progresses.
PW-WM6	Promote the responsible use of wai throughout the development, recognising wai as a taonga whose mauri should be protected for present and future generations.

6.2.3 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

6.2.3.1 Technical Review

The Hydrogeological Effects Assessment evaluates potential groundwater and surface water effects associated with the Southern Links Stage 1 development, including stormwater wetlands, wastewater infrastructure and related earthworks. It confirms that the development is located within the upper Mangakootukutuku catchment, while the Waitaawhiriwhiri catchment forms part of the wider Southern Links landscape. Existing drains, wetlands, groundwater systems and streams are hydraulically connected, with groundwater providing important baseflow to the headwaters of the Mangakootukutuku Stream.

The assessment identifies shallow and deeper aquifer systems beneath the site and confirms the hydraulic connection between groundwater, wetlands and surface water. Construction activities, including temporary dewatering for stormwater wetlands, wastewater pump stations and pipeline infrastructure, may intercept groundwater and temporarily alter local groundwater levels. The report concludes that these effects are generally localised and can be managed through appropriate construction methods, groundwater discharge management and targeted monitoring.

The assessment concludes that long-term groundwater interception by the proposed stormwater wetlands is unlikely to cause significant adverse effects on surrounding groundwater levels, nearby bores, natural wetlands or connected surface water systems. Temporary construction effects will be managed by directing groundwater discharges to the local drainage network, applying erosion and sediment controls, and undertaking targeted monitoring where required.

6.2.3.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Tangaroa and Groundwater

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, groundwater forms part of the wider domain of Tangaroa, whose mauri extends throughout the interconnected network of wai beneath and upon the whenua. Although largely unseen, groundwater is a living component of the wider wai system, sustaining the natural movement of wai through Papatuaanuku before emerging to support puna, wetlands, koawa and awa. The mauri of groundwater is therefore inseparable from the mauri of the wider catchment and contributes to the health and wellbeing of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments.

Puna and Aquifers

Puna have long held cultural and spiritual significance for mana whenua, providing places for tohi, the lifting of tapu and other tikanga associated with wai. Aquifers represent the natural stores of wai that sustain these groundwater-fed environments and contribute to the ongoing health of wetlands, streams and surrounding ecosystems. The interception or modification of groundwater therefore requires careful consideration to ensure that the natural movement and expression of wai continues to sustain the wider catchment.

Traditional Resource Use

Groundwater has historically sustained the wider cultural landscape by nourishing wetlands, streams, indigenous vegetation and the habitats upon which taonga species depend. These interconnected freshwater environments supported customary resource use, mahinga kai, rongoa Maaori, settlement, travel and the broader relationship between mana whenua and the taiao. While groundwater itself was seldom visible, its presence sustained the cultural landscapes and natural resources that enabled generations of mana whenua to live within and care for these catchments.

Protecting the Mauri of Groundwater

The modification, interception or contamination of groundwater has the potential to affect the mauri of the wider wai system beyond the immediate area of disturbance. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, protecting groundwater extends beyond maintaining water levels or hydraulic function. It requires recognising groundwater as a taonga whose mauri sustains puna, wetlands, koawa, awa and the interconnected relationship between Tangaroa, Papatuaanuku and tangata.

Kaitiakitanga and Mana Whakahaere

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu continue to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere over the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments, recognising that groundwater forms an integral part of these interconnected freshwater systems. The ongoing stewardship of groundwater should therefore seek to protect its mauri, maintain its natural contribution to the wider catchment, and support the long-term health and wellbeing of wai, taonga species and future generations.

6.2.3.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan

Assessment

Cultural Reconciliation

Framework

Te Awa Koiora

Framework – Piko Wai

The Hydrogeological Effects Assessment aligns with Piko Wai by recognising the interconnected relationship between groundwater, aquifers, puna, wetlands, streams and the wider catchment. The proposed measures seek to maintain natural groundwater movement, protect groundwater-dependent ecosystems and manage construction effects to support the long-term health of the wider wai system.

Te Awa Koiora

Framework – Mauri

The protection of groundwater systems contributes to maintaining the mauri of the wider wai environment by sustaining the natural relationships between aquifers, puna, wetlands and surface water. From

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Pou
Mana Whakahaere***

the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, these interconnected systems are inseparable, and their protection contributes to the long-term health and resilience of Te Awa o Waikato and its connected catchments.

Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in groundwater management, detailed design and the implementation of groundwater protection measures supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures the cultural significance of aquifers, puna and connected groundwater systems continues to inform project delivery.

***Te Ture Whaimana o
Te Awa o Waikato***

The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by seeking to maintain natural groundwater function, protect groundwater-fed ecosystems and minimise adverse effects on connected waterways. These measures contribute to the long-term restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato and its wider catchment.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)***

The proposed groundwater management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by recognising the interconnected nature of groundwater, aquifers, puna, wetlands and surface water, while promoting their long-term protection through sustainable management and the continued involvement of mana whenua.

6.2.3.4 Piko Wai Hydrology and Hydrogeology (PW-HY) Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed by reconciling the Hydrogeological Effects Assessment with the cultural values, history and relationship of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu with groundwater and the wider wai system. They have also been assessed against *Te Awa Koiora*, *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan to ensure the proposed hydrogeological management approach addresses technical matters while recognising and providing for the protection, restoration and enhancement of groundwater mauri and its interconnected relationship with puna, wetlands, koawa, awa, whenua and tangata.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>PW-HY1</i>	Recognise groundwater as an integral component of the wider wai system by protecting the natural relationship between aquifers, puna, wetlands, koawa and awa throughout detailed design, construction and operation.
<i>PW-HY2</i>	Minimise the interception and modification of groundwater, where practicable, and ensure temporary dewatering activities maintain the natural movement of wai within the wider catchment.

PW-HY3	Ensure groundwater discharged during temporary dewatering is returned to the same catchment, where practicable, to maintain downstream hydrological function and connectivity.
PW-HY4	Protect groundwater quality through the implementation of appropriate construction methodologies, erosion and sediment control measures, and contamination prevention practices.
PW-HY5	Protect the natural recharge and discharge functions of groundwater, where practicable, recognising that these processes sustain puna, wetlands, koawa, awa and the wider journey of wai throughout the Mangakootukutuku and Waitaawhiriwhiri catchments.
PW-HY6	Where previously unidentified natural springs (puna) or groundwater-fed features are encountered during construction, these features should be assessed before further modification to determine whether design refinements or appropriate management measures are required.
PW-HY7	Continue to reconcile hydrogeological investigations, detailed design and groundwater management with the principles of Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan throughout the development.
PW-HY8	Maintain the natural movement and connectivity of groundwater throughout the wider catchment, where practicable, recognising its role in sustaining puna, wetlands, koawa, awa and the long-term health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato.

6.2.4 Stormwater, Flood Management and Attenuation

6.2.4.1 Technical Review

The Stormwater Management Plan establishes the stormwater management framework for the Southern Links Stage 1 development, adopting an integrated catchment approach to manage stormwater quantity, water quality, hydraulic connectivity and flood attenuation. The proposal incorporates Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles through an integrated treatment train comprising on-lot retention tanks, forebays, constructed wetlands, diversion channels and controlled outlet structures before stormwater is discharged to the Mangakootukutuku catchment.

The Stormwater Management Plan has been developed to give effect to the recommendations and objectives of the Mangakootukutuku Integrated Catchment Management Plan (ICMP), which provides the overarching framework for managing stormwater, restoring catchment health and integrating engineering, ecological and environmental outcomes throughout the development. The ICMP recommendations therefore form a key mitigation measure that guides the detailed design, implementation and long-term management of the proposed stormwater network.

The assessment concludes that the proposed stormwater management system will improve water quality, reduce peak flows and maintain downstream hydraulic performance through stormwater treatment wetlands, attenuation storage and controlled discharges. The design incorporates existing drainage corridors and overland flow paths to maintain catchment connectivity, reduce flood risk and protect downstream receiving environments.

The Stormwater Management Plan also identifies opportunities to protect and enhance waterways through riparian restoration, indigenous planting and groundwater recharge. It recognises that the detailed design of wetlands and stormwater infrastructure, along with long-term maintenance programmes, will continue to be refined through the detailed design and implementation phases.

6.2.4.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Tangaroa and the Journey of Wai

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, wai follows a continuous journey from Ranginui, through Papatuaanuku and the interconnected network of puna, wetlands, and koawa, before ultimately returning to Te Awa o Waikato. Throughout this journey, wai retains its own mauri and remains within the domain of Tangaroa, sustaining the interconnected relationship between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata. The management of stormwater therefore extends beyond the conveyance of water through engineered infrastructure. It presents an opportunity to recognise, protect, restore and enhance the mauri of wai before it returns to the wider catchment.

The Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku Catchments

The Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments have sustained mana whenua for generations, providing freshwater, fertile landscapes and interconnected waterways that supported extensive settlement from the headwaters through to their confluence with Te Awa o Waikato. These catchments formed part of a wider cultural landscape where wai connected people to the whenua, sustained seasonal movement throughout the catchment and provided the foundation for the physical, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of mana whenua. Their puna, wetlands, koawa and awa supported a rich diversity of indigenous flora and fauna, while also serving as places of cultural practice, resource use and intergenerational knowledge. Although the landscape has been progressively modified through raupatu, drainage, agricultural development and urban expansion, the cultural significance of these catchments and their enduring relationship with Te Awa o Waikato remains unchanged.

Traditional Resource Use

The interconnected network of wetlands, koawa and awa throughout the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments sustained a diverse range of customary resources and cultural practices. These freshwater environments supported mahinga kai, including tuna, kooura and indigenous fisheries, while surrounding wetlands provided harakeke, raupoo, rongoaa Maaori and other natural resources utilised by mana whenua. Puna held important cultural and spiritual significance, supporting tikanga including tohi, the lifting of tapu and other customary practices associated with wai. Together, these freshwater systems formed living cultural landscapes that

sustained both the mauri of the environment and the wellbeing of mana whenua over many generations.

Wetlands as Taonga

Wetlands have historically performed an essential role in the natural journey of wai by filtering, slowing and sustaining water as it moved through the landscape. They provided important habitat for taonga species, supported the ecological processes upon which customary resource use depended, and sustained the natural health of the wider catchment. Beyond their ecological function, wetlands also held significant cultural value as places where waka, taonga and, in some circumstances, tuupaapaku were buried in the whenua and preserved within peat and wetland environments. They also provided important natural resources, including harakeke, raupoo and other materials utilised for customary practices. While many wetlands throughout the wider catchment have been drained or modified, the proposed restoration and creation of wetland environments provides an opportunity to re-establish some of these natural functions, recognising wetlands not solely as stormwater infrastructure but as living freshwater systems that contribute to the protection, restoration and enhancement of the mauri of wai.

Protecting the Mauri of Wai

The progressive drainage, modification and urbanisation of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments have altered the natural movement and quality of wai throughout the landscape, contributing to the degradation of its mauri over time. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the proposed stormwater treatment train, constructed wetlands and riparian restoration measures provide an opportunity to reverse some of these effects by improving the quality of wai before it returns to the receiving catchment. While these measures cannot fully restore the natural character of the ancestral landscape, they represent a positive step towards recognising, protecting, restoring and enhancing the mauri of wai, while reducing cumulative effects on these catchments and Te Awa o Waikato.

Kaitiakitanga and Mana Whakahaere

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu continue to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere over the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments, recognising an enduring responsibility to protect the mauri of wai for present and future generations. The long-term stewardship of the proposed stormwater network should therefore continue to recognise wai as a taonga, ensuring that wetlands, riparian margins and stormwater treatment systems function collectively to support healthy freshwater ecosystems, sustain taonga species and contribute to the ongoing restoration and resilience of the wider catchment.

6.2.4.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan

Assessment

Cultural Reconciliation

Framework

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Piko
Wai***

The Stormwater Management Plan aligns strongly with Piko Wai by recognising the interconnected nature of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments and adopting an integrated catchment approach to stormwater management. The proposed treatment train, constructed wetlands, riparian restoration and Water Sensitive Urban Design measures collectively seek to protect, restore and enhance the health of wai before it returns to the wider receiving environment.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Mauri***

The proposed stormwater management approach contributes to strengthening the mauri of wai by improving water quality, supporting natural hydrological processes and reducing contaminant loads entering the receiving environment. Collectively, these measures support the long-term health and resilience of the wider catchment and contribute to the restoration of Te Awa o Waikato.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Pou
Mana Whakahaere***

Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in the implementation of the Stormwater Management Plan and the Mangakootukutuku Integrated Catchment Management Plan supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values continue to inform catchment restoration, stormwater management and long-term environmental stewardship.

***Te Ture Whaimana o
Te Awa o Waikato***

The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by promoting the protection and restoration of freshwater systems through improved stormwater quality, reduced contaminant loads, flood attenuation and the restoration of more natural catchment processes. These measures contribute to the long-term health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato and its connected catchments.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)***

The proposed stormwater management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by integrating Water Sensitive Urban Design, wetland restoration, riparian enhancement and catchment-based management to strengthen freshwater ecosystems, ecological resilience and the long-term stewardship of wai by mana whenua.

6.2.4.4 Piko Wai Stormwater (PW-SW) Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed through the reconciliation of the Stormwater Management Plan with the cultural values, history and relationship of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu with wai and the wider Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments. They have also been assessed against the principles of Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan to ensure the proposed stormwater management approach not only addresses technical matters, but also recognises and provides for the protection, restoration and enhancement of the

mauri of wai and its interconnected relationship with wetlands, koawa, awa, whenua, taiao and tangata.

Ref	Recommendation
PW-SW1	Continue to implement the Stormwater Management Plan in a manner that gives effect, where practicable, to the recommendations and objectives of the Mangakootukutuku Integrated Catchment Management Plan and the Waitaawhiriwhiri Integrated Catchment Management Plan. Although these documents are not yet operative, they have informed the development of the proposal and provide important integrated catchment management frameworks for recognising, protecting, restoring and enhancing the mauri of the Mangakootukutuku and Waitaawhiriwhiri catchments.
PW-SW2	Maintain the stormwater treatment train as an interconnected journey of wai, ensuring stormwater is progressively filtered, treated and returned to the Mangakootukutuku catchment in a manner that recognises, protects, restores and enhances its mauri before entering Te Awa o Waikato.
PW-SW3	Continue to incorporate naturalised stormwater management measures, including constructed wetlands, riparian restoration and indigenous eco-sourced planting, to support the ecological, cultural and hydrological functions of the wider catchment.
PW-SW4	Ensure constructed wetlands are designed, planted and managed as living freshwater systems that provide cultural, ecological and water quality outcomes beyond their primary engineering function, recognising their role in sustaining the mauri of wai and supporting taonga species.
PW-SW5	Where sediment removal from wetlands, forebays or other stormwater treatment devices is required, undertake appropriate sediment characterisation and implement disposal and management procedures that protect the mauri of wai, whenua and the receiving environment, particularly where contaminated material may be present.
PW-SW6	Protect natural overland flow paths and floodplain functions, where practicable, recognising their role in sustaining the natural movement of wai, reducing flood risk and maintaining the resilience of the wider catchment.

PW-SW7	Continue to review the long-term performance of the stormwater management system through adaptive management to ensure the ongoing protection, restoration and enhancement of the Mangakootukutuku and Waitaawhiriwhiri catchments and their contribution to the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato.
PW-SW8	Continue to reconcile the detailed design, implementation and long-term management of the stormwater network with the principles of Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan throughout the life of the development.
PW-SW9	Promote opportunities for cultural landscape design through indigenous planting, cultural interpretation, naming and the recognition of mana whenua values within wetlands, riparian margins and associated public open spaces, strengthening the cultural identity and ecological resilience of the wider catchment.

6.2.5 Freshwater Ecology

6.2.5.1 Technical Review

The Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) evaluates the existing freshwater ecological values within the Southern Links Stage 1 project area and assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on wetlands, waterways, indigenous vegetation, aquatic habitats, freshwater ecosystems and associated indigenous species. The assessment focuses on the Mangakootukutuku Stream and its tributaries, drains and wetlands, recognising their importance in maintaining ecological connectivity, freshwater habitat and indigenous biodiversity throughout the wider catchment.

The assessment identifies the ecological values of the project area through investigations of stream and wetland condition, fish communities, macroinvertebrates, indigenous vegetation, riparian habitats and other freshwater-dependent fauna. The assessment also considers ecological connectivity between wetlands, waterways and adjoining terrestrial habitats, recognising the importance of maintaining ecological processes across the wider landscape.

The Ecological Impact Assessment concludes that ecological effects can be appropriately managed through the proposed avoidance, mitigation and restoration measures. These include protecting and enhancing wetlands and waterways, indigenous riparian planting, habitat restoration, ecological corridor enhancement and long-term ecological monitoring. With these measures in place, the proposal provides opportunities to restore and enhance freshwater ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity throughout the Mangakootukutuku catchment.

6.2.5.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Tangaroa and the Living Freshwater Environment

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the freshwater ecosystems of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments form part of the wider domain of Tangaroa. Through the journey of wai, Tangaroa sustains the puna, wetlands, koawa and awa that give life to the surrounding environment. The health of these freshwater ecosystems reflects the health of the wider catchment, while the abundance and diversity of taonga species reflects the strength of the mauri of wai. The protection and restoration of freshwater ecosystems is therefore fundamental to maintaining the relationship between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata.

Taonga Species and Traditional Resource Use

The freshwater environments of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments have sustained mana whenua for generations through a rich diversity of taonga species and customary resources. Tuna, kooura, iinanga, kookopu and other indigenous freshwater species formed an important part of traditional mahinga kai, while wetlands and riparian margins provided harakeke, raupoo, wiwi, toetoe and rongoaa Maaori used for weaving, construction, healing and everyday life. Puna also held significant cultural and spiritual importance, supporting tikanga including tohi, the lifting of tapu and other ceremonial practices associated with wai. These freshwater environments therefore sustained not only physical needs, but also the cultural identity, practices and knowledge of mana whenua.

Freshwater Ecosystems as Living Cultural Landscapes

The freshwater ecosystems of these catchments extend beyond individual waterways or wetlands. Together they form living cultural landscapes where wai, indigenous vegetation, wetlands, riparian margins and taonga species function collectively to sustain the natural balance of the environment. Historically, these landscapes supported settlement, seasonal movement, customary harvesting and the transmission of maatauranga Maaori between generations. Although many of these environments have been modified through drainage, raupatu, agricultural development and urbanisation, they continue to hold enduring cultural significance and remain central to the identity and responsibilities of mana whenua.

Restoring the Mauri of Freshwater Ecosystems

The restoration of freshwater ecosystems extends beyond ecological enhancement. It represents an opportunity to restore the conditions that enable taonga species and customary resources to flourish once again. Measures such as wetland restoration, indigenous riparian planting, habitat enhancement and fish passage contribute towards rebuilding healthier freshwater environments that better support biodiversity, ecological resilience and the long-term restoration of mauri throughout the wider catchment. While these measures cannot fully restore the ancestral landscape, they represent positive steps towards improving the health and function of the freshwater environment.

Kaitiakitanga and Mana Whakahaere

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu continue to exercise kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere over the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments, recognising an enduring responsibility to

protect the freshwater ecosystems and taonga species that have sustained mana whenua over many generations. The long-term stewardship of wetlands, waterways, indigenous habitats and ecological corridors should therefore continue to support the protection, restoration and enhancement of the mauri of these environments, ensuring they remain resilient and capable of sustaining future generations.

6.2.5.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan

Assessment Framework

Cultural Reconciliation

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Wai</i>	The Ecological Impact Assessment aligns with Piko Wai by recognising the interconnected relationship between freshwater ecosystems, wetlands, taonga species and the mauri of wai. The proposed restoration of wetlands, riparian margins, freshwater habitats and ecological corridors supports healthier aquatic ecosystems and strengthens the ecological resilience of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection and restoration of freshwater habitats contributes to strengthening the mauri of wai by improving ecological health, supporting indigenous biodiversity and enhancing the natural relationships between waterways, wetlands and taonga species. These outcomes contribute to the wider restoration of Te Awa o Waikato and its connected catchments.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in ecological restoration, habitat enhancement and ongoing environmental management supports the exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures ecological outcomes continue to reflect the aspirations and responsibilities of mana whenua.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by restoring freshwater ecosystems, strengthening indigenous biodiversity and enhancing the ecological health of the wider catchment. These measures contribute to the long-term restoration and protection of Te Awa o Waikato and its connected environments.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)</i>	The proposed ecological management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by protecting indigenous biodiversity, restoring freshwater habitats and recognising the cultural significance of taonga species. Collectively, these measures strengthen ecological resilience and support the enduring stewardship of freshwater ecosystems by mana whenua.

6.2.5.4 Piko Wai Freshwater Ecology (PW-EC) Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed through the reconciliation of the Ecological Impact Assessment with the cultural values, history and relationship of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu with the freshwater ecosystems of the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments. They have also been assessed against the principles of Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan to ensure the proposed ecological management approach not only addresses technical matters, but also recognises and provides for the protection, restoration and enhancement of the mauri of freshwater ecosystems and their interconnected relationship with wai, whenua, taonga species and tangata.

