Appendix 23 – Ngati Apākura Cultural Values Assessment



NGĀTI APAKURA

Cultural Values Assessment

Harlow Lifestyle Village Development
2025, Ōhaupo Road, Te Awamutu

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1. Executive Summary

This Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) has been prepared by Apakura Rūnanga Trust in relation to the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village development at 2025 Ōhaupō Road, Te Awamutu.

The assessment reflects the values, perspectives, and responsibilities of Ngāti Apakura as mana whenua within the wider Waipa landscape. It recognises that the proposed development site is part of a much broader cultural environment shaped by generations of occupation, whakapapa, customary resource use, and enduring relationships between people, whenua, wai, and the natural world.

For Ngāti Apakura, cultural significance is not confined to individual sites or recorded archaeological features. Rather, significance is derived from the interconnected relationships between ancestors, landscapes, waterways, wetlands, settlements, and the histories that continue to shape cultural identity today. The site sits within the wider cultural landscape of Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Rukuhia, Pekapekarau, and Moanatuatua, areas which have long sustained the people of Ngāti Apakura through food gathering, trade, travel, settlement, and cultural practice.

The proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village involves the development of approximately 25 hectares of rural land to establish a retirement village incorporating residential villas, duplex housing, aged-care facilities, community amenities, internal transport infrastructure, stormwater management systems, wetland restoration areas, and ecological enhancement initiatives. The proposal is being advanced through the Fast Track Approvals process.

This assessment applies the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework developed by Te Iti o Apakura. The framework brings together tīkanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, pūtaiao (science), environmental planning, and Atua-based relationships with the natural environment to assess effects on whenua, wai, biodiversity, ecological systems, and environmental mauri. Through this approach, cultural, environmental, and technical information are considered together to provide a holistic assessment of the proposal.

While the development will result in the permanent conversion of productive rural land to an urban residential environment, it also presents opportunities to achieve positive cultural and environmental outcomes. Key initiatives associated with the proposal include:

- Protection of the Kahikatea Significant Natural Area (WP312).
- Restoration and enhancement of approximately 10,983m² of wetland habitat.
- Protection and enhancement of long-tailed bat habitat.
- Indigenous biodiversity enhancement and ecological connectivity.
- Ecologically based stormwater treatment and management.
- Opportunities for cultural landscape restoration and interpretation.
- Long-term environmental stewardship and kaitiakitanga outcomes.

From a Ngāti Apakura perspective, the proposal provides an opportunity to improve ecological health and contribute to the restoration of environmental mauri, particularly through wetland enhancement, indigenous planting, and the protection of important ecological features. These opportunities must, however, be balanced against the permanent loss of rural land and the need to ensure that cultural values, relationships, and responsibilities associated with the wider landscape are appropriately recognised and maintained.

Overall, this assessment concludes that the site forms part of a wider cultural landscape of significance to Ngāti Apakura. Subject to the implementation of the recommendations contained within this report, the proposal has the potential to deliver positive cultural, environmental, and community outcomes while contributing to the long-term wellbeing of both present and future generations within the Waipā catchment.

2. Purpose of this Assessment

The purpose of this Cultural Values Assessment is to identify, understand, and articulate the cultural values associated with the proposed development site and its surrounding cultural landscape from the perspective of Ngāti Apakura.

The assessment examines the relationship of Ngāti Apakura with the whenua, wai, wetlands, ecological systems, and wider Waipā catchment, and considers how those relationships may be affected by the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village development.

The assessment is informed by Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework, which integrates tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, pūtaiao, environmental planning, and cultural indicators of wellbeing to evaluate effects on cultural and environmental values. The framework recognises that the wellbeing of people and the wellbeing of the environment are inseparable, and that the health of whenua and wai is fundamental to the exercise of kaitiakitanga.

In addition to identifying potential cultural effects, this assessment considers opportunities to enhance environmental and cultural outcomes through restoration, biodiversity enhancement, cultural design, and active stewardship of the landscape. Particular attention is given to opportunities for wetland restoration, protection of significant ecological features, strengthening cultural connections to place, and supporting the long-term health and resilience of the wider Waipā environment.

The assessment provides recommendations intended to avoid, remedy, mitigate, or enhance cultural outcomes where appropriate. These recommendations are designed to support the protection and enhancement of cultural values while assisting decision-makers in understanding the interests, responsibilities, and aspirations of Ngāti Apakura in relation to the proposal.

Ultimately, this assessment has been prepared to inform the Fast Track Approvals process and to provide a mana whenua perspective on the proposal and its potential contribution to the environmental, cultural, social, and intergenerational wellbeing of the Waipā landscape.

3. Cultural Landscape Context

3.1 Introduction

For Ngāti Apakura, the cultural significance of the landscape extends far beyond individual sites, features, or mapped boundaries. The landscape is understood as a living cultural system in which whenua, wai, whakapapa, memory, occupation, and identity are inseparably connected. Every wetland, stream, lake, ridge, and pathway contributes to a wider network of relationships established by generations of tūpuna and sustained through the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga.

The proposed development site is situated within the cultural landscape of the Waipā basin, an area that has long supported the social, economic, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing of Ngāti Apakura. This landscape contains important ancestral associations arising from settlement, resource use, trade, conflict, alliance, and enduring relationships with neighbouring iwi and hapū.

Understanding the cultural values of the site therefore requires consideration of the wider historical and cultural landscape within which it sits. Central to this understanding are the traditions of Ngā Roto and Hingakākā, the whakapapa of Ngāti Apakura, and the longstanding relationship of the iwi with the wetland systems that once dominated this part of the Waipā district.

3.2 Tainui Waka and the Origins of Ngāti Apakura