Ref	Recommendation
PW-EC1	Continue to protect, restore and enhance freshwater ecosystems within the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments, recognising their role in sustaining the mauri of wai, taonga species and customary relationships.
PW-EC2	Protect and enhance habitats that support taonga species, recognising their whakapapa, cultural significance and role as indicators of the health and wellbeing of the wider freshwater environment.
PW-EC3	Use locally eco-sourced indigenous species within riparian, wetland and habitat restoration programmes, including culturally significant species traditionally used for weaving, rongoaa Maaori and customary practices where appropriate.
PW-EC4	Maintain and enhance ecological connections between wetlands, waterways, riparian margins and adjoining indigenous habitats to support the natural movement, migration and resilience of taonga species.
PW-EC5	Protect and improve fish passage and aquatic habitat, recognising the cultural importance of sustaining the life cycles of indigenous freshwater species throughout the catchment.
PW-EC6	Continue to reconcile ecological restoration and long-term management with the Mangakootukutuku and Waitaawhiriwhiri ICMPs, recognising those documents as important integrated catchment management frameworks.
PW-EC7	Continue to reconcile ecological management with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan throughout detailed design, construction and long-term management.
PW-EC8	Review restoration outcomes over time to confirm that ecological measures are contributing to the recovery of taonga species, freshwater habitats and the mauri of the catchments.

6.2.6 Te Awa o Waikato – The Ultimate Receiving Environment

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, Te Awa o Waikato is not simply the ultimate receiving environment for the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal. Te Awa o Waikato is our tuupuna, the source of whakapapa, identity, wellbeing and cultural continuity. As recognised through the Waikato River Settlement, the Awa is a single indivisible being extending from Te Taheke Hukahuka to Te Puuaha o Waikato, embracing its tributaries, wetlands, lakes, puna, floodplains, fisheries, vegetation and all living systems that sustain its mana and mauri. The Awa is not simply a river that flows through our landscape; it is the landscape from which our identity, tikanga and responsibilities continue to flow.

For generations, *Te Awa o Waikato* has sustained the physical, cultural, spiritual and economic wellbeing of Waikato hapuu. It has provided freshwater, mahinga kai, transport routes, settlement areas and places of cultural practice, while forming the foundation for tribal identity and the transmission of maatauranga across generations. The Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments are part of this wider ancestral landscape, carrying wai from their headwaters through puna, wetlands, koawa and awa before returning to *Te Awa o Waikato*. The health of these tributaries therefore directly supports the health and wellbeing of the Awa.

This understanding is central to *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato*, which recognises that restoring and protecting the Waikato River begins with its tributaries, wetlands and catchments. Actions that restore freshwater ecosystems, improve water quality, protect taonga species or enhance the mauri of wai all contribute to the wider restoration of the Awa. Likewise, cumulative adverse effects within the catchment ultimately affect *Te Awa o Waikato*. The responsibility to restore and protect the Awa therefore extends across the entire catchment and is shared by all river iwi and hapuu connected to the awa through whakapapa.

Te Awa Koiora Framework was developed by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu as a practical cultural framework for assessing the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal against the aspirations of *Te Ture Whaimana*. Rather than assessing technical disciplines in isolation, the framework recognises that all aspects of the proposal collectively influence the health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato* through the protection and restoration of its tributaries, wetlands, freshwater ecosystems and the mauri of wai.

This understanding is reflected in the enduring Waikato whakataukii, “*Waikato taniwharau, he piko he taniwha*”, which recognises that every bend of the Awa carries its own history, identity, mana and kaitiaki, while together forming the living body of our tuupuna. The Awa connects people, places and generations through whakapapa, and its wai continues to nourish, heal and restore those who maintain their relationship with it. This enduring responsibility has guided the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout this Cultural Values Assessment, ensuring that each recommendation contributes to restoring and protecting the mana and mauri of our tuupuna, *Te Awa o Waikato*, in accordance with the vision of

Tooku awa koiora me oona pikonga he kura tangihia o te maataamuri

The river of life, each curve more beautiful than the last.

6.2.6.2 Te Awa o Waikato Recommendation

The cultural assessments undertaken throughout Piko Wai show that wai management extends beyond individual technical disciplines and must be considered in relation to the health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato*. As the ancestral river of Waikato-Tainui and the ultimate receiving environment, the Awa provides the overarching cultural context for all water-related planning, design, mitigation, implementation and long-term management.

Ref	Recommendation
PW-AWA1	Ensure that the detailed design, mitigation measures, ecological restoration, implementation and ongoing management of the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal are undertaken in a manner that gives effect to the Vision and Strategy (Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato), recognising Te Awa o Waikato as the ancestral river and ultimate receiving environment whose mana, mauri, health and wellbeing should be recognised, protected, restored and enhanced for present and future generations.

6.2.7 Piko Wai Summary

Piko Wai assesses the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal through the relationship of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu with wai, recognising its journey from *Te Awa o Waikato* through the Waitaawhiriwhiri and Mangakootukutuku catchments and back to the ancestral river. By considering water management, hydrology and hydrogeology, stormwater, freshwater ecology and the wider receiving environment, this assessment reconciles the proposal with the cultural values of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the *Te Awa Koiora Framework*, *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* and the Waikato-Tainui Taiao Plan.

Collectively, the assessment concludes that the proposal provides a positive foundation for recognising, protecting, restoring and enhancing the mauri of wai through an integrated catchment management approach. The recommendations contained within Piko Wai provide opportunities to further strengthen these outcomes through detailed design, ecological restoration, implementation and the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and kaitiakitanga.

Ultimately, the success of the proposal will not be measured solely by the performance of its infrastructure, but by the extent to which it contributes to the long-term restoration and protection of the mana, mauri, health and wellbeing of *Te Awa o Waikato*, our tuupuna, for present and future generations.

6.3 Piko Whenua

For mana whenua, whenua is the domain of Papatuaanuku, the ancestral mother from whom all life originates. Hineahuone, the first of human form, was created from the sacred soils of Papatuaanuku by Taane Mahuta, who breathed the mauri of life into her. The genealogical cycle is that all people descend from this ancestor. This whakapapa affirms the inseparable relationship between tangata and

whenua, recognising that the mauri of the people is intrinsically connected to the mauri of the land itself.

Papatuaanuku provided an abundance of natural resources that sustained mana whenua over countless generations. The forests of Taane Mahuta, the cultivated gardens of Rongomataane, the fertile soils, wetlands, waterways and wider natural environment supported settlement, travel, cultivation, mahinga kai, rongoaa Maaori and the sustainable harvesting of natural resources. These relationships were governed by tikanga, recognising that the wellbeing of people depended upon maintaining the sustainable health and mauri of the whenua for present and future generations.

The wider Southern Links 1 landscape also embodies the history and identity of mana whenua. It retains the physical and cultural imprint of generations of occupation through waahi tuupuna, paa, kaainga, cultivation areas, traditional travel routes, battle sites, urupaa and depositories of various koiwi, taonga and waka. While many of these landscapes have since been modified through drainage, farming and urban development, their cultural significance endures and continues to inform the exercise of kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere today.

Piko Whenua considers how the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal recognises and responds to these entrenched relationships. The assessment draws upon the relevant technical investigations to determine whether the proposal intends to protect the mauri and cultural integrity of the whenua and contributes positively to the cultural values and aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu through the Te Awa Koiora Framework.

6.3.1 Archaeological and Cultural Landscape Values

6.3.1.1 Technical Findings

An Archaeological Assessment of Effects has been prepared to identify recorded archaeological sites and assess the potential archaeological effects associated with the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal. The assessment concludes that there are no recorded archaeological sites within the project footprint and considers the likelihood of encountering unrecorded archaeological material to be low. The report recommends the implementation of an Accidental Discovery Protocol during construction and early engagement with mana whenua to recognise that cultural effects may differ from archaeological effects.

6.3.1.2 Cultural Reconciliation

From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the cultural significance of the whenua cannot be determined solely by the presence or absence of recorded archaeological sites. The wider Southern Links 1 landscape has supported generations of mana whenua occupation, settlement, travel and the sustainable use of natural resources in accordance with tikanga. These enduring relationships have shaped the cultural landscape over many generations, with many cultural values extending beyond the archaeological record.

Archaeological investigations provide an important source of information regarding past human activity; however, they represent only one component of the wider cultural landscape. The SL1 TWWG Hapuu also recognise that not all waahi tapu, waahi tuupuna or places of cultural significance are

recorded within archaeological databases or publicly identified. In many instances, the location and nature of these places are intentionally protected by mana whenua for reasons of tikanga, cultural sensitivity and the ongoing protection of their integrity. Consequently, the absence of mapped or recorded sites should not be interpreted as indicating an absence of cultural significance across the wider landscape. Mana whenua recognise that the whenua retains cultural significance through whakapapa, maatauranga Maaori, historical occupation and the enduring exercise of kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere.

The SL1 TWWG therefore considers that archaeological investigations should be read alongside this Cultural Values Assessment to ensure that cultural values are understood within the broader context of the landscape, rather than being limited to recorded archaeological evidence alone

6.3.1.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koira, Te Ture Whaimana and Te Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework	Cultural Reconciliation
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Whenua</i>	The archaeological assessment recognises recorded archaeological values within the project area; however, from the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the cultural landscape extends beyond the archaeological record to include waahi tapu, waahi tuupuna, ancestral occupation, traditional movement corridors and the enduring relationships of mana whenua with the whenua. Accordingly, the cultural landscape should be understood completely rather than limited to recorded archaeological sites.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection of archaeological sites and the wider cultural landscape contributes to maintaining the mauri of the whenua by recognising the enduring relationship between mana whenua and the ancestral landscape. Protecting these values strengthens the cultural integrity of the whenua and supports the transmission of maatauranga and whakapapa to future generations.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout archaeological investigations, earthworks and construction supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures that cultural values, tikanga and maatauranga continue to inform the management of the wider cultural landscape.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	Although the archaeological assessment is not directly focused on the restoration of Te Awa o Waikato, recognising and protecting the wider cultural landscape supports the Vision and Strategy by acknowledging the inseparable relationship between tangata, whenua and Te Awa o Waikato throughout the wider catchment.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan</i>	The proposed archaeological management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by recognising

**(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)**

cultural heritage values and providing for their protection during project implementation. Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu further supports the recognition of maatauranga Maaori, kaitiakitanga and the enduring relationship of mana whenua with their ancestral landscape.

6.3.1.4 Recommendations – Piko Whenua Archaeology (PW-AR)

Ref	Recommendation
<i>PW-AR1</i>	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should prepare a Cultural Landscape and Waahi Tapu Assessment to inform future archaeological investigations, earthworks planning, detailed design and construction activities. Any culturally sensitive information should remain under the control of mana whenua and be shared only where necessary to appropriately manage potential effects.
<i>PW-AR2</i>	The applicant should continue to engage with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout detailed design, archaeological investigations and construction to ensure cultural values and cultural landscape matters continue to inform project delivery.
<i>PW-AR3</i>	Archaeological assessments should be considered alongside maatauranga Maaori and the cultural knowledge of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu when assessing cultural effects, recognising that the absence of recorded archaeological sites does not equate to the absence of waahi tapu, waahi tuupuna or other places of cultural significance.
<i>PW-AR4</i>	An Accidental Discovery Protocol should be developed and implemented in partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, incorporating culturally appropriate procedures for the management of kooiwi tangata, taonga and previously unidentified archaeological material.
<i>PW-AR5</i>	Where archaeological material, waahi tapu or other culturally significant features are identified during project delivery, the SL1 TWWG Hapuu should be actively involved in determining appropriate cultural management responses alongside any statutory archaeological processes.
<i>PW-AR6</i>	Given the scale of earthworks and the cultural significance of the Southern Links landscape, the Applicant should prepare an Archaeological Site Management Plan (ASMP) in partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. The ASMP should be informed by this Cultural Values Assessment and ongoing engagement with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to ensure that cultural values, tikanga, monitoring requirements, accidental discovery procedures and the management of any previously unidentified cultural features are appropriately integrated into construction management.

6.3.1.5 Conclusion

The archaeological assessment provides a useful overview of recorded archaeological values within the project area and recommends appropriate management measures if archaeological material is

encountered. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, however, the cultural significance of the wider landscape extends beyond the archaeological record. The absence of recorded sites does not indicate the absence of waahi tapu, waahi tuupuna or other cultural values. The recommendations in this section therefore seek to strengthen the recognition and management of the wider cultural landscape throughout detailed design, earthworks and construction for the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

6.3.2 Earthworks and Soil Management

6.3.2.1 Technical Findings

The supporting geotechnical investigations and Earthworks Management Plan describe the earthworks required to facilitate the Stage 1 development and the measures proposed to manage associated construction effects. The investigations confirm that the site is predominantly underlain by Hinuera Formation soils, with peat deposits located beyond the Stage 1 residential footprint. The proposal requires substantial cut and fill operations to establish building platforms, roads, wetlands and supporting infrastructure. Earthworks will be undertaken in stages and supported by erosion and sediment controls, progressive stabilisation, topsoil management and rehabilitation measures to minimise construction effects.

6.3.2.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Papatuuānuku and the Mauri of the Whenua

From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, earthworks involve more than the movement of soil to facilitate development. They represent the direct disturbance of Papatuuānuku, whose mauri continues to sustain the interconnected relationship between whenua, wai, taiao and tangata. The modification of the whenua therefore carries cultural responsibilities that extend beyond engineering and construction considerations.

Whenua as a Cultural Repository

Although the project area has been substantially modified through Raupatu, agricultural activities, drainage and urban expansion, these changes do not diminish the potential for culturally significant features or materials to remain within the whenua.

Historical Hydrology and the Living Landscape

The present-day landscape does not necessarily reflect the historical character of the Southern Links area. Over many generations, natural springs, wetlands, seepages and drainage pathways have been modified, diverted, drained or infilled through Raupatu, agricultural development and urban expansion. Many of these historical water features would have contributed to the wider Mangakootukutuku catchment and ultimately the Waikato Awa.

Accordingly, cut and fill activities, deep excavations and other earthworks have the potential to intersect historical groundwater pathways, shallow aquifers or former wetland systems that are no longer evident on the surface. This reinforces the interconnected relationship between whenua and wai and the importance of recognising that disturbance of the whenua may also result in effects on the wider freshwater environment.

Traditional Resource Use and Maara Kai

The soils of the Waikato have historically supported a diverse range of cultural activities, including maara kai, the harvesting of natural resources and the collection of culturally significant materials. Different soil types were utilised for different purposes, and areas of suitable soils may retain evidence of former cultivation, storage pits, cultural features and other signs of ancestral occupation and resource use that are no longer visible on the surface.

Peat Wetlands and Cultural Depositories

Peat wetlands throughout the Waikato have long held cultural significance. In addition to supporting important ecological functions, they were traditionally utilised for the storage and preservation of waka, taonga and, in some circumstances, tuupaapaku. Peat environments are also recognised for their ability to preserve organic materials that may not survive in other soil conditions. Accordingly, the disturbance of peat deposits or former wetland environments presents a heightened potential for uncovering taonga, kooiwi tangata or other culturally significant materials that may not be reflected within existing archaeological records.

Culturally Significant Soils and Natural Resources

Whenua has historically provided a wide range of natural materials that supported cultural practice. Across the Waikato, naturally occurring iron oxide deposits associated with wetland environments were processed to produce kookoowai, a sacred red ochre used for ceremonial purposes, whakairo and in association with kooiwi tangata and taonga. While the presence of these specific resources within the project area has not been confirmed, this illustrates that the whenua may contain culturally significant materials beyond those typically identified through engineering or archaeological investigations.

Modified Landscapes and Enduring Cultural Values

Many former wetlands, springs and natural drainage systems within the wider Southern Links landscape have been drained, diverted or converted to agricultural land over time. Despite these modifications, such areas may continue to contain preserved cultural materials, taonga, kooiwi tangata and other evidence of ancestral occupation beneath the existing ground surface.

6.3.2.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koira, Te Ture Whaimana and Te Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework

Cultural Reconciliation

Te Awa Koira Framework – Piko Whenua

The proposal requires significant earthworks to facilitate the Southern Links 1 development. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, earthworks represent more than physical modification of the landscape; they involve disturbance of Papatuaanuku and therefore require careful management to minimise unnecessary disturbance, respect the cultural integrity of the whenua and appropriately manage the movement and reuse of soil throughout the project.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Mauri***

Earthworks have the potential to affect the mauri of Papatuaanuku through landform modification, soil disturbance and the exposure of culturally significant features. Appropriate earthworks management, together with the recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment, contributes to protecting the mauri of the whenua while recognising its cultural, historical and spiritual significance to the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Pou
Mana Whakahaere***

Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu during earthworks planning, implementation and cultural monitoring supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures tikanga, maatauranga Maaori and cultural values continue to inform the management of the whenua throughout project delivery.

***Te Ture Whaimana o
Te Awa o Waikato***

Although earthworks are not directly focused on the restoration of Te Awa o Waikato, minimising disturbance to the whenua and appropriately managing earthworks supports the Vision and Strategy by recognising the interconnected relationship between whenua, wai and tangata throughout the wider catchment.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)***

The proposed earthworks management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by recognising the cultural significance of Papatuaanuku, promoting the careful management of earthworks and providing for the continued involvement of mana whenua in protecting cultural values during project implementation.

6.3.2.4 Recommendations – Piko Whenua-Earthworks (PW-EW)

Ref

Recommendation

PW-EW1

Earthworks should be limited to the minimum extent reasonably necessary to facilitate the proposed development, avoiding unnecessary disturbance of Papatuaanuku wherever practicable.

PW-EW2

Where practicable, topsoil and suitable excavated material should be retained and reused within the Southern Links landscape in preference to commercial sale or unnecessary disposal offsite, recognising the physical and cultural integrity of the whenua and its relationship with the wider catchment.

PW-EW3

Earthworks design should seek to avoid or minimise disturbance of prominent landforms, former wetland environments, shallow aquifers and other areas identified as having heightened cultural or archaeological significance.

PW-EW4	Comprehensive cultural monitoring should be undertaken by representatives of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout earthworks and excavation activities to recognise and appropriately respond to any taonga, kooiwi tangata, former maara kai, cultural features, historical watercourses or other evidence of ancestral occupation that may be encountered.
PW-EW5	Cultural monitoring should work alongside archaeological investigations and statutory archaeological processes to ensure both archaeological and cultural values are appropriately recognised and managed throughout construction.
PW-EW6	Earthworks should be undertaken in accordance with approved erosion and sediment control measures and progressive stabilisation practices to minimise adverse effects on the whenua, connected waterways and the wider receiving environment.
PW-EW7	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to be actively involved throughout detailed earthworks planning, construction and implementation to ensure tikanga, maatauranga Maaori and mana whakahaere continue to inform the management of Papatuaanuku.

6.3.3 Contaminated Soils

6.3.3.1 Technical Findings

Investigations identified several areas within the Southern Links Stage 1 project footprint where previous land uses have resulted in soil contamination requiring management prior to development. The primary sources of contamination are associated with historical agricultural activities, former farm infrastructure, imported fill material and the long-term application of phosphate fertilisers.

Site investigations identified elevated concentrations of arsenic, cadmium, lead, zinc and asbestos within localised areas of the site. Elevated cadmium concentrations were also identified across grazing land, consistent with historical superphosphate application. The investigations concluded that the site is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health (NES-CS).

A Contaminated Soils Management and Remediation Plan (CSMRP) has been prepared to manage the identification, excavation, stockpiling, validation, transport and disposal of contaminated soils encountered during construction. The CSMRP also includes procedures for dust suppression, stormwater and groundwater protection, stockpile management, validation sampling and the management of any previously unidentified contamination encountered during earthworks.

The investigations conclude that, provided the recommended remediation and management measures are implemented, contaminated soils can be appropriately managed to enable the proposed residential development while protecting human health and the surrounding environment.

6.3.3.2 Cultural Reconciliation

Papatuuaanuku, Mauri and the Health of the Whenua

Papatuuaanuku is the ancestral mother from whom all life originates. She provides the whenua that has sustained mana whenua for generations and continues to uphold the interconnected relationship between whenua, wai, taiao and tangata. The mauri of Papatuuaanuku underpins the health, productivity and resilience of the natural environment, supporting the ecosystems and waterways upon which all living things depend.

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu, as mana whenua of this landscape, have maintained an enduring relationship with the whenua through whakapapa, tikanga and the exercise of kaitiakitanga. Historically, the whenua provided fertile soils for maara kai, rongoa Maaori, indigenous resources for everyday life, and places of occupation, travel and cultural practice. The health of the whenua was therefore fundamental to the health and wellbeing of mana whenua and the wider taiao.

From this perspective, contamination represents more than the presence of hazardous substances within the soil. It represents a degradation of the mauri of Papatuuaanuku and her ability to continue sustaining healthy ecosystems, indigenous biodiversity and customary relationships with the environment. The degradation of the whenua also has the potential to affect the mauri of wai through the movement of contaminants into groundwater, wetlands, natural drainage pathways and tributaries that contribute to the Mangakootukutuku catchment and ultimately the Waikato Awa.

The health and wellbeing of the Waikato Awa cannot be separated from the health of the whenua that nourishes it. Where the mauri of Papatuuaanuku is diminished, the effects may extend beyond the immediate area, influencing the health of freshwater environments, taonga species, indigenous flora and fauna, and the ability of future generations to continue exercising their responsibilities as kaitiaki.

Accordingly, the remediation of contaminated land is viewed by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu as more than a regulatory requirement. It provides an opportunity to restore the mauri of Papatuuaanuku, protect the interconnected relationship between whenua and wai, and contributes to the long-term health and wellbeing of the Waikato Awa and its catchments for future generations.

6.3.3.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora, Te Ture Whaimana and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework	Cultural Reconciliation
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Whenua</i>	Historical contamination has adversely affected the health of Papatuuaanuku within parts of the Southern Links 1 project area. The proposed remediation works provide an opportunity to restore the integrity of the whenua by removing or managing contamination, reducing risks to connected ecosystems and supporting the recovery of the wider cultural landscape.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Mauri***

The remediation of contaminated land contributes to restoring the mauri of Papatuaanuku by improving the health of the whenua and reducing potential effects on connected groundwater, wetlands, tributaries and the wider Mangakootukutuku catchment. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, restoring the mauri of the whenua also strengthens the interconnected wellbeing of wai, taiao and tangata.

***Te Awa Koiora
Framework – Pou
Mana Whakahaere***

Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout contaminated land investigation, remediation and ongoing management supports the exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values, tikanga and maatauranga Maaori continue to inform the restoration and stewardship of Papatuaanuku.

***Te Ture Whaimana o
Te Awa o Waikato***

The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by reducing potential contaminant pathways to connected freshwater environments and supporting the restoration of healthy whenua and wai throughout the wider Waikato River catchment.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari,
Tai Ao)***

The proposed contaminated land management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by restoring the health of Papatuaanuku, reducing risks to connected freshwater environments and recognising the continuing role of mana whenua in the stewardship of the whenua and taiao.

6.3.3.4 Recommendations – Piko Whenua Contaminated Lands (PW-CL)

Ref Recommendation

PW-CL1	The Contaminated Soils Management and Remediation Plan (CSMRP) should be finalised in partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to ensure cultural values and tikanga are appropriately integrated into remediation activities.
PW-CL2	Cultural monitoring by representatives of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu should be undertaken throughout contaminated soil remediation and associated earthworks to support the exercise of kaitiakitanga and respond to any cultural matters arising during excavation.
PW-CL3	Remediation activities should prioritise the protection of groundwater, aquifers, wetlands, natural drainage pathways and connected waterways to prevent

	contaminants from migrating into the Mangakootukutuku catchment and ultimately the Waikato Awa.
PW-CL4	Where contamination is identified beyond the extent of the current investigations, works within the affected area should cease until the contamination has been assessed, appropriate management measures implemented, and the SL1 TWWG Hapuu consulted on the proposed remediation approach.
PW-CL5	Validation sampling, remediation completion reports and confirmation that remediation objectives have been achieved should be provided to the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to demonstrate that the health of the whenua has been restored to a condition appropriate for its intended use.
PW-CL6	Opportunities to restore the mauri of Papatuuānuku should be incorporated into post-remediation works through indigenous planting, ecological restoration, soil rehabilitation and other enhancement measures developed in partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.
PW-CL7	Contaminated soils should be managed, transported and disposed of in accordance with best practice to prevent secondary contamination of whenua, groundwater, surface water and the wider receiving environment.
PW-CL8	The selection of remediation methods should, where practicable, consider cultural outcomes alongside technical, environmental and regulatory requirements, recognising the role of mana whenua in the restoration and long-term stewardship of Papatuuānuku.

6.3.3.6 Piko Whenua Conclusion

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu considers the protection, restoration and enhancement of mauri to be the cultural bottom line of this Cultural Values Assessment. Through the Te Awa Koiora Framework, the mauri of the whenua, the mauri of the wai and the mauri of the tangata are recognised as inseparable and mutually dependent. The degradation of one inevitably affects the others, while the restoration of one contributes to the restoration of the whole.

Papatuuānuku provides the foundation from which all life originates. The whenua has sustained mana whenua and their tuupuna for generations, providing maara kai, rongoa Māori, indigenous flora and fauna, natural resources, waterways, wetlands, places of occupation and the cultural landscapes that continue to define the identity of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. The mauri of the whenua therefore underpins the health and wellbeing of the wider taiao.

Healthy whenua sustains healthy wai. The whenua filters, stores and nourishes groundwater, wetlands, springs, tributaries and the wider catchment before these waters ultimately flow to the Waikato Awa. Where the mauri of the whenua is degraded through contamination, unnecessary disturbance or poor environmental management, the mauri of the wai is also placed at risk. Conversely, restoring the health of the whenua contributes directly to the restoration of freshwater environments and the health and wellbeing of the Waikato Awa.

The Waikato Awa and its tributaries have long supported mana whenua through mahinga kai, customary practices, cultural identity, recreation, spiritual wellbeing and the continuation of whakapapa. The ability of present and future generations to exercise these relationships relies upon the protection and restoration of the mauri of both the whenua and the wai.

These relationships are not independent. They form a continuous and interconnected system reflected through Te Awa Koiora, where Piko Whenua recognises the relationship between mana whenua and Papatuuaanuku, Piko Wai recognises the relationship with freshwater and the Waikato Awa, and Piko Tangata recognises the relationship between mana whenua, their cultural practices and the wellbeing of their communities. These relationships are upheld through Pou Mana Whakahaere, which provides the mechanism through which mana whenua exercise kaitiakitanga, tikanga and decision-making to protect, restore and enhance the mauri of the whenua, wai and tangata.

Accordingly, this Cultural Values Assessment assesses the proposal through the lens of Te Awa Koiora by recognising that the mauri of the whenua forms the foundation upon which the mauri of wai and the mauri of tangata depend. The recommendations throughout this report are therefore directed towards protecting and restoring the mauri of Papatuuaanuku, recognising the enduring relationship between mana whenua and the whenua, and ensuring that kaitiakitanga and mana whakahaere continue to guide the stewardship of this landscape for present and future generations.

6.4 Piko Taiao

Piko Taiao considers the relationship between mana whenua and the wider natural environment, recognising that healthy indigenous ecosystems are fundamental to the long-term wellbeing of the whenua, wai and tangata. While aspects of the taiao, including wetlands, freshwater ecosystems and the cultural landscape, have been considered under Piko Wai and Piko Whenua, this section focuses specifically on the protection, restoration and long-term resilience of indigenous biodiversity, ecological systems and terrestrial habitats associated with the Southern Links 1 Stage 1 proposal.

The following assessments reconcile the relevant ecological and environmental technical investigations with the cultural values and aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. Each assessment considers the extent to which the proposal supports healthy indigenous ecosystems, strengthens ecological resilience and contributes to positive environmental outcomes for future generations. Consistent with the Te Awa Koiora Framework, the technical findings are reconciled against Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato, the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao), and the cultural values of mana whenua hapuu to identify culturally informed recommendations for project implementation, restoration and long-term stewardship.

6.4.1 Ecology

6.4.1.1 Technical Review

An Ecological Assessment of Effects has been prepared to identify the existing ecological values within the Southern Links Stage 1 project area and to assess the potential ecological effects arising from the proposed development. The assessment considers indigenous vegetation, terrestrial and freshwater habitats, ecological connectivity, wetlands, and the presence of indigenous fauna, including freshwater fish, bats, lizards and avifauna. It also identifies opportunities for ecological restoration and enhancement to support the long-term resilience of the receiving environment.

The assessment concludes that, although the proposal will modify existing habitats as part of urban development, these effects can be appropriately managed through practicable avoidance, ecological restoration, habitat enhancement, indigenous planting and long-term ecological management. It adopts an integrated ecological management approach that aims to retain and enhance key ecological features, improve habitat quality and strengthen ecological connectivity across the wider project area.

The following sections reconcile the technical findings with the cultural values and aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to identify opportunities to strengthen ecological outcomes through project planning, implementation and long-term stewardship.

6.4.1.2 Cultural Reconciliation

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the taiao expresses the interconnected relationships between atua, whenua, wai, taonga species and tangata. Grounded in whakapapa, these relationships recognise that all living things possess mauri. The wellbeing of the taiao is therefore inseparable from the wellbeing of mana whenua, with the health of indigenous ecosystems and taonga species reflecting the condition of the wider cultural landscape.

Taonga species are not simply components of biodiversity; they are whanaunga that share whakapapa with the natural world and with people. They are recognised as indicators of environmental health, expressions of mauri and, in many cases, kaitiaki, spiritual guardians and carriers of wairua. Their continued presence, abundance and resilience reflect the strength of the environment, while their decline signals a weakening of the taiao and the relationships that sustain it.

For generations, mana whenua exercised kaitiakitanga through practices that protected both the taiao and the taonga species it sustained. Resources were managed in accordance with tikanga to ensure ecological balance, maintain healthy populations and provide for future generations. These practices recognised that the mauri of taonga species, the mauri of the whenua and the mauri of the people are intrinsically connected. Protecting one required protecting the others.

Although much of the Southern Links 1 landscape has been modified through raupatu, wetland drainage, vegetation clearance and urban development, the responsibility to restore these relationships has endured. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, ecological restoration is therefore not simply about replacing habitat or achieving biodiversity gains. It is about restoring the ecological integrity of the landscape, strengthening the habitats upon which taonga species depend, and enabling indigenous ecosystems to recover and flourish over successive generations.

Accordingly, the following assessment reconciles the ecological investigations against the Te Awa Koiora Framework to determine the extent to which the proposal protects and enhances indigenous ecosystems, supports taonga species, restores ecological resilience, and contributes to the long-term wellbeing of the taiao in accordance with the enduring responsibilities of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu as kaitiaki of their ancestral landscape.

6.4.1.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora Framework, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework	Cultural Reconciliation
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Taiao</i>	The proposed ecological restoration measures recognise opportunities to protect, restore and enhance indigenous ecosystems, strengthen habitat resilience and improve ecological function throughout the Southern Links 1 project area. Collectively, these outcomes support the long-term health and resilience of the taiao.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The restoration of indigenous vegetation and ecological habitats contributes to strengthening the mauri of the taiao by improving the health, diversity and resilience of indigenous ecosystems. As the mauri of the natural environment is strengthened, so too are the cultural relationships between whenua, taonga species and tangata.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in ecological restoration planning, implementation, monitoring and adaptive management supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures ecological outcomes continue to reflect the aspirations and responsibilities of mana whenua.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	The proposal aligns with the Vision and Strategy by supporting the restoration and protection of indigenous flora and fauna, adopting an integrated catchment approach and contributing to the long-term health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato through ecological restoration and environmental enhancement.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)</i>	The proposed ecological management approach aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by promoting indigenous biodiversity, restoring ecological function, strengthening habitat resilience and recognising the enduring role of mana whenua in the stewardship of the taiao.

6.4.1.4 Piko Taiao Ecology (PT-ECO) Recommendations

The cultural reconciliation has identified opportunities to further strengthen the ecological outcomes of the Southern Links 1 proposal. The following recommendations are intended to support the protection, restoration and long-term resilience of indigenous ecosystems by guiding ecological restoration, implementation, monitoring and the ongoing involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout the life of the project.

Ref	Recommendation
PT-ECO1	Ecological restoration should prioritise indigenous ecosystems that strengthen ecological resilience and long-term ecological function.
PT-ECO2	Indigenous revegetation should utilise eco-sourced plant material, where practicable, to support local biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.
PT-ECO3	Ecological restoration should strengthen habitat connectivity throughout the Southern Links 1 project area.
PT-ECO4	A Long-term Ecological Management Plan should be prepared in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and guided by the cultural values, aspirations and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment to inform ecological restoration, monitoring and adaptive management.
PT-ECO5	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to participate in ecological restoration planning, implementation and monitoring throughout the life of the project.

6.4.1.5 Conclusion

The Ecological Assessment provides a positive foundation for protecting and restoring the natural environment within the Southern Links 1 project area. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, opportunities exist to further strengthen these outcomes through long-term ecological restoration, culturally informed management and the ongoing involvement of mana whenua in implementation, monitoring and adaptive management. The following assessments consider specific taonga species and further reconcile the proposed management measures against the aspirations of the Te Awa Koiora Framework.

6.4.2 Freshwater Fishlife

6.4.2.1 Technical Review

A Fish Management Plan (FMP) has been prepared to avoid, minimise and manage adverse effects on indigenous freshwater fish during the reclamation and diversion of artificial farm drains associated with the Southern Links 1 proposal. The Plan identifies five indigenous fish species within the project area, comprising shortfin eel (tuna), longfin eel (tuna), giant kookopu, banded kookopu and black mudfish. Of these, longfin eel, giant kokopu, banded kokopu and black mudfish are recognised as species with elevated conservation status. The assessment predicts that shortfin eel are likely to be the predominant species present within the sections of drain directly affected by the proposed works.

The Fish Management Plan sets out procedures for fish salvage and relocation prior to earthworks, including staged fish capture, dewatering supervision, relocation to suitable habitat and the implementation of fish passage measures where new culverts are installed. The Plan also provides contingency measures should threatened species be encountered during construction and includes reporting requirements to confirm the outcomes of fish relocation activities.

The following cultural reconciliation considers the proposed management measures from the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and evaluates the extent to which they support the protection and long-term wellbeing of taonga freshwater species.

6.4.2.2 Cultural Reconciliation

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, indigenous freshwater fish are taonga species whose whakapapa is inseparable from Te Awa o Waikato and the wider network of tributaries, streams and wetlands that have sustained mana whenua for generations. Their presence reflects the health and mauri of the freshwater environment, while their abundance has long indicated the ability of the catchment to sustain life. Healthy ika populations therefore represent more than ecological success; they are a reflection of the enduring relationship between tangata, wai and the natural world.

For generations, tuna, kookopu and other indigenous fish species provided an important source of sustenance and contributed to the economic prosperity of neighbouring hapuu through customary harvest and exchange. Their seasonal movements and behaviour reflected the rhythms of the natural environment and informed the exercise of tikanga, guiding when and how resources were gathered to ensure healthy populations were maintained for future generations. These customary practices recognised that the wellbeing of the people depended upon the continued health of the freshwater environment and the taonga species it sustained.

Within Waikato traditions, certain ika also hold deep cultural and spiritual significance. Some are recognised as kaitiaki or are associated with taniwha that maintain an enduring presence within particular waterways, while others are regarded as carriers of wairua and messengers whose presence reflects the condition of the environment. Such traditions reinforce the understanding that taonga species possess their own mauri and are connected through whakapapa to both the natural world and the people who continue to exercise responsibility for their wellbeing.

Although the Southern Links 1 catchment has been substantially modified through drainage, land development and the loss of natural freshwater habitats, the responsibility to protect and restore taonga fish species has endured. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the successful management of indigenous fish extends beyond their salvage and relocation during construction. It requires the restoration and protection of healthy freshwater habitats, the maintenance of natural life cycles and fish passage, and the long-term resilience of indigenous fish populations throughout the wider catchment.

Accordingly, this assessment considers the extent to which the proposed management measures contribute to protecting taonga fish species during construction while supporting the long-term restoration of healthy freshwater ecosystems and the enduring relationship of mana whenua with these taonga species.

6.4.2.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora Framework, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework Cultural Reconciliation

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Taiao</i>	The proposed management measures recognise opportunities to protect taonga fish species during construction while supporting the long-term restoration of freshwater habitats and the resilience of indigenous fish populations throughout the Southern Links 1 catchment.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection of indigenous fish species contributes to maintaining and enhancing the mauri of freshwater ecosystems. Healthy taonga fish populations reflect the health of the catchment and reinforce the enduring relationship between wai, taonga species and mana whenua.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in fish management, habitat restoration and ecological monitoring supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values continue to inform the management of taonga species.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	The proposed management approach aligns with the Vision and Strategy by recognising the importance of protecting indigenous fisheries, supporting healthy freshwater ecosystems and contributing to the long-term restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of Te Awa o Waikato.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)</i>	The proposed management measures align with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by protecting taonga species, maintaining indigenous biodiversity and recognising the role of mana whenua in the long-term stewardship of freshwater ecosystems.

6.4.2.4 Piko Taiao Freshwater Fish (PT-FI) Recommendations

The cultural reconciliation has identified opportunities to further strengthen the management of taonga freshwater fish throughout the Southern Links 1 proposal. The following recommendations are intended to support the protection of indigenous fish species, their habitats and the long-term exercise of kaitiakitanga by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>PT-FI1</i>	The Fish Management Plan should be implemented in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and guided by the cultural values, aspirations and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment.

PT-FI2	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should be provided the opportunity to observe and participate in fish salvage and relocation activities, where practicable.
PT-FI3	Fish relocation should prioritise the long-term survival and wellbeing of taonga fish species by relocating them into suitable habitat within the wider catchment.
PT-FI4	Where threatened or 'At Risk' freshwater fish species are encountered, the SL1 TWWG Hapuu should be notified and involved in determining appropriate cultural management responses alongside the project ecologist and relevant statutory agencies.
PT-FI5	Post-construction monitoring should be undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of fish management measures and the long-term health of indigenous fish populations within the Southern Links 1 catchment.

6.4.2.5 Conclusion

The Fish Management Plan provides a practical framework for managing potential effects on indigenous freshwater fish during construction. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the long-term success of these measures will be reflected not only in the safe relocation of taonga species, but in the continued health, abundance and resilience of indigenous fish populations throughout the Southern Links 1 catchment. The following assessment considers the relationship between mana whenua and another important taonga species, pekapeka (long-tailed bats), and the measures proposed to protect and enhance their habitat.

6.4.3 Pekapeka

6.4.3.1 Technical Review

A Bat Management Plan (BMP) has been prepared to assess and manage the potential effects of the Southern Links 1 proposal on long-tailed bats (pekapeka), a nationally critical taonga species protected under the Wildlife Act 1953. Ecological investigations confirmed that long-tailed bats utilise the project area for foraging, commuting and potentially roosting, with the Mangakootukutuku gully, riparian corridors, mature trees and surrounding vegetation providing important habitat and ecological connectivity within the wider landscape.

The assessment identifies vegetation clearance, the removal of potential roost trees, habitat fragmentation and increased artificial lighting as the principal risks to long-tailed bats associated with the proposed development. To manage these effects, the Bat Management Plan proposes a range of measures including pre-clearance bat roost surveys, supervised vegetation removal in accordance with Department of Conservation protocols, bat-sensitive lighting design, retention and relocation of roost features, ecological corridor planting and habitat enhancement to improve long-term connectivity and habitat availability.

The following cultural reconciliation considers these proposed management measures from the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and evaluates the extent to which they contribute to the

protection of pekapeka as taonga species and the long-term restoration of the indigenous habitats upon which they depend.

6.4.3.2 Cultural Reconciliation

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, pekapeka are taonga species belonging to the domain of Taane Mahuta and occupy a unique place within the whakapapa of the natural world. Within te ao Maaori, pekapeka have long been recognised as culturally significant species whose presence reflects the enduring relationship between the spiritual and natural realms. Their nocturnal nature and close association with indigenous ngahere have contributed to their recognition within Maaori traditions as species that embody the wairua and mystery of the forest, reinforcing the responsibility of mana whenua to protect the environments upon which they depend.

Through whakapapa, pekapeka are intrinsically connected to the ngahere, indigenous vegetation and the wider taiao. Their continued presence is dependent upon healthy forests, mature trees, abundant insect populations and connected ecological corridors. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the wellbeing of pekapeka is therefore inseparable from the wellbeing of the indigenous environment as a whole. Their presence provides an important indicator of ecological integrity and demonstrates that the mauri of the ngahere continues to be sustained.

Historically, the indigenous forests throughout the Southern Links 1 landscape provided habitat for a diverse range of taonga species that collectively sustained the ecological balance of the taiao. Although much of this habitat has been fragmented through vegetation clearance and land development, the responsibility of mana whenua to restore these ecological relationships has remained constant. Protecting pekapeka is therefore not simply about conserving a single species, but about restoring the indigenous habitats, ecological connectivity and environmental conditions necessary for taonga species to flourish over successive generations.

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu recognise the measures proposed to avoid and minimise adverse effects on pekapeka during construction. However, the long-term success of these measures will ultimately depend upon restoring mature indigenous habitat, maintaining ecological connectivity, minimising disturbance to roosting habitat and ensuring that future urban development continues to support the recovery of pekapeka populations within the Southern Links 1 landscape.

Accordingly, this assessment considers the extent to which the proposed management measures contribute to the long-term protection of pekapeka by strengthening the ecological resilience of the indigenous environment and supporting the enduring exercise of kaitiakitanga by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

6.4.3.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora Framework, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework Cultural Reconciliation

Te Awa Koiora

Framework – Piko Taiao

The proposed management measures recognise opportunities to protect pekapeka habitat, maintain ecological connectivity and enhance

	indigenous vegetation, supporting the long-term resilience of this taonga species within the Southern Links 1 project area.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection and restoration of habitat for pekapeka contributes to strengthening the mauri of the ngahere and the wider taiao. The continued presence of pekapeka reflects healthy indigenous ecosystems and the ecological integrity of the landscape.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in habitat restoration, ecological monitoring and the implementation of bat management measures supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values continue to inform the protection of this taonga species.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	The proposed management measures align with the Vision and Strategy by contributing to the restoration and protection of indigenous biodiversity, strengthening ecological resilience and recognising the interconnected health of Te Awa o Waikato and its wider catchment.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)</i>	The proposal aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by protecting taonga species, restoring indigenous habitat, strengthening ecological connectivity and recognising the role of mana whenua in the long-term stewardship of the taiao.

6.4.3.4 Piko Taiao Pekapeka (PT-BAT) Recommendations

The cultural reconciliation has identified opportunities to further strengthen the protection and long-term recovery of pekapeka within the Southern Links 1 project area. The following recommendations are intended to support the protection of pekapeka, the restoration of indigenous habitat and the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>PT-BAT1</i>	The Bat Management Plan should be implemented in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and guided by the cultural values, aspirations and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment.
<i>PT-BAT2</i>	Vegetation clearance and potential roost tree management should be undertaken in accordance with the approved Bat Management Plan and relevant Department of Conservation requirements.
<i>PT-BAT3</i>	Indigenous restoration planting should strengthen habitat connectivity and provide long-term habitat opportunities for pekapeka throughout the Southern Links 1 project area.

PT-BAT4	Bat-sensitive lighting design should be incorporated throughout the project to minimise disturbance to pekapeka movement and foraging behaviour.
PT-BAT5	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to participate in the implementation, monitoring and adaptive management of bat habitat restoration throughout the life of the project.

6.4.3.5 Conclusion

The Bat Management Plan provides a comprehensive framework for avoiding and managing potential effects on pekapeka during construction. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the long-term success of these measures will be reflected in the protection of existing habitat, the restoration of connected indigenous ecosystems and the continued presence of pekapeka within the Southern Links 1 landscape. The following section considers the cultural relationship between mana whenua and indigenous lizard species and reconciles the proposed management measures through the Te Awa Koiora Framework.

6.4.4 Mokomoko

6.4.4.1 Technical Review

A Lizard Management Plan (LMP) has been prepared to manage potential effects on indigenous lizards associated with vegetation clearance and earthworks required for the Southern Links 1 proposal. Ecological investigations identified areas of suitable habitat for copper skink and potentially ornate skink within riparian planting, rank grass, blackberry and other ground-cover vegetation throughout the project area. Although no indigenous lizards were recorded during habitat surveys, the assessment concludes that suitable habitat remains present and that copper skinks are likely to occur at low densities. Accordingly, a precautionary management approach has been adopted.

The Lizard Management Plan proposes pre-clearance lizard salvage and relocation in accordance with Department of Conservation best practice and Wildlife Act authorisations. Where indigenous lizards are encountered, the proposed management includes supervised vegetation clearance, relocation to Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park, construction of artificial refugia, predator control and long-term reporting to support the successful establishment and ongoing protection of relocated populations.

The following cultural reconciliation considers the proposed management measures from the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and evaluates the extent to which they contribute to the protection of mokomoko as taonga species and the long-term stewardship of indigenous biodiversity.

6.4.4.2 Cultural Reconciliation

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, mokomoko are taonga species that occupy an important place within the whakapapa of the natural world. Belonging to the domain of Taane Mahuta, they are intrinsically connected to the whenua and are recognised within Waikato as kaitiaki whose presence reflects the enduring relationship between the physical and spiritual realms. Mokomoko carry the wairua of the whenua and, through generations of maatauranga handed down by tuupuna, have also been regarded as tohu that may signify changing circumstances, conveying omens associated with both life and death.

The cultural significance of mokomoko extends beyond the living environment. As kaitiaki, they are represented within whakairo, cultural design and other expressions of Maaori identity, symbolising guardianship, protection and the enduring responsibility of mana whenua to care for the whenua and the taiao. Their presence within both the natural and cultural landscape reinforces the reciprocal relationship between tangata and the environment that has guided the exercise of kaitiakitanga for generations.

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the continued presence of mokomoko is also an indicator of a healthy and diverse natural environment. As taonga species, they reflect the integrity of indigenous ecosystems and the ability of the whenua to continue supporting the many interconnected forms of life that collectively sustain the mauri of the wider catchment. Their protection therefore contributes not only to the preservation of an individual species, but to maintaining the ecological diversity and cultural wellbeing of the Southern Links 1 landscape.

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu acknowledge the precautionary approach adopted within the Lizard Management Plan, recognising that suitable habitat exists despite no indigenous lizards being recorded during ecological surveys. From a cultural perspective, the absence of recorded observations does not diminish the cultural significance of mokomoko or the responsibility to protect them. Rather, it reinforces the importance of adopting a precautionary approach that recognises the potential presence of taonga species and provides appropriate measures to avoid or minimise adverse effects should they be encountered.

Accordingly, this assessment considers the extent to which the proposed management measures contribute to the protection of mokomoko as taonga species while supporting the enduring exercise of kaitiakitanga and the long-term wellbeing of the whenua and its indigenous biodiversity.

6.4.4.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora Framework, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework Cultural Reconciliation

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Taiao</i>	The proposed management measures recognise opportunities to protect mokomoko through the precautionary management of potential habitat, habitat enhancement and the long-term restoration of indigenous ecosystems that support this taonga species.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection of mokomoko contributes to maintaining and enhancing the mauri of the whenua and the wider taiao. As taonga species, their continued presence reflects the health, diversity and ecological integrity of the natural environment.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in the implementation of the Lizard Management Plan, habitat restoration and ecological monitoring supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values continue to inform the protection of mokomoko.

***Te Ture Whaimana o Te
Awa o Waikato***

The proposed management measures align with the Vision and Strategy by contributing to the protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity, strengthening the ecological health of the wider catchment and recognising the interconnected relationship between tangata, whenua and the natural environment.

***Waikato-Tainui
Environmental Plan
(Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai
Ao)***

The proposal aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by protecting taonga species, restoring indigenous habitat and recognising the role of mana whenua in the long-term stewardship of indigenous biodiversity and the taiao.

6.4.4.4 Piko Taiao Mokomoko (PT-LIZ) Recommendations

The cultural reconciliation has identified opportunities to further strengthen the protection of mokomoko and their habitat throughout the Southern Links 1 proposal. The following recommendations are intended to support the long-term protection of this taonga species and the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>PT-LIZ1</i>	The Lizard Management Plan should be implemented in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu and guided by the cultural values, aspirations and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment.
<i>PT-LIZ2</i>	Indigenous lizard salvage and relocation should be undertaken in accordance with the approved Lizard Management Plan and relevant Department of Conservation Wildlife Act Authorisations. Where native lizards (mokomoko) are incidentally killed, they should, where authorised, be respectfully returned to the whenua through burial in consultation with mana whenua to uphold the mauri of the mokomoko and the whenua.
<i>PT-LIZ3</i>	Habitat enhancement and predator control measures should be implemented to support the long-term establishment and resilience of relocated mokomoko populations.
<i>PT-LIZ4</i>	Where indigenous lizards are encountered during construction, the SL1 TWWG Hapuu should be notified and provided the opportunity to participate in determining appropriate cultural management responses.

PT-LIZ5

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to participate in the implementation, monitoring and adaptive management of mokomoko habitat throughout the life of the project.

6.4.4.5 Conclusion

The Lizard Management Plan adopts a precautionary approach to managing potential effects on indigenous lizards within the Southern Links 1 project area. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the protection of mokomoko extends beyond species management to recognising their role as taonga, kaitiaki and indicators of a healthy and diverse natural environment. The proposed management measures provide an opportunity to protect these enduring cultural relationships while strengthening indigenous habitat and supporting the long-term resilience of mokomoko within the wider landscape.

6.4.5 Manu (Aviafauna)**6.4.5.1 Technical Review**

A Bird Management Plan (BirdMP) has been prepared to manage potential effects on indigenous bird species associated with vegetation clearance and construction activities within the Southern Links 1 proposal. Ecological investigations identified that the project area currently supports a relatively small assemblage of common indigenous and introduced bird species associated with a highly modified rural landscape. However, desktop assessments also identified numerous Threatened and 'At Risk' indigenous bird species within the wider locality, recognising that nearby waterways, riparian vegetation and the Mangakootukutuku gully continue to provide important habitat for indigenous avifauna.

The principal ecological risk identified is the removal of nesting habitat during the breeding season, with potential effects including disturbance, injury or mortality of nesting birds and the loss of habitat used for feeding, shelter and reproduction. To avoid and minimise these effects, the Bird Management Plan proposes avoiding vegetation clearance during the peak breeding season where practicable, undertaking pre-clearance nest surveys, establishing exclusion buffers around active nests where required and implementing ecological supervision where vegetation clearance cannot be avoided.

The main ecological risk is the removal of nesting habitat during the breeding season, which could disturb, injure or kill nesting birds and reduce habitat used for feeding, shelter and reproduction. To avoid or minimise these effects, the Bird Management Plan recommends avoiding vegetation clearance during peak breeding periods where practicable, undertaking pre-clearance nest surveys, establishing exclusion buffers around active nests where required, and providing ecological supervision where clearance cannot be avoided.

6.4.5.2 Cultural Reconciliation

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, manu are taonga species belonging to the domain of Taane Mahuta and occupy an important place within the whakapapa of the natural world. Their presence reflects the vitality of the ngahere and the wider taiao, where healthy forests, abundant food sources and

functioning ecosystems sustain diverse indigenous bird populations. The wellbeing of manu has long been recognised as an indicator of the health and abundance of the natural environment, signalling that the ngahere continues to provide the resources necessary to support life.

Within Waikato traditions, many manu also possess deep cultural and spiritual significance. They are recognised as kaitiaki and messengers that move between the physical and spiritual realms, carrying meaning through their presence, behaviour and call. Particular reverence is afforded to species such as the ruuruu, whose call has long been understood by many as a reminder of those who have passed into the spiritual world, while species such as the piwakawaka are recognised as messengers whose appearance may carry significance depending on the circumstances. Through generations of maatauranga, these relationships have reinforced the understanding that manu are not merely part of the natural environment, but are woven into the cultural and spiritual identity of mana whenua.

Historically, indigenous bird species also provided an important source of sustenance and cultural resources for mana whenua. Birds were harvested in accordance with tikanga and seasonal cycles, while feathers were valued for ceremonial dress, adornment and cultural expression. These customary practices reflected a reciprocal relationship with the ngahere, where resources were carefully managed to ensure that indigenous bird populations remained healthy and available for future generations.

Although the indigenous forests of the Southern Links 1 landscape have been substantially reduced through historical land use and development, the responsibility of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to protect manu as taonga species has endured. The restoration of indigenous vegetation, protection of nesting habitat and enhancement of ecological diversity provide opportunities to strengthen the long-term resilience of indigenous bird populations while contributing to the wider restoration of the ngahere and its associated ecosystems.

Accordingly, this assessment considers the extent to which the proposed management measures contribute to protecting manu throughout construction while supporting the long-term restoration of indigenous bird habitat and the enduring exercise of kaitiakitanga by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu.

6.4.5.3 Alignment with Te Awa Koiora Framework, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

Assessment Framework Cultural Reconciliation

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Piko Taiao</i>	The proposed management measures recognise opportunities to protect manu through the retention of nesting habitat, the restoration of indigenous vegetation and the enhancement of habitats that support indigenous bird populations throughout the Southern Links 1 landscape.
<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Mauri</i>	The protection and restoration of indigenous bird habitat contributes to strengthening the mauri of the ngahere and wider taiao. The continued presence and diversity of manu reflects healthy ecosystems and the ecological resilience of the natural environment.

<i>Te Awa Koiora Framework – Pou Mana Whakahaere</i>	Continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu in habitat restoration, ecological monitoring and the implementation of bird management measures supports the ongoing exercise of mana whakahaere and ensures cultural values continue to inform the protection of manu as taonga species.
<i>Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato</i>	The proposed management measures align with the Vision and Strategy by contributing to the protection of indigenous biodiversity, strengthening ecological resilience and supporting the restoration of healthy ecosystems throughout the wider Waikato River catchment.
<i>Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan (Tai Tumu, Tai Pari, Tai Ao)</i>	The proposal aligns with the aspirations of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan by protecting taonga species, restoring indigenous habitat and recognising the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki in the long-term stewardship of indigenous biodiversity.

6.4.5.4 Piko Taiao Avifauna (PT-AV) Recommendations

The cultural reconciliation has identified opportunities to support the protection of manu and their habitat throughout the Southern Links 1 proposal. The following recommendations are intended to support practical management during construction while strengthening long-term habitat outcomes for indigenous bird species.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>
<i>PT-AV1</i>	The Bird Management Plan should be implemented and guided by the cultural values, aspirations and recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment.
<i>PT-AV2</i>	Vegetation clearance should avoid the indigenous bird breeding season wherever practicable and be undertaken in accordance with the approved Bird Management Plan.
<i>PT-AV3</i>	Indigenous restoration planting should prioritise species that provide long-term food sources, nesting habitat and ecological diversity for manu.
<i>PT-AV4</i>	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to participate in the implementation, monitoring and adaptive management of indigenous bird habitat restoration throughout the life of the project.

6.4.5.5 Conclusion

The Bird Management Plan provides an appropriate framework for managing potential effects on indigenous bird species during construction. From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the

protection of manu extends beyond avoiding adverse effects during vegetation clearance to restoring the ecological diversity, abundance and health of the ngahere upon which these taonga species depend. Collectively, the proposed management measures provide an opportunity to strengthen indigenous bird habitat, support the long-term resilience of manu and contribute to the wider restoration of the Southern Links 1 landscape in accordance with the principles of kaitiakitanga and the aspirations of Te Awa Koiora.

6.5 Piko Tangata

6.5.1 Cultural Context

Piko Tangata recognises that the wellbeing of the people is inseparable from the wellbeing of the whenua, wai and taiao. For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the restoration of the natural environment must also provide opportunities to restore and strengthen the relationship of mana whenua with their ancestral landscape, ensuring that present and future generations continue to exercise the responsibilities inherited from their tuupuna.

Prior to raupatu, the ancestors of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu exercised mana whakahaere and mana motuhake throughout the Southern Links 1 landscape through their enduring relationships with the whenua, waterways and natural resources. These responsibilities were expressed through tikanga, the sustainable management of resources, the protection of waahi tapu, the maintenance of customary practices and the collective wellbeing of their people. The confiscation of ancestral lands and the subsequent transformation of the landscape significantly disrupted these relationships; however, the responsibilities of mana whenua as kaitiaki have never diminished.

Today, these responsibilities continue to be exercised through the governance, planning and environmental leadership undertaken by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu on behalf of their iwi, hapuu and marae. Through participation in Treaty settlement implementation, statutory planning processes, collaborative partnerships and environmental decision-making, mana whenua continue to uphold the aspirations of their tuupuna while advocating for outcomes that strengthen the cultural, environmental, social and economic wellbeing of future generations.

From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, successful development is therefore measured not only by its environmental performance, but by the opportunities it creates for people. This includes restoring cultural identity, strengthening mana whakahaere, creating pathways for employment and economic participation, recognising cultural identity within the built environment, and ensuring that the benefits of development contribute to the long-term wellbeing of mokopuna and the generations who will inherit this landscape.

Accordingly, Piko Tangata reconciles the planning and implementation aspects of the Southern Links 1 proposal against the Te Awa Koiora Framework to assess the extent to which the proposal contributes to the aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu for healthy communities, enduring partnerships, intergenerational prosperity and the continued exercise of mana whakahaere throughout their ancestral landscape.

6.5.2 Mana Whakahaere Recommendations

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, mana whakahaere is the continuing expression of inherited authority and responsibility as kaitiaki of their ancestral landscape. While the proposal has benefited from early engagement, the successful implementation of Southern Links 1 will depend upon maintaining meaningful participation throughout detailed design, consent implementation, construction and future stages of development. Mana whakahaere extends beyond consultation and is demonstrated through active participation in decision-making, cultural leadership and the implementation of cultural outcomes.

The following recommendations seek to ensure that the SL1 TWWG Hapuu continue to exercise mana whakahaere throughout the implementation of Southern Links 1 and that the cultural outcomes identified within this Cultural Values Assessment are effectively integrated into project delivery.

Ref	Recommendation
PT-MW1	The SL1 TWWG Hapuu should continue to provide the principal cultural advisory forum throughout detailed design, consent implementation, construction and future stages of the Southern Links 1 proposal.
PT-MW2	Project management plans should be prepared in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu at an early stage to ensure cultural values, tikanga and the recommendations of this Cultural Values Assessment are appropriately incorporated where relevant.
PT-MW3	A Cultural Monitoring Plan should be prepared in partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu prior to the commencement of earthworks to guide cultural monitoring throughout construction, incorporating cultural monitoring protocols, accidental discovery procedures, communication pathways, reporting requirements and the appointment of cultural monitors by the hapuu. The plan should be reviewed and updated, where required, in consultation with the hapuu throughout project implementation.
PT-MW4	Appropriate resourcing should be provided to enable the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to undertake cultural advisory services, technical review, cultural monitoring and ongoing participation where necessary throughout relevant Project Planning and Implementation phases. This will be collectively determined between the Applicant and the SL1 TWWG.
PT-MW5	The recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment, together with any subsequent cultural reports prepared by the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, should be considered during the preparation of consent conditions, project management plans and other implementation documents where relevant.
PT-MW6	A Cultural Recommendations Register should be established to record how the recommendations of this Cultural Values Assessment are proposed to be

implemented, with regular review and discussion between the Applicant and the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout the life of the project.

6.5.3 Housing and Intergenerational Wellbeing Recommendations

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, housing represents more than urban development. It provides an opportunity to strengthen the long-term wellbeing of whaanau by creating places where future generations can live, prosper and maintain their connection with their ancestral landscape. Consistent with the aspirations of mana whenua, future housing opportunities should contribute to cultural, social, environmental and economic wellbeing while supporting the long-term aspirations of mokopuna and strengthening the connection of future generations with their whenua.

The following recommendations seek to encourage ongoing collaboration regarding housing opportunities that align with the aspirations of the SL1 TWWG hapuu and contribute positively to the future development of Southern Links 1.

Ref	Recommendation
PT-HW1	The Applicant should continue to work collaboratively with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to identify opportunities for housing outcomes that support the aspirations of mana whenua throughout future stages of the Southern Links 1 development.
PT-HW2	Opportunities for collaboration with Kāinga Ora should be explored with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu where these align with the aspirations of mana whenua and future housing initiatives associated with the project.
PT-HW3	Future neighbourhood planning should, where practicable, recognise opportunities to strengthen community wellbeing, access to open space, walkability and the long-term wellbeing of present and future generations.

6.5.4 Employment, Procurement and Capacity Building Recommendations

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, meaningful participation in development extends beyond environmental management to include opportunities for employment, business development and the strengthening of mana whenua capability. Southern Links 1 should provide opportunities for the hapuu to contribute their knowledge, skills and services throughout the planning, construction, restoration and operational phases of the project while building capability that will continue to benefit future generations.

The following recommendations seek to strengthen opportunities for mana whenua participation and long-term economic development throughout the implementation of Southern Links 1.

Ref	Recommendation
PT-EP1	The Applicant should prepare a Mana Whenua Procurement Plan in consultation with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to maximise opportunities for participating hapuu businesses, suppliers and service providers throughout the planning, construction, restoration and operational phases of the project.
PT-EP2	The Applicant should work collaboratively with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu to identify employment, apprenticeship, cadetship and training opportunities for members of the SL1 TWWG hapuu throughout the life of the project.
PT-EP3	Opportunities should be provided to strengthen mana whenua capability through participation in planning, environmental management, cultural advisory services, cultural monitoring, restoration and project implementation associated with Southern Links 1.

6.5.5 Cultural Identity and Design Recommendations

For the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the future urban environment should recognise and reflect the enduring cultural identity of mana whenua. Beyond environmental restoration, Southern Links 1 provides an opportunity to express the history, whakapapa and continuing presence of the SL1 TWWG hapuu through the design of public spaces, landscape treatment, cultural narratives and place naming. Integrating these elements within the development will contribute to creating a distinctive place that reflects the ancestral landscape while strengthening the connection of future generations with their cultural identity.

Recognising that some cultural knowledge and site-specific narratives are culturally sensitive and not appropriate for inclusion within a public Cultural Values Assessment, the SL1 TWWG Hapuu may prepare supplementary Cultural Advice documents to inform detailed design where appropriate. This approach enables cultural values to be integrated into the project while ensuring that culturally sensitive maatauranga remains under the care and control of mana whenua.

The following recommendations seek to ensure that the cultural identity of the SL1 TWWG hapuu is appropriately recognised and expressed throughout the detailed design and future implementation of Southern Links 1.

Ref	Recommendation
PT-CD1	The Applicant should work collaboratively with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu during detailed design to incorporate mana whenua narratives, cultural design principles,

	indigenous landscape expression, indigenous planting, public artwork and cultural interpretation where appropriate throughout the development. Where cultural design components are incorporated, the Applicant should seek to utilise hapuu cultural designers, artists and practitioners wherever practicable.
PT-CD2	Recognising that some cultural knowledge is culturally sensitive and not appropriate for inclusion within this Cultural Values Assessment, the SL1 TWWG Hapuu may prepare supplementary Cultural Advice documents to provide site-specific cultural narratives, cultural design guidance and other cultural advice to inform detailed design, landscape treatment and project implementation where appropriate.
PT-CD3	The Applicant should engage with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu regarding the naming of roads, reserves, wetlands, open spaces and other public features to appropriately recognise the cultural history, whakapapa and identity of the Southern Links 1 landscape.

6.6 Te Awa Koiora Technical Reconciliation Summary

The Te Awa Koiora Technical Reconciliation has provided an integrated cultural assessment of the Southern Links 1 proposal by reconciling the technical assessments against the four interconnected piko of Te Awa Koiora: Piko Wai, Piko Whenua, Piko Taiao and Piko Tangata. Collectively, these piko recognise that the health of Te Awa o Waikato cannot be considered through individual environmental disciplines, but through the interconnected whakapapa relationships that exist between wai, whenua, taiao and tangata.

Throughout this Cultural Values Assessment, mauri has provided the unifying thread across each piko, recognising that the wellbeing of one is inseparable from the wellbeing of the others. The restoration of healthy waterways strengthens the whenua; healthy whenua supports thriving ecosystems; healthy taiao sustains the wellbeing of mana whenua; and in turn, mana whenua continues to exercise the inherited responsibilities as kaitiaki through mana whakahaere. Together, these reciprocal relationships give practical expression to Te Awa Koiora.

The cultural reconciliation has identified that the Southern Links 1 proposal presents opportunities to protect and enhance these interconnected relationships through integrated stormwater management, ecological restoration, cultural landscape protection, cultural design, housing, employment and the continued involvement of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu throughout project implementation.

The recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment collectively form the Pou Mana Whakahaere of the Te Awa Koiora Framework. They provide the practical mechanisms through which the cultural, environmental and intergenerational aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu can be

implemented throughout detailed design, construction and the long-term stewardship of the Southern Links 1 landscape.

7. Conclusion

This Cultural Values Assessment has assessed the Southern Links 1 proposal from the perspective of the cultural values, responsibilities and aspirations of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu. Through the reconciliation of the technical assessments, the proposal has been considered against the relevant statutory framework, maatauranga Maaori and the collective cultural values of the Southern Links 1 Tangata Whenua Working Group Hapuu.

The assessment recognises that Southern Links 1 will result in significant change to the existing environment. As with many large-scale infrastructure and urban development projects, the proposal has the potential to generate adverse cultural and environmental effects if not appropriately managed. Equally, however, it presents a significant opportunity to restore freshwater systems, strengthen ecological resilience, protect cultural landscapes and create enduring cultural, social and economic outcomes for the participating hapuu.

From the perspective of the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, the long-term success of the proposal will depend less on the construction of the infrastructure itself and more on the manner in which the project is implemented. Continued partnership with the SL1 TWWG Hapuu, early engagement, the integration of cultural values into project decision-making, and appropriate resourcing for mana whenua participation will be fundamental to achieving the aspirations identified throughout this Cultural Values Assessment.

The recommendations contained within this report provide a practical framework to guide detailed design, resource consent condition development and implementation, construction and ongoing stewardship of the Southern Links 1 development. Together, they seek to ensure that the proposal not only avoids or mitigates adverse effects, but also delivers positive cultural, environmental, social and economic outcomes that reflect the aspirations of the SL1 TWWG.

The SL1 TWWG Hapuu consider that the Southern Links 1 proposal has the potential to achieve positive cultural outcomes, provided the recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment continue to inform project delivery. Through their implementation, Southern Links 1 has the opportunity to leave an enduring legacy that recognises the relationship of mana whenua with this ancestral landscape and contributes to the wellbeing of present and future generations.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Future Consolidated Recommendations Register (Cultural Implementation Framework)

Note:

At the time of preparing this Cultural Values Assessment, the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal remains subject to the substantive Fast Track Approvals process. Accordingly, a consolidated implementation register has not been prepared as part of this assessment.

*Should the project receive the necessary approvals to proceed, it is recommended that a **Consolidated Recommendations Register** be prepared collaboratively by the Applicant and the SL1 TWWG following the granting of consent. The register should consolidate the recommendations contained within this Cultural Values Assessment, together with any subsequent Cultural Advice Documents, and identify their implementation through consent conditions, management plans, detailed design, construction and ongoing project implementation.*

The register should operate as a live implementation document, enabling recommendations to be tracked, reviewed and updated throughout the necessary components of the project.

Example

Ref	Piko	Theme	Recommendation	Implementation Stage	Responsibility	Status
PW-WM1	Piko Wai	Water Management		Design	Applicant	
PW-SW1	Piko Wai	Stormwater		Design / Construction	Applicant	
PW-WQ1	Piko Wai	Water Quality		Construction / Operation	Applicant	
PW-EW1	Piko Whenua	Earthworks		Construction	Applicant	
PW-AR1	Piko Whenua	Archaeology		Construction	Applicant / HNZPT	
PW-CL1	Piko Whenua	Cultural Landscape		Design	Applicant	
PT-ECO1	Piko Taiao	Ecology		Design / Construction	Applicant	
PT-FM1	Piko Taiao	Fish		Construction / Operation	Applicant	
PT-BM1	Piko Taiao	Birds		Construction	Applicant	
PT-LM1	Piko Taiao	Lizards		Construction	Applicant	
PT-BAT1	Piko Taiao	Pekapeka		Construction	Applicant	
PT-MW1	Piko Tangata	Mana Whakahaere		Entire Project	Applicant / SL1 TWWG	

PT-HW1	Piko Tangata	Housing		Future Development	Applicant / SL1 TWWG	
PT-EP1	Piko Tangata	Employment & Procurement		Entire Project	Applicant	
PT-CD1	Piko Tangata	Cultural Identity & Design		Detailed Design	Applicant / SL1 TWWG	

Implementation Note: The recommendations contained within this register are intended to guide the ongoing implementation of the Southern Links 1 proposal. Where appropriate, recommendations should inform the development of consent conditions, management plans and detailed design, and be implemented in partnership with the SL1 Tangata Whenua Working Group.

Appendix 2 – Ngaati Apakura Cultural Values Report

The **Ngaati Apakura Cultural Values Report** accompanies this Cultural Values Assessment as a separate supporting document and should be read alongside this assessment.

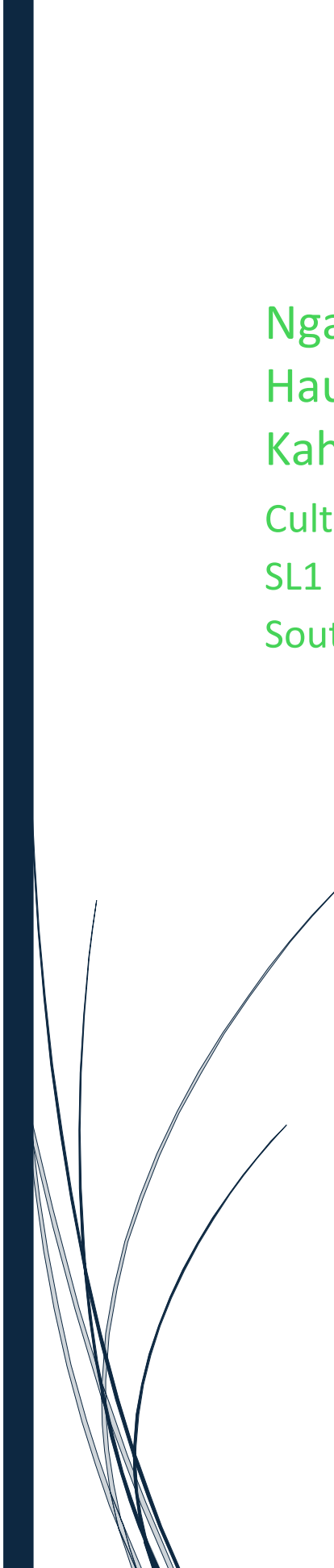
The report provides additional hapuu-specific historical narratives, whakapapa, cultural values, landscape associations and aspirations that have informed the preparation of this Cultural Values Assessment. While this assessment establishes the shared cultural framework for the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal, the accompanying Ngaati Apakura Cultural Values Report provides further context regarding the cultural relationship of Ngaati Apakura with the wider ancestral landscape.

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Appendix 3 – Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura and Ngaati Hauaa Cultural Values Report

The **Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Koroki-Kahukura and Ngaati Hauaa Cultural Values Report** accompanies this Cultural Values Assessment as a separate supporting document and should be read alongside this assessment.

The report provides additional hapuu-specific historical narratives, whakapapa, cultural values, landscape associations and aspirations that have informed the preparation of this Cultural Values Assessment. While this assessment establishes the shared cultural framework for the Southern Links Stage 1 proposal, the accompanying Cultural Values Report provides further context regarding the cultural relationship of the above-named with the wider ancestral landscape.

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Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Hauaa & Ngaati Korokii Kahukura

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Appendix 4 – Ngaati Maahanga Cultural Narrative

Ngaati Maahanga Cultural Landscape Narrative – Koromaatua (Southern Links Stage One)

The Southern Links Stage One proposal traverses part of the ancestral cultural landscape of Ngaati Maahanga, including the area known traditionally as Korongaa Maatua naa Puuhaanga (Koromaatua). For Ngaati Maahanga, this landscape is not defined solely by individual archaeological sites or recorded waahi tapu. It is a living cultural landscape where whakapapa, whenua, wai, taiao and tangata remain inseparably connected through generations of occupation, customary practice and kaitiakitanga.

Ngaati Maahanga maintains an enduring relationship with Koromaatua founded upon whakapapa, hereditary authority, customary occupation, spiritual leadership and the continuous exercise of mana whenua. That relationship neither commenced nor concluded with physical occupation of individual settlements. Rather, it reflects an ongoing obligation to protect the mauri of the whenua and wai and to uphold responsibilities inherited from tuupuna and carried forward for future generations.

The cultural associations of Koromaatua are supported by multiple independent evidential sources, including koorero tuku iho, whakapapa, Maaori Land Court evidence, Waitangi Tribunal claimant evidence, historical Crown records, archaeological investigations and the historical research of Hayward and Samuels (2022). Collectively, these sources demonstrate the continuous exercise of Ngaati Maahanga mana whenua through occupation, hereditary authority, spiritual leadership, burial practices, customary use and cultural responsibility across the wider ancestral landscape (Collins, Turner & Kelly-Hepi Te Huia, 2012; Hayward & Samuels, 2022; Rakena, 1909; Turton, 1864; *Te Rongopai: Treasures to Remember*).

Korongaa Maatua naa Puuhaanga was an important centre of Ngaati Maahanga settlement comprising numerous kaainga, cultivation areas, travel routes and places of burial. Historical evidence records multiple urupaa, including those located within the area now occupied by the Temple, confirming Koromaatua as an important centre of occupation, ancestral connection and spiritual significance within the wider Ngaati Maahanga cultural landscape (Hayward & Samuels, 2022; Collins, Turner & Kelly-Hepi Te Huia, 2012).

Koromaatua formed part of a broader interconnected cultural landscape extending across the Waikato River catchment, including Temple View, Glenview, Peacocke, Mangakotukutuku, Waitawhiriwhiri, Whatawhata and the Waikato River itself. Waterways, wetlands, ridgelines, paa, kaainga, urupaa and waahi tapu collectively express the longstanding relationship between Ngaati Maahanga and the whenua. The significance of the landscape therefore, arises not only from individual places but from the relationships that exist between them.

The Waitangi Tribunal Oral and Traditional History identifies the constituent hapuu of Ngaati Maahanga as sharing whakapapa and customary relationships that collectively express the exercise of mana whenua across the ancestral estate. Historical research undertaken by Hayward and Samuels (2022) similarly identifies additional affiliated hapuu whose relationships with Ngaati Maahanga were maintained through whakapapa, intermarriage and customary occupation. Together, these relationships demonstrate the depth, continuity and collective nature of Ngaati Maahanga authority throughout the Koromaatua landscape. Mana whenua is therefore understood through the interconnected relationships of Ngaati Maahanga and its constituent hapuu rather than through the occupation of any single locality (Collins, Turner & Kelly-Hepi Te Huia, 2012; Hayward & Samuels, 2022).

The hereditary authority of Koromaatua is reflected through the whakapapa of its principal tuupuna. Uehooka Hone Kingi of Ngaati Kuku and Ngaati Hourua exercised hereditary authority at Koromaatua. Through his daughter Mihi Aotea, Te Mokorou of Ngaati Ruru became established there, with subsequent generations continuing through constituent hapuu of Ngaati Maahanga. These whakapapa relationships demonstrate an unbroken continuity of customary authority until physical occupation was disrupted by the confiscation of the Horotiu–Waipaa Block rather than through voluntary alienation (Hayward & Samuels, 2022; Rakena, 1909).

Koromaatua also occupied an important place within the spiritual traditions of Ngaati Maahanga. Tai Rakena's evidence before the Maaori Land Court identifies Te Rangiwhakaokonga within the hereditary line of Ngaati Maahanga tohunga descending from Ruateatea. Historical evidence records Te Rangiwhakaokonga as a tohunga ahurewa who resided at Koromaatua and directed that he be buried there. His burial within the principal houhanga confirms the enduring spiritual significance of Koromaatua as a place where ancestral authority, ceremonial practice and whakapapa converged across generations (Rakena, 1909; Hayward & Samuels, 2022; *Te Rongopai: Treasures to Remember*).

The relationship between Ngaati Maahanga and Koromaatua is further reinforced through claimant evidence identifying Temple View as a Ngaati Maahanga waahi tapu and recording that the Temple was constructed over a Ngaati Maahanga urupaa. Historical accounts record that Roore Erueti granted permission for the Temple construction to proceed, reflecting the continued exercise of Ngaati Maahanga authority over the site. During construction in 1957, kooiwi were uncovered and subsequently identified by Ngaati Maahanga, demonstrating that cultural responsibilities continued long after confiscation and remain active whenever activities affect ancestral lands (Collins, Turner & Kelly-Hepi Te Huia, 2012; Hayward & Samuels, 2022; *Te Rongopai: Treasures to Remember*).

Although Crown confiscation disrupted physical occupation, it did not extinguish the responsibilities of Ngaati Maahanga as mana whenua. Whaanau relocated throughout the wider rohe, including Whatawhata, while maintaining whakapapa, identity and customary responsibilities associated with Koromaatua. Historical census records and claimant evidence demonstrate this continuity of occupation following confiscation. Correspondence relating to the Horotiu–Waipaa Block similarly confirms that Koromaatua was not alienated through voluntary

sale but was affected by Crown confiscation associated with the Waikato invasion (Hayward & Samuels, 2022; Turton, 1864).

For Ngaati Maahanga, the cultural values associated with Koromaatua continue to inform contemporary resource management responsibilities. Kaitiakitanga extends beyond acknowledging historical associations and requires active participation in decisions affecting whenua, wai and taiao. This responsibility aligns with Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato, recognising that the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and its tributaries cannot be separated from the protection of the surrounding cultural landscape. The mauri of waterways, groundwater, wetlands, soils, indigenous ecosystems and ancestral landscapes are interconnected, and changes to one element inevitably influence the wellbeing of the whole.

Accordingly, the Southern Links proposal should be assessed not only by its ability to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects, but also by the extent to which it contributes positively to the restoration of cultural landscapes, freshwater health and indigenous biodiversity. Protection of cultural values requires the meaningful involvement of Ngaati Maahanga throughout detailed design, construction, ecological restoration, monitoring and long-term management to ensure that cultural values continue to guide decision-making over the life of the project.

Ngaati Maahanga therefore, considers the Southern Links Stage One proposal to be more than an infrastructure project. It is a proposal situated within an ancestral cultural landscape that continues to embody the identity, history and responsibilities of Ngaati Maahanga. Recognition of that enduring relationship should be reflected throughout project planning, consent conditions, implementation, restoration and ongoing management so that the obligations of kaitiakitanga are upheld for present and future generations.

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Cultural Values Assessment (CVA)

Ngaati Apakura

SL1 Houchens Development – Southern Hamilton



NGĀTI APAKURA

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1. Introduction

This Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) has been prepared on behalf of Ngaati Apakura in relation to the proposed SL1 development within the Hamilton Southern Links (HSL) growth area.

The purpose of this CVA is to:

- Articulate the relationship of Ngaati Apakura with the whenua, wai, and wider cultural landscape
- Identify potential cultural effects associated with the SL1 development
- Provide recommendations to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse effects
- Ensure Ngaati Apakura values and maatauranga are appropriately reflected within planning and decision-making processes

The SL1 development forms part of a wider programme of urban expansion, incorporating residential, industrial, and infrastructure development across the southern extent of Hamilton.

2. Cultural Context and Whakapapa Foundations of Ngaati Apakura

The SL1 development area is situated within a wider cultural landscape in which Ngaati Apakura hold enduring whakapapa-based interests, associations, and responsibilities. These interests arise from long-established patterns of occupation, resource use, and ancestral connection across the Waipā and southern Waikato region and are inseparable from the genealogical foundations of the iwi.

Ngaati Apakura identity is anchored in descent from the Tainui waka, whose captain, Hoturoa, established the ancestral lines that define the cultural and political landscape of the Waikato and Waipaa. From Hoturoa descends a line of rangatira through to Taawhaao, a pivotal ancestor whose lineage gave rise to multiple significant Tainui iwi and hapū.

Taawhaao had two principal sons:

- **Whatihua** (the elder / maataamua line) born to Maru-te-hiakina, the younger sister
- **Tuurongo** (the second born son) born to Puniu-te-Kore, the older sister

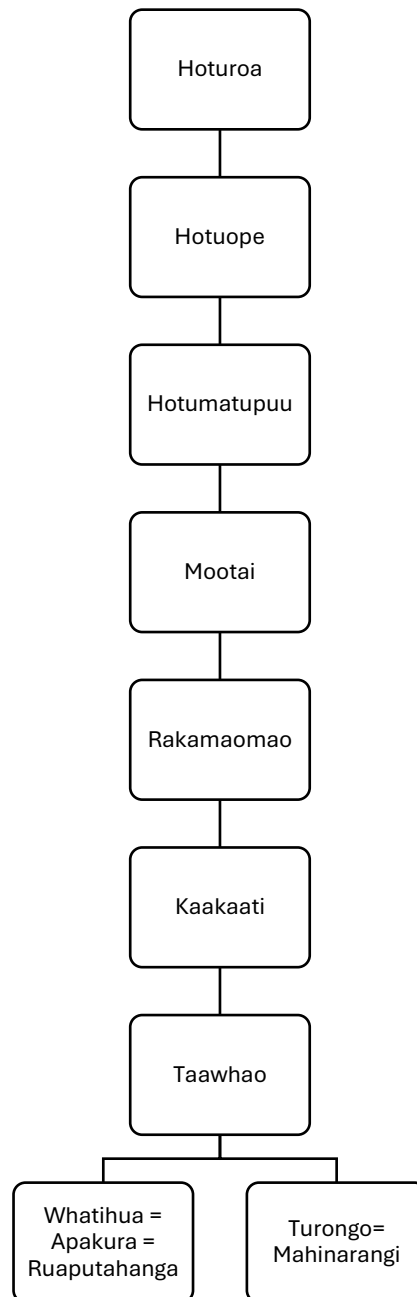
These lines established enduring spheres of influence across the region, forming the basis of later tribal identities and relationships.

Whatihua, as the maataamua, entered into significant marital unions that shaped the descent lines of Waikato iwi. His first union was with Ruapuutahanga, and subsequently with Apakura, from whom Ngaati Apakura takes its name and identity. Through this lineage, Ngaati Apakura descend directly from the senior line of Whatihua, affirming their standing within the wider Tainui confederation.



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Whakapapa Tuku iho: Hoturoa ki Whatihua and Apakura



This whakapapa establishes Ngaati Apakura not simply as occupants of the landscape, but as holders of inherited relationships and responsibilities to the whenua, wai, and wider cultural systems of the region.

Apakura herself is recognised in koorero tuku iho as having whakapapa connections beyond Tainui, including associations with Te Arawa and the patupaiarehe traditions. These narratives are important not only as genealogical records, but as expressions of the layered and

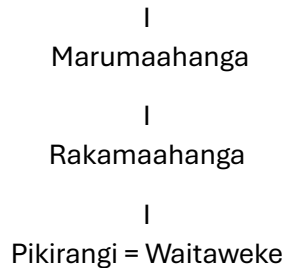


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interconnected nature of Maaori identity, linking Ngaati Apakura to wider ancestral and spiritual networks across Aotearoa

Whakapapa and Spatial Identity

Apakura = Whatihua



Ngaati Apakura

This line of descent affirms Ngaati Apakura as heirs of the union between Apakura and Whatihua, through Marumahanga, Rakamahanga, and Pikirangi (who married Waiteweke). Through this whakapapa, Ngaati Apakura inherit not only ancestry, but a framework of relationships, responsibilities, and obligations that bind people to whenua, wai, and one another. This lineage shaped patterns of movement, settlement, and resource use, particularly across inland landscapes rich in wetlands, birdlife, and tuna. Whakapapa in this context is not merely genealogical record; it is the basis through which Ngaati Apakura understand identity, connection, and kaitiakitanga, informing how places were occupied, how resources were managed, and how relationships with neighbouring hapuu and iwi were maintained within a dynamic and relational cultural landscape. The descent from Whatihua and Apakura is intrinsically linked to the inland landscapes of Waipaa, including Oohaupoo, Rukuhia, Rangiaowhia, Te Awamutu, Pirongia, Ngaroto, Paa te rangi and the surrounding wetland systems. These relationships are expressed in the well-established whakatauki:

“Whatihua ki tai, Apakura ki uta”

This statement reflects a complementary spatial order in which:

- Coastal domains remained aligned with Whatihua-associated relationships to Kawhia moana
- Inland domains, including extensive wetland systems of Ngaaroto, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua became central to Ngaati Apakura identity and occupation

Within this inland orientation, the whenua and wai associated with the SL1 area form part of a continuous Ngaati Apakura cultural landscape, historically characterised by:

- Extensive repo (wetlands) such as Rukuhia and Moanatuatua
- Interconnected awa and drainage systems feeding the Waipaa River
- Networks of paa, kaainga, and mahinga kai sites

- Established ara tuku iho linking inland settlements with wider trade and exchange systems

Historic sources, including the Hochstetter survey of the Waipaa–Waikato basin (c.1859–1860), provide independent corroboration of this interconnected landscape, depicting dense wetland coverage, settlement patterns, and movement networks throughout the area.

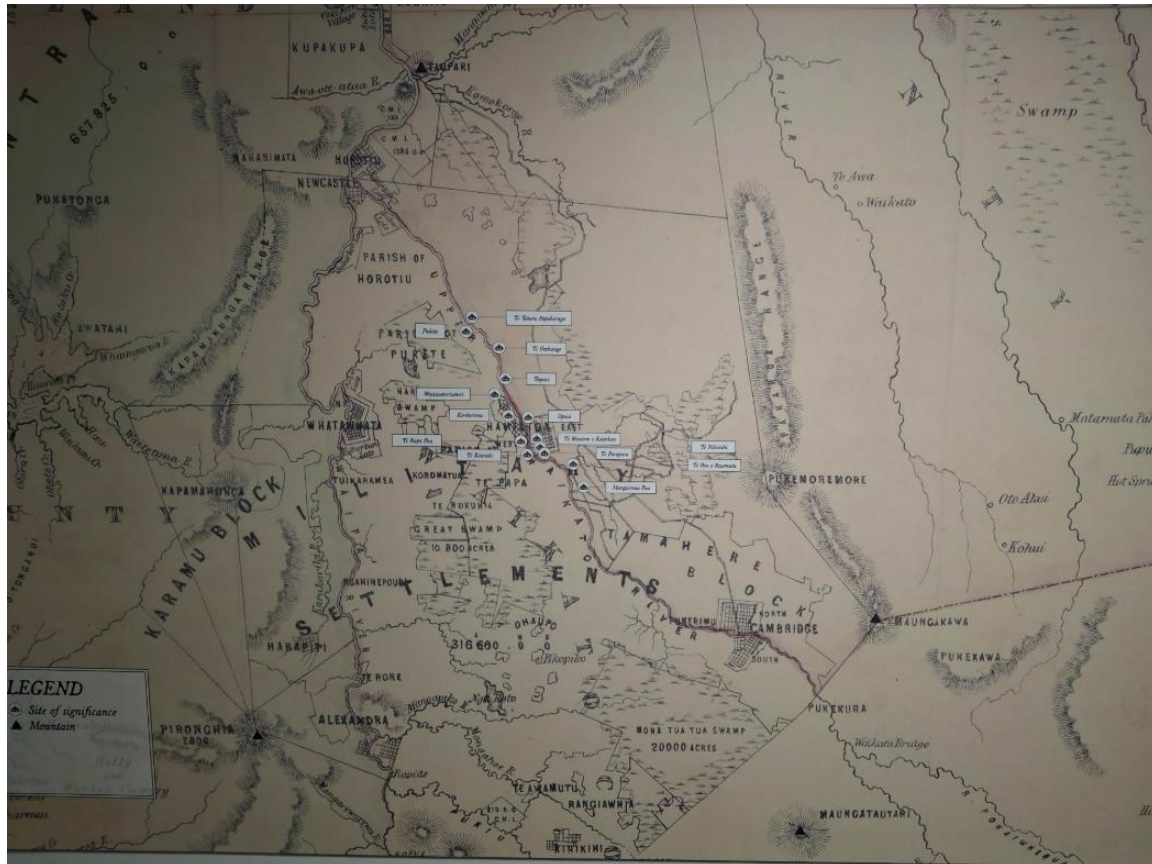


Figure 2.2: Survey map attributed to Ferdinand von Hochstetter depicting the Waipaa–Waikato basin in the late 1850s–early 1860s. The map shows the main river courses (Waipaa and Waikato), extensive wetlands/swamps, and the principal ranges (e.g., Maungatautari, Pironhia), alongside contemporary settlements, paa/fortifications, mission sites, tracks and road lines. Key localities such as Rangiaowhia, Te Awamutu, Kihikihi, Oaraakau, Paaterangi, Te Rore, Whatawhata and Ngaaruawaahia appear within a single riverine landscape, illustrating how waterways and ridgelines structured movement, occupation and defence across the Waipaa plains. The map visually situates Ngaati Apakura places within the wider network of paa, kaainga, wetlands (e.g., Moanatuatua, Ngaaroto) and transport routes that underpinned nineteenth-century production and trade.

Historic maps and research from authorities such as Dr Pei Te Hurinui Jones (1959) reveal the breadth of Ngaati Apakura’s customary interests across Waikato and Waipaa. Yet precise tribal



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boundaries are challenging to define. The landscapes and authority of Ngaati Apakura and other Iwi overlap significantly, reflecting a world in which territorial rights were relational, negotiated, and responsive to circumstance. Attempts to impose rigid borders and classifications—through maps, lines, or categories—risk oversimplifying Maaori land tenure and contributing to Treaty grievances. Maaori identity, authority, and whenua relationships are dynamic, situational, and deeply contextual Joseph (2013).

Still, Ngaati Apakura clearly exercised spheres of influence across a wide rohe. These included areas around Te Awamutu, Kaipaka, Rangiaowhia, Puahue, Oohaupo, Rukuhia, Tuhikaramea, Ngaahinapoouri, Pirongia, and Kaawhia.

Ngaati Apakura established and occupied numerous traditional paa and marae sites. These include but are not limited too:

- **Whatiwhati hoe ki** Pirongia
- **Matakitaki** ki Pirongia
- **Maketu** ki Ootaawhao
- **Mangakaware** ki Ngaahinapoouri
- **Ngaahuruhuru Paa** ki Raroera
- **Uruutomokia** ki Raroera
- **Whakamanu Paa** ki Kaawhia
- **Taurangarimirimū Paa** ki Ngaaroto
- **Taurangatahi** and **Kaipaka Paa** ki Te Awamutu
- **Raroera Paa**

Cultural Landscape Development — Rivers, Terraces, Paa and Maara

As Tainui peoples extended inland from their initial coastal arrivals, settlement patterns became closely aligned with the ecological and strategic qualities of the Waikato and Waipaa landscapes. Inland occupation was not random but reflected a deliberate and enduring relationship with the whenua, guided by maatauranga Maaori and intergenerational observation.



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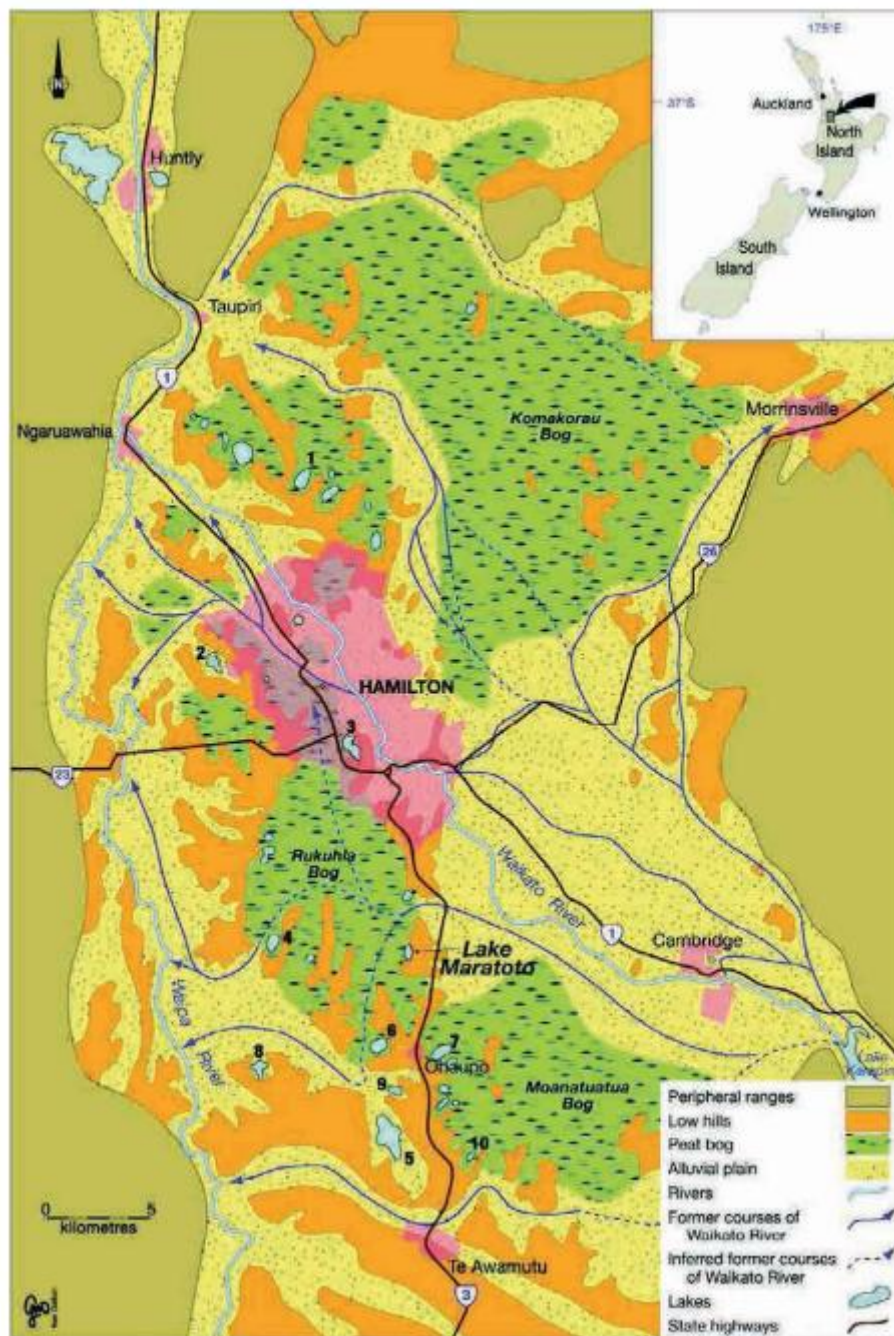


Figure 2.3 Large scale landscape features of the Waikato basin, Rukuhia Bog and Moanatuatua swamp is annotated from (Lowe 2010:2)

The awa systems, particularly the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers and their tributaries, provided essential transport networks, sustained mahinga kai, deposited fertile alluvium, and established natural boundaries that shaped patterns of occupation. These waterways formed the backbone of a highly organised cultural landscape in which movement, settlement, cultivation, and exchange were intrinsically connected.



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Archaeological evidence across Kirikiriroa and the wider Waikato Basin reflects this long-standing and sophisticated land-use system. This includes:

- Paa established on elevated spurs and ridgelines, providing strategic advantage, visibility, and defensibility
- Maara kai located on fertile lower river terraces, optimised for cultivation
- Networks of borrow pits, storage pits, planting hollows and charcoal layers evidencing horticultural innovation
- Dense concentrations of sites along river margins, tributaries, and gully systems

Taken together, these features demonstrate an integrated settlement pattern in which paa and maara were mutually sustaining — combining strategic occupation with intensive food production. This system reflects a deep understanding of landscape function and long-term environmental management, sustained across generations.

Whakaotirangi and the Genealogical Foundations of Maara Kai

Embedded within the inland expansion of Tainui is the whakapapa of maara kai, carried through the revered tuupuna Whakaotirangi, wife of Hoturoa. Traditions recount that she brought with her the first kete of kumara and other cultivated plants aboard the Tainui waka. Her knowledge of soil conditions, seasonal cycles, and celestial indicators enabled early communities to successfully establish horticulture in the cooler inland climates of Waikato.

Whakaotirangi is widely commemorated as the originator of organised cultivation systems within the region. Carvings at Ootaawhao marae depict her holding the kete of seed kumara, symbolising the transfer of knowledge and the establishment of enduring food systems. Her legacy underpins the extensive and highly developed maara networks that later defined Kirikiriroa and the Middle Waikato Basin.

Maaori Modified Soils — Engineering Abundance

The river terraces of the Waikato Basin contain one of the most significant concentrations of Maaori modified soils in Aotearoa, commonly identified as the **Tamahere soil series**. These soils provide clear evidence of large-scale environmental modification undertaken to enhance productivity.

Ancestral practices included:

- The incorporation of kirikiri (gravel), sand, and charcoal to improve soil warmth and drainage
- The creation of friable, free-draining soils ideally suited to kumara cultivation
- The formation of raised planting mounds (puke) and organised quincunx planting arrangements



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- The excavation of borrow pits to source materials for soil modification

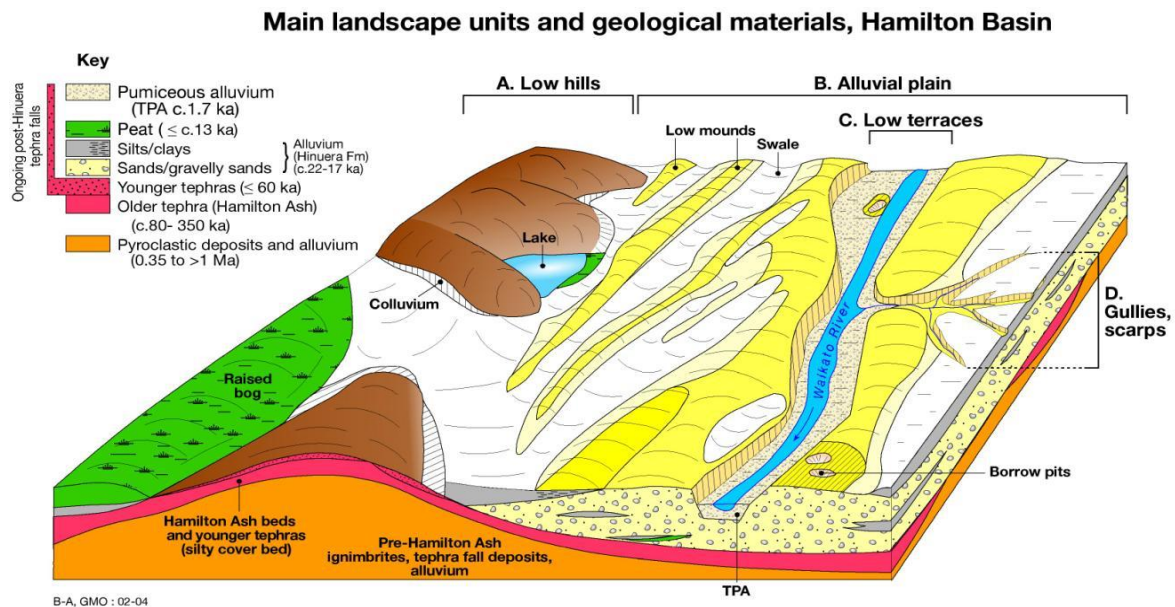


Figure 2.2 Block diagram showing the principal landform units of the Hamilton Basin (Lowe 2010: 4)

Radiocarbon dating of charcoal layers within these soils indicates cultivation activity as early as the 15th century, confirming long-term and continuous use of the river terraces for horticulture.

This productivity is encapsulated in the tongi of Kīngi Tāwhiao:

“Te koopuu maania o Kirikiriroa me oona maara kai — he whenua momona.”

The smooth belly of Kirikiriroa and its cultivated gardens, a land of abundance.

This statement affirms a deeply held understanding of the whenua as fertile, interconnected, and life-sustaining, shaped through careful stewardship and tikanga-based management. Contemporary initiatives such as Te Parapara at Hamilton Gardens continue to revitalise and share these traditions.

Tikanga, Tapu and the Spiritual Dimensions of Cultivation

Maara kai were not solely physical systems of production but were governed by tikanga and spiritual relationships with the atua, particularly Rongomaataane. Cultivation practices were underpinned by:

- Ceremonial plantings such as maara tautane
- Karakia at key stages of planting and harvesting
- The placement of mauri stones to anchor the life force of the garden
- Rituals of pure to remove tapu and maintain balance

These practices reinforced the reciprocal relationship between people, land, and the spiritual realm, ensuring both ecological sustainability and cultural continuity.

Raupatu, Disruption and Enduring Significance

Prior to raupatu, the Kirikiriroa plains formed a highly productive and interconnected landscape of wetlands, river terraces, paa sites, and mahinga kai systems. These environments supported substantial populations and thriving economies grounded in cultivation, trade, and resource management.

Following Te Tiriti o Waitangi, increasing Crown pressure and land alienation culminated in the invasion of Waikato in 1863. Subsequent confiscations under the New Zealand Settlements Act resulted in widespread dispossession and the transformation of the landscape. Wetlands were drained, traditional land-use systems were disrupted, and access to key resources was significantly diminished.

Despite these changes, the underlying cultural landscape — and the whakapapa relationships that define it — remain intact.

Contemporary Relevance — Development, Kaitiakitanga and Cultural Landscape Values

The river terraces and soils within the Southern Links 1 corridor form part of this wider ancestral horticultural complex, extending broadly from Cambridge to Taupiri. Within this context, areas in proximity to the Waikato River (particularly within approximately 2 km) are considered highly sensitive, with potential to contain:

- Maaori modified soils
- Subsurface archaeological features
- Remnants of paa and settlement sites
- Storage pits, borrow pits, and associated horticultural infrastructure

This landscape must therefore be understood not as a series of isolated sites, but as a connected cultural system shaped through whakapapa, ecological knowledge, and intergenerational stewardship.

Contemporary development within this area carries the potential to impact not only physical features, but also the mauri and integrity of this system. At the same time, opportunities exist to reflect and uphold these values through:

- Wetland restoration and hydrological reconnection
- Stormwater design aligned with natural processes
- Protection of soils and subsurface features



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- Establishment of ecological corridors

Such approaches are consistent with the enduring ethic of **kaitiakitanga** that has historically guided land use across the Waikato Basin.

He Kupu Whakapī

The context outlined above affirms that Kirikiriroa is a landscape shaped by tuupuna ingenuity, horticultural excellence, and deep whakapapa relationships. The river terraces, soils, and waterways are not simply physical resources, but form part of a living cultural system that continues to hold significance for mana whenua.

Any development within this landscape must proceed with careful regard to the mauri of the whenua, the integrity of the awa systems, and the interconnected ecological and cultural relationships that have sustained communities across generations.

3. Recognition of Relational Interests

While Ngaati Apakura maintain clear and established connections to this landscape, it is also acknowledged that the Waipaa and southern Waikato region is characterised by overlapping and interrelated spheres of influence among Tainui iwi and hapuu.

The relationships arising from the lines of Whatihua and Tuurongo, and subsequent intermarriages between iwi, mean that:

- Interests in the landscape are often shared, layered, and relational
- Boundaries are not rigid, but reflect dynamic and negotiated relationships over time
- Contemporary engagement requires recognition of both mana whenua and mana whanaunga relationships

Accordingly, this CVA recognises that:

- Ngaati Apakura hold distinct and substantive interests within the SL1 area
- These interests exist alongside those of neighbouring iwi and hapuu
- Cultural assessment and decision-making should reflect this relational context, rather than treating interests as exclusive or isolated

4. Implications for Cultural Assessment

Grounding the assessment in this whakapapa framework establishes that the SL1 development area:

- Lies within an area of recognised Ngaati Apakura ancestral connection and influence
- Forms part of a wider cultural system structured through whakapapa, wetlands, and waterways



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- Must be assessed not only at a site level, but within the context of interconnected landscape relationships

Despite the significant impacts of raupatu, wetland drainage, and later development, these whakapapa relationships remain intact. They continue to inform:

- Cultural values associated with the whenua and wai
- The responsibilities of kaitiakitanga
- Contemporary expressions of identity and engagement

Recognition of these foundations is essential to ensuring that the assessment of effects, and any subsequent development decisions, are undertaken in a manner that:

- Reflects the true cultural context of the landscape
- Upholds the mana and identity of Ngaati Apakura
- Supports outcomes consistent with Te Mana o te Wai and intergenerational wellbeing

5. Cultural Values

5.1 Whenua – Land as Ancestral Foundation

For Ngaati Apakura, whenua is not a passive resource but a living entity, imbued with mauri and bound through whakapapa to people, ancestors, and atua.

The SL1 area sits within a landscape that has:

- Supported long-standing patterns of occupation and use
- Formed part of interconnected settlement and resource networks
- Undergone substantial modification through drainage, agriculture, and urban expansion

Despite these changes, the whenua retains cultural significance through:

- Its position within the Ngaati Apakura rohe
- Its association with nearby paa, kaainga, and resource areas
- Its role within the wider wetland and riverine systems

The relationship between people and whenua is therefore ongoing, with responsibilities of kaitiakitanga extending beyond visible features to include the restoration and protection of underlying mauri.

5.2 Wai – Te Mana o te Wai

Water is central to Ngaati Apakura identity, particularly within the inland wetland landscapes that define the iwi's historical and cultural orientation.

The SL1 area is intrinsically connected to an interconnected water system that includes:



- The Waipaa River system, as a primary inland artery
- Tributary streams and modified drainage networks
- Former wetland systems, including Rukuhia and Moanatuatua
- The wider Waikato River catchment, recognised as tūpuna awa

Within Ngaati Apakura understanding, the Waipaa River and its tributaries must be read in direct relationship with the Waikato River, forming part of a single, connected system of wai that carries whakapapa, mauri, and historical continuity across the landscape.

The Waikato River, as tuupuna awa, holds overarching cultural and spiritual significance, while the Waipaa functions as a key inland lifeline, sustaining settlement, movement, and mahinga kai systems throughout Ngaati Apakura rohe. Together, these waterways form an integrated cultural and ecological network rather than separate entities.

The principle of Te Mana o te Wai provides the framework for understanding these relationships, establishing a hierarchy in which:

- The health and mauri of water is paramount
- The oranga of the iwi is derived from, and dependent upon, the health and mauri of water
- Other uses must not compromise these priorities

Within this context, key cultural values include:

- Protection and enhancement of water quality
- Maintenance and restoration of natural hydrological processes
- Reconnection of fragmented water systems and wetlands
- Recognition and management of cumulative pressures on river and catchment systems

The proposed abstraction of water from the Waikato River introduces a significant cultural consideration, particularly when understood in relation to both:

- The tuupuna awa of Waikato, and
- The linked Waipaa system that supports Ngaati Apakura identity and practices

Key concerns include:

- Existing pressures and allocation levels within the Waikato catchment
- The need to maintain flow, water quality, and ecological integrity across the system as a whole
- The obligation to ensure that water returned to the system does not result in degradation of receiving environments

Within a Ngaati Apakura framework, the taking and return of water cannot be considered in isolation. It must instead be assessed across the broader **ki uta ki tai system**, recognising that effects at one point in the catchment will influence the health, mauri, and function of the wider network of wai.

5.3 Mahinga Kai

Wetland and water systems historically supported mahinga kai practices, including:

- Tuna harvesting
- Seasonal food gathering
- Use of plant resources for weaving and rongoaa

These practices reflect not only sustenance but the transmission of knowledge and tikanga.

Although significantly modified, these values remain present and relevant

6 Assessment of Cultural Effects

6.1 Approach to Assessment

The assessment of cultural effects has been undertaken from a Ngaati Apakura worldview, grounded in:

- Whakapapa relationships to the whenua and wai
- Maatauranga Maaori frameworks, including Te Mana o te Wai and ki uta ki tai
- Recognition of cumulative historical impacts across the Waipaa–Waikato landscape
- The understanding that cultural values operate at a landscape and catchment scale, rather than being confined to discrete sites

Accordingly, effects are assessed not only in terms of physical modification, but also in relation to:

- Mauri (life force)
- Wairua (spiritual integrity)
- Whakapapa (ancestral continuity)
- The ability of Ngaati Apakura to exercise kaitiakitanga now and into the future

6.2 Existing Cultural Context and Cumulative Effects

The SL1 area is located within a landscape that has already undergone substantial transformation, including:

- Drainage of extensive wetland systems such as Rukuhia and Moanatuatua swamps



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- Modification and straightening of natural waterways
- Conversion of land for agricultural and urban use
- Fragmentation of historically interconnected ecological and cultural systems

These changes have resulted in:

- Significant loss of mahinga kai habitats
- Disruption of hydrological connectivity
- Reduced visibility of waahi tuupuna within the landscape
- Ongoing degradation of water quality within the Waipaa and Waikato catchments

From a Ngaati Apakura perspective, these cumulative effects are critical, as they:

- Represent a sustained erosion of cultural relationships with the environment
- Place increasing pressure on remaining cultural and environmental values
- Heighten the sensitivity of the landscape to further development

Any additional effects arising from the SL1 development must therefore be considered in the context of this cumulative loss, rather than in isolation.

7. Effects on Wai (Water Systems and Te Mana o te Wai)

7.1 Nature of Effects

The SL1 development has the potential to affect water systems through:

- Abstraction of water from the Waikato River
- Increased stormwater runoff associated with urbanisation
- Modification of land and drainage patterns
- Discharge of treated wastewater to the wider system

These activities may result in:

- Changes to flow regimes
- Degradation of water quality
- Increased contaminant loads entering waterways
- Further disconnection of natural hydrological processes

7.2 Cultural Assessment

From a Ngaati Apakura perspective, these effects are significant due to the central importance of wai within cultural identity and practice.

The Waikato River, as tuupuna awa, and the Waipaa River as its interconnected inland system, must be understood as a single living network. Effects within one part of the system will inevitably influence the health and mauri of the whole.

In this context:

- The taking of water is not simply a technical or allocation matter, but a cultural issue relating to the removal of life-supporting elements from the system
- The return of water carries an obligation that it must not be degraded in a way that diminishes mauri
- Urban development introduces sustained pressures that may compound existing degradation

Particularly significant is the principle that:

The oranga of the iwi is derived from, and sustained by, the health and mauri of water

Accordingly, any activity that diminishes the health of water directly affects the wellbeing of Ngaati Apakura.

7.3 Magnitude of Effect

Without appropriate controls and cultural integration, the potential effects on wai are assessed as:

- High in cumulative impact
- Long-term and potentially irreversible
- Extending beyond the project footprint to the wider catchment

8. Recommendations and Cultural Management Measures

Ngaati Apakura consider that the SL1 development must be approached as occurring within a highly modified ancestral cultural landscape, rather than an isolated development site. This landscape reflects centuries of interconnected occupation, cultivation, and environmental management, including maara kai systems, river terraces, and associated settlement patterns.

Accordingly, the primary objective is to:

- Avoid adverse effects wherever practicable, particularly in areas of identified or high-potential cultural value
- Where avoidance is not achievable, ensure that effects are remedied or mitigated in a manner that upholds mauri, whakapapa, and cultural integrity
- Enable the meaningful and ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga by Ngaati Apakura

All recommendations are to be guided by:



- Te Mana o te Wai — prioritising the health and mauri of water
- A ki uta ki tai approach — recognising whole-of-catchment connectivity
- Recognition of cumulative cultural and environmental effects
- A cultural landscape approach — acknowledging interconnected soils, waterways, terraces, and waahi tūpuna

Cultural Landscape Management Plan (CLMP)

recommend that a Cultural Landscape Management Plan (CLMP) is developed to ensure that cultural values, archaeological features, and the integrity of the wider ancestral landscape are appropriately identified, protected, and integrated into the development.

A Cultural Landscape Management Plan (CLMP) shall be developed in partnership prior to detailed design and earthworks.

The CLMP shall:

- Identify areas of high cultural sensitivity, including river terraces, gully systems, and former wetland margins
- Map known and potential archaeological features, including pā, storage pits, borrow pits, and horticultural systems
- Establish avoidance areas (“no-go zones”) where intact cultural features or soils are present
- Provide integrated design guidance across earthworks, stormwater, open space, and restoration
- Include protocols for cultural monitoring, interpretation, and long-term management

Cultural Monitoring

recommend that cultural monitoring is undertaken to ensure that cultural values, waahi tuupuna, and potential archaeological features are appropriately identified, protected, and managed throughout all ground-disturbing works.

- Cultural monitors shall have authority to:
 - Require temporary cessation of works
 - Provide cultural direction in response to discoveries
- Monitoring shall occur as part of a formal Cultural Monitoring Plan

Accidental Discovery Protocol

recommend that a robust Accidental Discovery Protocol (ADP) is implemented to ensure that any kooiwi, artefacts, or cultural materials encountered during earthworks are managed in a manner that upholds Mana whenua tikanga and protects cultural values and should include:

- A robust Accidental Discovery Protocol must be implemented for all earthworks



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- Works must cease immediately upon discovery of kooiwi or artefacts
- Mana whenua must be notified immediately and involved in all decision-making
- Protocols must align with Mana whenua tikanga and relevant statutory requirements

Stormwater Management

recommend that stormwater management is designed and implemented in a manner that upholds Te Mana o te Wai, restores natural hydrological processes, and avoids further degradation of the receiving environment. The Stormwater systems shall:

- Incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design principles
- Mimic natural hydrology of the site
- Include treatment measures such as:
 - Rain gardens
 - Swales
 - Wetlands
- Stormwater shall undergo a treatment train approach prior to discharge.

Wetlands, Ecology and Maara Kai

Wetland Restoration

recommend wetland restoration is progressed in a manner that restores ecological function and cultural integrity within the landscape. This should include the restoration or creation of wetland areas where practicable, the retention or reinstatement of natural drainage systems, and the establishment of riparian planting along waterways to enhance water quality, biodiversity, and the mauri of the wider catchment.

Mahinga Kai and Biodiversity

recommend that ecological restoration associated with the development prioritises native species and restores habitats that support tuna and other indigenous fauna. Restoration planting and design should also incorporate culturally significant plant species, enabling the ongoing expression of mahinga kai values and contributing to the re-establishment of ecological and cultural relationships within the landscape.

Cultural Design and Landscape Integration

Cultural Expression

recommend that the development integrates Ngaati Apakura identity in a meaningful and visible way throughout the built and natural environment. This should include

- Naming of streets, reserves, and features Cultural interpretation elements



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- Landscape design reflecting maara and river terrace patterns

Protection of Waahi Tuupuna

recommend all known and unidentified waahi tūpuna are protected from disturbance or inappropriate modification. This includes ensuring that development activities recognise and respond appropriately to the potential presence of unidentified cultural features within the wider landscape. Ngaati Apakura further recommend that historic movement corridors (ara tuku iho) are recognised, retained, and integrated into the development layout wherever practicable, in a manner that maintains their cultural integrity and connection within the ancestral landscape

Environmental Offsets and Positive Outcomes

Where adverse effects cannot be fully avoided:

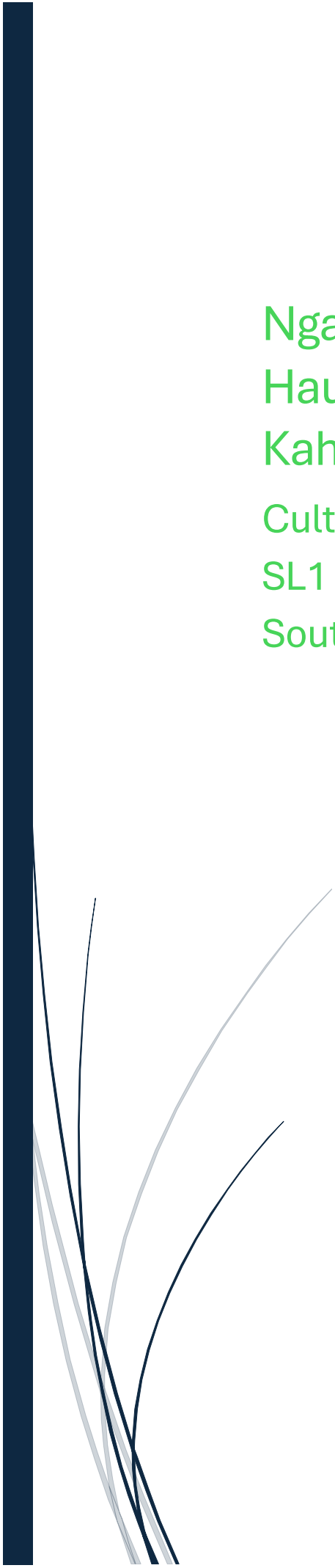
- Appropriate environmental offsets should be undertaken this may include:
 - Wetland restoration projects
 - Riparian planting programmes
 - Contributions to catchment-scale restoration initiatives
- Offsets must deliver tangible cultural and environmental benefits and be agreed with Ngaati Apakura

9.0 Conclusion

Ngaati Apakura consider that the SL1 development can only proceed in a manner consistent with cultural values where:

- The mauri of wai is protected and enhanced
- Development reflects a ki uta ki tai approach
- Ngaati Apakura are able to exercise kaitiakitanga in a meaningful and ongoing way

Implementation of the above recommendations is necessary to ensure that adverse cultural effects are appropriately avoided, remedied, or mitigated, and that the relationship of Ngaati Apakura with their ancestral landscape is recognised and upheld.

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Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Hauaa & Ngaati Korokii Kahukura

Cultural Values Assessment (CVA)
SL1 Houchens Development –
Southern Hamilton

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1. Introduction

This Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) has been prepared to outline the cultural, historical, and whakapapa associations of **Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa** in relation to the SL1 Houchens development area.

The purpose of this CVA is to:

- articulate mana whenua relationships with the whenua and awa
- provide cultural context for the site
- identify matters of significance that must be recognised in development
- guide the application of tikanga and kaitiakitanga

This assessment supports informed decision-making to ensure the protection of cultural values, taonga, and the mauri of the environment.

2. Cultural Context and Whakapapa Foundations

Tainui Waka and Settlement

The SL1 Houchens site sits within the wider cultural landscape established through the arrival of the Tainui waka in the late 13th century.

Following landfall at Taamaki Makaurau, the waka was transported across the portage at Ootaahuhu (Te Too Waka), linking eastern and western waterways. From there, Tainui travelled down the west coast to Kaawhia Harbour, where the waka came to rest at Maketuu, marking the beginning of sustained occupation.

From Kaawhia, descendants moved inland along the Waikato and Waipaa awa, which became vital transport, communication, and settlement corridors. These waterways shaped the development of paa, kaainga, and maara kai systems throughout the Waikato Basin, including Kirikiriroa.

Kiingitanga and Mana Motuhake

The establishment of the Kiingitanga in 1858 represents the continued expression of mana motuhake within the Waikato. It is grounded in:

- the protection of whenua
- the authority of mana whenua
- the unity and wellbeing of Waikato-Tainui

The Kiingitanga remains centred at Tuurangawaewae Marae, Ngaaruawaahia, at the confluence of the Waikato and Waipaa awa, reinforcing the cultural and political significance of this wider landscape.

For Waikato-Tainui hapuu, including Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa, the Kiingitanga is not only a historical institution but a living expression of mana motuhake and collective identity. It provides a framework through which hapuu exercise rangatiratanga, maintain unity, and uphold their responsibilities to whenua, awa, and people. The Kiingitanga reinforces the intergenerational obligation to protect cultural landscapes and ensures that ancestral values continue to guide contemporary decision-making.

Mana motuhake is intrinsically linked to whakapapa and ahi kaa, anchoring the authority of hapuu within their respective rohe. It affirms the right and responsibility of mana whenua to actively participate in the management, protection, and use of their ancestral lands and resources. In this context, the whenua within the SL1 Houchens area is not viewed solely as a physical resource, but as a taonga tuku iho — carrying the mauri, histories, and identity of the people who descend from it.

Through the Kiingitanga, these hapuu continue to express kaitiakitanga in practice, ensuring that development within their rohe is undertaken in a manner that respects tikanga and protects the integrity of cultural landscapes. This includes safeguarding sites of significance, maintaining the health of awa systems, and ensuring that the relationship between people and whenua remains intact. As such, engagement with mana whenua and recognition of Kiingitanga values are essential components in achieving outcomes that are culturally appropriate, sustainable, and enduring.

Contemporary Relevance

The SL1 Houchens site forms part of this interconnected cultural landscape. Its proximity to significant river systems and fertile terraces indicates a high likelihood of archaeological and cultural features, including:

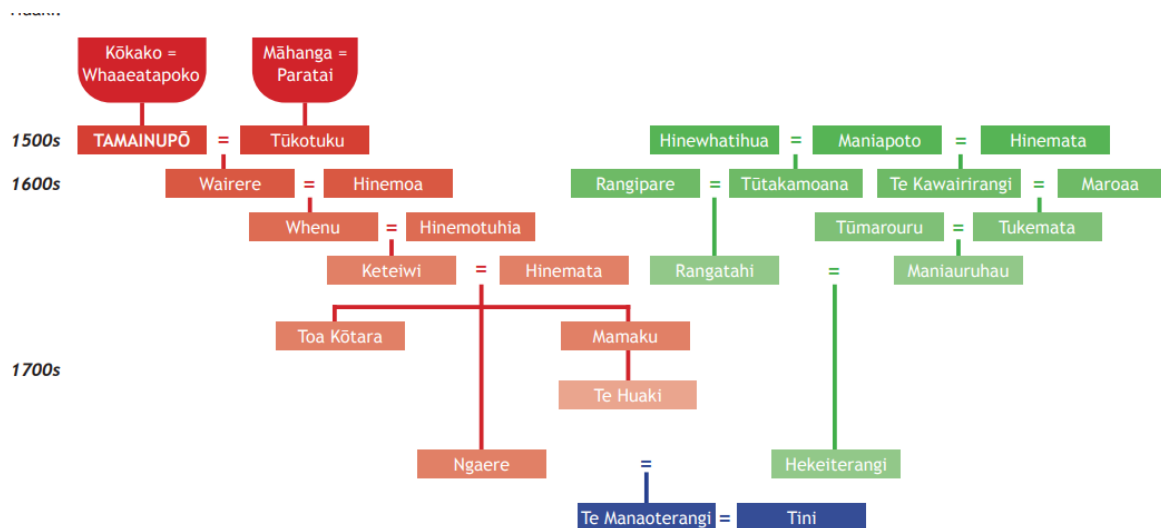
- Maaori modified soils
- subsurface storage and borrowing pits
- paa and kaainga remnants
- waahi tapu and cultural layers

As such, development within this area carries cultural significance and requires careful management aligned with tikanga and kaitiakitanga.

Whakapapa Connections

Ngaati Tamainupoo

Ngaati Tamainupoo descend from the tupuna Tamainupoo, the son of Kookako, who married Tuukootuku, a daughter of Maahanga. In the 17th century, they established themselves along the Waipaa awa between Ngaaruawaahia and Whatawhata, embedding enduring relationships with this landscape that continue today.



Ngaati Tamainupoo are also descendants of Ngaere, the rangatira of Pukeiahua Paa at Ngaaruawaahia, and maintain associations with the kaainga known as Ngaere in the Mangaharakeke area. These ancestral ties reinforce their longstanding occupation and cultural authority across this part of the Waikato.

Ngaati Tamainupoo hold strong influence and kaitiaki responsibilities extending from the west coast through to central Kirikiriroa (Hamilton City). Their presence across this landscape reflects interconnected systems of settlement, cultivation, and resource management. They occupied and utilised lands within the wider Ngaati Maahanga rohe and extended westward to the coast.

The interweaving of whakapapa across Waikato-Tainui hapuu firmly establishes Ngaati Tamainupoo as mana whenua within the SL1 Houchens project area, with enduring obligations to uphold tikanga, protect taonga, and maintain the mauri of the whenua and awa.

Ngaati Tamainupoo continue to express these responsibilities through contemporary frameworks such as Te Mata Herenga, which reflects a strategic commitment to te taiao, succession planning for rangatahi, and the active protection and management of cultural resources

Ngaati Korokii Kahukura

Ngaati Korokii Kahukura share direct whakapapa connections with Ngaati Tamainupoo and Ngaati Hauaa through the tupuna Korokii, who married Te Kahurere and Tumataura, granddaughters of Tamainupoo and Tuukootuku. From these unions descend Ngaati Korokii, Hauaa, and other related hapuu.

Korokii's sons, Hape and Hauaa, were born in the area now associated with the Hamilton Hospital precinct, a site known by various names including Horotiu, Te Rapa, and Kourarahi. These associations firmly anchor Ngaati Korokii Kahukura within the Kirikiriroa landscape.

In the early 1800s, the rangatira Tioriori resided at Te Paapara (Tamahere) at Arikirua Paa, near the Narrows on the Waikato awa. He also established a whare waananga near the present University of Waikato, reinforcing the role of the area as a centre of knowledge, leadership, and occupation.

The following paatere acknowledges the tuupuna connected to Tamahere:

*E tuu raa e ngaa puna i moe ai ngaa hira nunui e tuu mai nei i te muri.
Ihaka Tarawhiti raa kei Hauraki.*

*Takerei, Arama Karaka, Taneti, Paeturi, Wiremu Hoeta, Pehimana, Te Amokau, Tamehana, Tioriori
kei Tamahere.*

*Manena, Hera, Rangihui, Tiria, Kukutai kei Waikato.
Te mutunga o aku ara e rere tika nei, tika tonu.*

This paatere affirms the continuity of whakapapa and occupation across the region.

Kirikiroa ki te tonga

Kirikiroa, now known as Hamilton, has a long history of Maori occupation and settlement. Before it became a colonial town, Kirikiroa was known as a significant paa and settlement area on the western side of the Waikato River. The river was central to travel, food gathering, trade, gardens, and the life of many hapuu connected through Tainui whakapapa. Tamainupoo and the infamous Korokii cleared the Kirikiroa area.

Ngaati Korokii Kahukura are part of this wider history. Their connections extend from Maungatautari Tamahere Kirikiroa through to Taupiri the Waikato River and the surrounding landscape. Ngaati Koroki Kahukura had many paa and places of occupation around Hamilton Lake, Deanwell, Collins Road, Resthills, Rukuhia, Peacockes, area.

Ko Maungatautari te Maunga

Maungatautari is the Mountain

Ko Ngaati Koroki Kahukura te Hapu

Ngaati Koroki Kahukura is the tribe

Ko Te Ngoungou te Tangata

Te Ngoungou is the Chief

Cultural Landscape and Rohe

Ngaati Korokii Kahukura maintain a legislated heartland centred on Maungatautari, with traditional rohe extending into southern and central Hamilton. Their wider rohe spans from Taupiri to Maungatautari, across to Te Awamutu, Mamaku, and the Kaimai ranges, following key awa systems including Horotiu (the Waikato River corridor).

Whakapapa connections further anchor Ngaati Korokii Kahukura within this landscape. Ruru, a daughter of Korokii and his first wife Kahurere, is associated with the area extending from Peacockes through to Maungatautari. This lineage reinforces the enduring presence of these whaanau lines within the Kirikiroa environment.

Nukuhau is also remembered as an important paa of Korokii, identified as Paa Tuuwatawhata, highlighting the strategic occupation and defence of key parts of the awa corridor. These histories demonstrate that the landscape of Kirikiroa was not an empty space, but rather a dynamic network of paa, kaainga, maara, waterways, and intergenerational relationships.

The site now occupied by Waikato Hospital also forms part of this whakapapa landscape. It is associated with Korokii and his whaanau, where his first wife Kahurere gave birth to daughters, including Ruru, and his second wife Tumataura gave birth to sons Hape and Hauaa. This reinforces the significance of the area as a place of settlement, birth, and continuity of lineage.

These associations connect a major contemporary landmark within Hamilton to deeper layers of mana whenua history, illustrating how present-day places continue to sit within and reflect ancestral landscapes.

Ngaati Korokii Kahukura remain active across the Hamilton area through collective iwi structures and continue to exercise strong cultural authority as mana whenua alongside related hapuu.

Ngaati Hauaa

Ngaati Hauaa descend from the tupuna Hauaa, a direct descendant of Hoturoa, captain of the Tainui waka. Their identity and authority are grounded in this whakapapa and their long-standing occupation across a diverse and resource-rich landscape.

The rohe of Ngaati Hauaa extends from:

- Te Aroha
- along the Kaimai Range to Te Weraiti
- west to Maungatautari
- northwest to Te Rapa
- eastward to Mangateparu

This rohe encompasses wetlands, forested areas, awa systems, and geothermal resources that supported traditional lifeways including mahinga kai, cultivation, and seasonal movement.

Ngaati Hauaa occupied significant sites within the project vicinity, including Maniapoto Paa at Tamahere, an important stronghold and the birthplace of Te Waharoa Tarapiipipi (c.1700–1800). His son, Wiremu Tamehana, became a key rangatira and leader within the Kiingitanga, advocating for peace during the Waikato conflicts.

In 1865, Wiremu Tamehana entered into a covenant of peace known as He Maungaarongo, symbolised by the laying down of his taiaha. This act reflects enduring values of leadership, diplomacy, and tikanga within Ngaati Hauaa.

Despite the impacts of raupatu and the subsequent alienation of land, Ngaati Hauaa retained areas of significance, including land near Maniapoto Paa, maintaining their ahi kaa and continued presence within the rohe.

Archaeological and Cultural Significance

Investigations within the wider Hamilton area, including infrastructure works, have identified:

- Extensive gardening soils and kuumara mounds (puke)

- Paa overlooking waterways
- Ritual sites (tuuaahu)
- Kooiwi tangata

These findings confirm the depth of occupation and reinforce the high likelihood of cultural material being present across the landscape, including within the SL1 Houchens area.

Ngaati Hauaa maintain their role as kaitiaki, with ongoing responsibilities to protect and manage sites of significance and uphold the mauri of the whenua and awa for future generations.

2.1 Te Mata Herenga – Ngaati Tamainupoo Maatauranga and Taonga Management Plan (2021)

The Te Mata Herenga Plan is the primary hapuu environmental management document for Ngaati Tamainupoo. It has statutory recognition as an Iwi Environmental Management Plan and is intended to guide councils, developers, and decision-makers in the management and protection of taonga within the hapuu takiwaa.

The Plan:

- affirms Ngaati Tamainupoo as rangatira over their maatauranga and kaitiaki of their taonga
- establishes expectations for engagement, participation, and decision-making
- sets out Ngaa Pou (overarching objectives) grounded in:
 - rangatiratanga
 - active protection
 - partnership
 - maatauranga-informed decision-making

It explicitly requires that resource management processes:

- recognise and provide for the relationship of Maaori with their lands, waters, and taonga (RMA s6(e))
- have particular regard to kaitiakitanga (RMA s7(a))
- take into account Te Tiriti o Waitangi (RMA s8)

The Plan also makes clear that:

resource management decisions must be informed by Ngaati Tamainupoo maatauranga, and that engagement must occur early, meaningfully, and as an ongoing relationship rather than a procedural step.

As such, Te Mata Herenga provides a direct mandate for how cultural values are to be recognised and upheld within this CVA.

2.2 Mana Whenua Aromatawai – Te Oko Horoi ki Piireere (ManaWA, 2024)

The ManaWA (Mana Whenua Aromatawai) prepared by Ngaati Korokii Kahukura and Ngaati Hauaa represents an evolution beyond a traditional CVA, adopting a holistic approach to environmental, cultural, social, and economic assessment.

ManaWA emphasises:

- mana whenua authority in decision-making
- kaitiakitanga over land, water, and taonga
- the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, including partnership and active protection
- the integration of Te Ao Maaori concepts, including mauri, tikanga, and whakapapa, into project design and assessment

Importantly, ManaWA establishes that:

- cultural values extend beyond identified archaeological sites
- whenua and awa retain mauri regardless of modification
- outcomes must seek betterment, not just mitigation

Mana whenua position within ManaWA confirms that:

their role extends beyond consultation, and includes governance, direction-setting, and the protection and enhancement of taonga for future generation

2.3 Relevance to this CVA

Together, these documents provide the cultural, statutory, and methodological foundation for this Cultural Values Assessment.

They collectively establish that:

- mana whenua are not stakeholders but Treaty partners and kaitiaki
- cultural values must be assessed at a landscape and whakapapa scale, not limited to recorded sites
- development must:
 - recognise mana motuhake and rangatiratanga
 - protect mauri of the whenua and awa
 - enable the exercise of kaitiakitanga
 - achieve outcomes that reflect partnership under Te Tiriti

This CVA therefore adopts an approach that:

- aligns with the Ngaa Pou of Te Mata Herenga

- reflects the holistic assessment framework of ManaWA
- integrates whakapapa, cultural landscape, and tikanga alongside technical assessments

3.0 Cultural Values Framework

3.1 Introduction

The identification and assessment of cultural effects within this CVA are grounded in Te Ao Māori values and principles, as held and expressed by Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa.

These values reflect intergenerational knowledge systems that define the relationship between:

- people
- whenua
- awa
- taonga

They are not separate from the environment but are inherent to it, expressed through whakapapa, tikanga, and kaitiakitanga.

This framework aligns with:

- Te Mata Herenga (Ngaati Tamainupoo Management Plan)
- ManaWA (Ngaati Korokii Kahukura / Ngaati Hauaa)
- Waikato-Tainui cultural frameworks

3.2 Mauri

Mauri is the life force present in all living and non-living things. It is a central concept that underpins the health and wellbeing of:

- whenua
- wai
- ecosystems
- people

The protection and enhancement of mauri is fundamental to mana whenua.

Where mauri is strong:

- ecosystems are functioning
- taonga species thrive
- cultural practices are sustained

Where mauri is degraded:

- imbalance occurs
- cultural relationships are impacted

Development activities must therefore:

- avoid adverse impacts on mauri
- restore or enhance mauri where it has been diminished

3.3 Whakapapa

Whakapapa defines the genealogical relationships between all elements of the environment, linking tangata to:

- whenua
- awa
- flora and fauna
- atua

Through whakapapa:

- the environment is understood as a living system of relationships
- people are descendants of the natural world, not separate from it

The SL1 Houchens area forms part of this whakapapa network through:

- Tainui waka settlement
- interwoven hapuu lines (Tamainupoo, Korokii, Hauaa)
- historical occupation and use

This reinforces that cultural effects are not limited to physical disturbance, but include impacts on relationships.

3.4 Kaitiakitanga

Kaitiakitanga is the exercise of guardianship and stewardship by mana whenua, guided by tikanga and grounded in whakapapa.

Kaitiakitanga:

- is both a right and responsibility
- requires active involvement in the management of resources
- ensures the protection of taonga for future generations

For this project area, kaitiakitanga includes:

- protection of whenua and soils

- safeguarding waterways and wetlands
- management of cultural sites and taonga
- participation in decision-making processes

The RMA requires that particular regard is given to kaitiakitanga (s7(a)), reinforcing its importance in this assessment.

3.5 Tikanga

Tikanga refers to the customs, protocols, and practices that guide the relationship between people and the environment.

Tikanga includes:

- karakia
- rāhui
- tapu and noa
- cultural processes for managing taonga

These practices:

- maintain balance within the environment
- protect mauri
- guide appropriate behaviour

Within a development context, tikanga informs:

- how works are undertaken
- how discoveries are managed
- how engagement with mana whenua occurs

3.6 Mana Motuhake and Kiingitanga

The exercise of mana motuhake remains central to the identity and authority of mana whenua.

Through the Kiingitanga, these values are upheld as a collective expression of:

- rangatiratanga
- unity
- protection of whenua
- intergenerational wellbeing

For Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa:

- mana motuhake is expressed through active kaitiakitanga
- the Kiingitanga provides a framework for decision-making and leadership

This reinforces that:

mana whenua must not only be consulted, but enabled to participate in a manner that reflects their authority and responsibilities.

3.7 Cultural Landscape Perspective

From a mana whenua perspective, the SL1 Houchens site forms part of a wider cultural landscape, rather than an isolated parcel of land.

This landscape includes:

- awa systems (Waikato and Waipaa)
- historic wetlands and maara kai systems
- paa, kaainga, and settlement patterns
- whakapapa relationships between hapuu

Key principles:

- cultural values extend beyond mapped sites
- modification does not remove cultural significance
- whenua retains mauri and identity

This aligns with mana whenua positions that:

the absence of recorded sites does not equate to the absence of cultural value.

4.0 Site-Specific Cultural Assessment

4.1 Site Overview

The SL1 Houchens development area is located within the wider Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) landscape, an area of longstanding cultural occupation and significance to Waikato-Tainui hapuu, including **Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa**.

The Site forms part of a modified rural landscape that has undergone drainage and land use change over time. These modifications include:

- historical wetland drainage
- agricultural use
- formation of artificial waterways and drainage systems

Despite these changes, the Site remains situated within a highly connected cultural and ecological system, historically defined by:

- extensive wetlands (repo)
- fertile alluvial soils
- proximity to the Waikato and Waipaa awa systems

4.2 Cultural Landscape Context

From a mana whenua perspective, the Site is not viewed in isolation but as part of a broader cultural landscape shaped by:

- Tainui waka settlement
- interconnected paa, kaainga, and maara kai systems
- inland movement along awa corridors
- shared whakapapa between hapuu

The Waikato Basin is widely recognised as a significant horticultural landscape, with evidence of:

- Maaori modified soils
- kuumara cultivation systems (puke)
- borrow pits and storage features

Although such features may not be visible within the Site itself, the wider landscape demonstrates:

a pattern of intensive occupation and use that extends beyond mapped or recorded archaeological sites.

4.3 Whakapapa and Mana Whenua Associations

The Site lies within an area where interwoven whakapapa relationships connect Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa.

These connections are reinforced through:

- descent from Tamainupoo and Tuukootuku
- the lineage of Korokii and associated marriages to Kahurere and Tumataura
- the descent of Hape and Hauaa, linking directly to Ngaati Korokii and Ngaati Hauaa

These genealogical relationships establish:

- shared mana whenua status
- overlapping rohe and areas of interest
- collective kaitiakitanga responsibilities

Accordingly, the Site is situated within a shared whakapapa landscape, where multiple hapuu maintain enduring relationships to whenua and taonga.

4.4 Environmental and Cultural Characteristics

4.4.1 Land and Soils (Whenua)

The Site is likely to contain soils that:

- have been historically modified through drainage
- may retain characteristics of Maaori horticultural activity within the wider landscape

From a cultural perspective:

- whenua is a taonga with mauri
- disturbance of soils represents disturbance of ancestral layers and whakapapa connections

4.4.2 Waterways and Wetlands (Wai / Repo)

The project area sits within a landscape formerly characterised by:

- wetlands
- drainage channels
- connections to larger awa systems

For mana whenua:

- wetlands are repositories of maatauranga and taonga
- they form part of the whakapapa of awa systems
- they support ecological and cultural health

Even where modified:

these systems retain cultural significance through their role in the wider environmental network.

4.4.3 Archaeological and Subsurface Potential

While recorded sites may be limited within the Site itself, the wider Hamilton area demonstrates:

- extensive horticultural systems
- paa and kaainga
- subsurface features not visible at surface level

This indicates:

- a high likelihood of unknown cultural material

- the potential presence of:
 - storage pits
 - gardening soils
 - cultural layers

From a cultural perspective:

absence of recorded sites does not equate to absence of cultural value.

4.5 Contemporary Cultural Context

Mana whenua continue to maintain active relationships with the wider landscape through:

- kaitiakitanga responsibilities
- cultural frameworks such as Te Mata Herenga
- participation in planning and environmental management

The Site therefore represents:

- a living cultural landscape
- an area where mana motuhake continues to be exercised
- a location requiring ongoing engagement and recognition of mana whenua authority

5.0 Assessment of Cultural Effects

5.1 Overview

The proposed development involves significant land use change, including:

- earthworks
- subdivision
- infrastructure development

These activities have the potential to generate both direct and indirect cultural effects on the Site and its wider environment.

5.2 Nature of Potential Effects

5.2.1 Effects on Whenua

Earthworks associated with the proposed development have the potential to significantly alter the physical condition of the whenua. These activities may result in the disturbance of soils, the removal or modification of subsurface cultural layers, and the alteration of the land's physical and spiritual integrity. From a cultural perspective, such changes are not limited to physical impacts alone but also represent a disturbance to the mauri of the whenua. This can lead to the disruption of whakapapa relationships embedded within the land, affecting the connection between tangata whenua and their ancestral environment.

5.2.2 Effects on Wai and Wetland Systems

The proposed development also has the potential to affect hydrological and ecological systems within the Site. This includes impacts on drainage networks, groundwater movement, and any remaining wetland functions within the area. From a cultural perspective, these changes are significant, as wai and wetlands are integral components of the wider environmental system. Adverse effects may include the degradation of the **mauri of water**, disruption of ecological and cultural connections, and the weakening of the natural relationships between whenua and wai that are central to mana whenua worldviews.

5.2.3 Effects on Unknown Cultural Material

There remains an inherent risk that development activities may uncover previously unidentified archaeological material or disturb taonga and koiwi. This risk is heightened by the broader cultural and historical context of the Waikato landscape, which is known to contain extensive evidence of past occupation and use. Importantly, this risk exists regardless of whether sites have been formally recorded, reflecting the understanding that cultural values are not always visible or documented through conventional archaeological processes.

5.2.4 Effects on Cultural Landscape Integrity

The scale and extent of the proposed development may also contribute to changes in the integrity of the wider cultural landscape. Incremental modification of the land has the potential to obscure or diminish the ability to recognise historical patterns of occupation, land use, and movement across the area. Over time, this can contribute to a cumulative loss of cultural context, where the broader relationships between sites, features, and cultural narratives become increasingly difficult to identify and maintain.

5.2.5 Effects on Kaitiakitanga

Without appropriate recognition and involvement of mana whenua, there is a risk that the ability to exercise kaitiakitanga may be constrained. This includes limitations on the capacity of hapuu to fulfil their responsibilities as kaitiaki of the whenua, wai, and associated taonga. Ensuring that mana whenua are actively engaged and able to participate in decision-making processes is therefore critical. This is consistent with the requirements of section 7(a) of the Resource Management Act, which requires particular regard to be given to the exercise of kaitiakitanga.

5.3 Overall Assessment of Cultural Effects

In considering the location of the Site within a recognised cultural landscape, the strong whakapapa associations held by mana whenua, the potential for subsurface cultural material, and the overall scale of the proposed development, the level of cultural effect is assessed as moderate to high in the absence of appropriate mitigation.

This assessment reflects both the tangible and intangible values associated with the Site, and the need to ensure that any development appropriately recognises, protects, and responds to the cultural significance of the area.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Overview

The following recommendations are provided to ensure that the cultural values of Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa are appropriately recognised and protected throughout the development process.

These recommendations are grounded in:

- the principles of kaitiakitanga
- the framework established in Te Mata Herenga
- the holistic approach outlined in ManaWA
- the statutory requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991, particularly sections 6(e), 7(a), and 8

They are intended to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse cultural effects while also providing opportunities for positive cultural outcomes and enhancement.

6.2 Mana Whenua Engagement and Partnership

Effective engagement with mana whenua is fundamental to achieving culturally appropriate outcomes. Engagement should occur early in the project lifecycle and continue throughout all phases of planning, design, and implementation.

This engagement should move beyond consultation and reflect a genuine partnership approach, recognising the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki and Treaty partners. Mana whenua should be enabled to actively contribute to decision-making processes, including influencing design outcomes, environmental management approaches, and cultural mitigation measures.

6.3 Cultural Monitoring

Cultural monitoring should be undertaken during all earthworks and ground-disturbing activities. Mana whenua representatives should be present on site to observe works and ensure that any cultural matters are appropriately identified and managed in accordance with tikanga.

The role of cultural monitors should be recognised alongside other technical specialists, ensuring they are appropriately resourced and empowered to respond to any cultural issues that arise during construction.

6.4 Accidental Discovery Protocols

An Accidental Discovery Protocol (ADP) should be developed and implemented prior to the commencement of works. This protocol must clearly outline procedures for the management of:

- taonga
- koiwi tangata

- archaeological material

In the event of a discovery, all works in the immediate vicinity must cease, and mana whenua should be notified immediately. Mana whenua must be provided the opportunity to lead the response in accordance with tikanga and established processes.

The protocol should align with relevant statutory requirements, including engagement with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga where necessary.

6.5 Protection of Mauri

The protection and enhancement of mauri should be a guiding principle for all aspects of the development. This includes adopting design and construction approaches that:

- minimise disturbance to whenua
- protect and improve the health of waterways and drainage systems
- maintain and enhance ecological function

Consideration should be given to how the development can contribute positively to the restoration of degraded environmental systems, particularly those associated with historic wetlands and water networks.

6.6 Cultural Design Integration

The project provides an opportunity to embed cultural values within the design of the development. This should be undertaken in collaboration with mana whenua and may include:

- recognising the historical presence of wetland systems within the landscape
- incorporating cultural narratives that reflect mana whenua connections to the area
- utilising indigenous planting strategies aligned with tikanga and ecological restoration principles

These elements should not be treated as add-ons but as integral components of the overall design response.

6.7 Recognition of Kaitiakitanga

The development should enable the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga by mana whenua. This includes ensuring that mana whenua:

- have access to the site where appropriate
- are involved in environmental management and monitoring processes
- are able to contribute to adaptive management approaches over time

Recognising kaitiakitanga in practice strengthens the relationship between mana whenua and the development and supports long-term environmental and cultural outcomes.

6.8 Statutory Alignment

All recommendations should be implemented in a manner that gives effect to the relevant provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991, including:

- recognising and providing for the relationship of Maaori with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga (section 6(e))
- having particular regard to kaitiakitanga (section 7(a))
- taking into account the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (section 8)

In addition, decision-makers should have regard to relevant iwi and hapuu planning documents, including Te Mata Herenga and the direction provided through Mana Whenua Aromatawai.

7.0 Conclusion

This Cultural Values Assessment recognises that the SL1 Houchens development area sits within a wider Waikato-Tainui cultural landscape, shaped by intergenerational occupation, whakapapa connections, and enduring relationships between whenua, wai, and tangata.

For Ngaati Tamainupoo, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, and Ngaati Hauaa, the Site forms part of a living cultural system informed by shared ancestry, historical land use, and ongoing kaitiakitanga responsibilities. These relationships persist regardless of land modification and extend beyond the presence or absence of recorded archaeological sites.

The assessment has identified that, in the absence of appropriate mitigation, the proposed development has the potential to give rise to moderate to high cultural effects, particularly in relation to:

- disturbance of whenua and subsurface cultural layers
- impacts on wai and ecological systems
- risk to unknown cultural material
- incremental loss of cultural landscape integrity
- constraints on the exercise of kaitiakitanga

However, these effects can be appropriately managed through the adoption of a culturally informed and responsive approach that:

- recognises mana whenua as partners in the development process
- enables the active exercise of kaitiakitanga
- protects and enhances the mauri of the environment
- integrates cultural values into design and implementation

Central to this approach is a commitment to early, meaningful, and ongoing engagement with mana whenua, alongside the application of tikanga-based processes and cultural oversight during works.

With these measures in place, the proposal has the potential not only to avoid or mitigate adverse effects, but also to contribute positively to the recognition and expression of mana whenua values within the landscape.

Accordingly, it is considered that, subject to the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report, the proposed development can proceed in a manner that is consistent with the cultural values, interests, and aspirations of mana whenua, and aligns with the relevant provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991.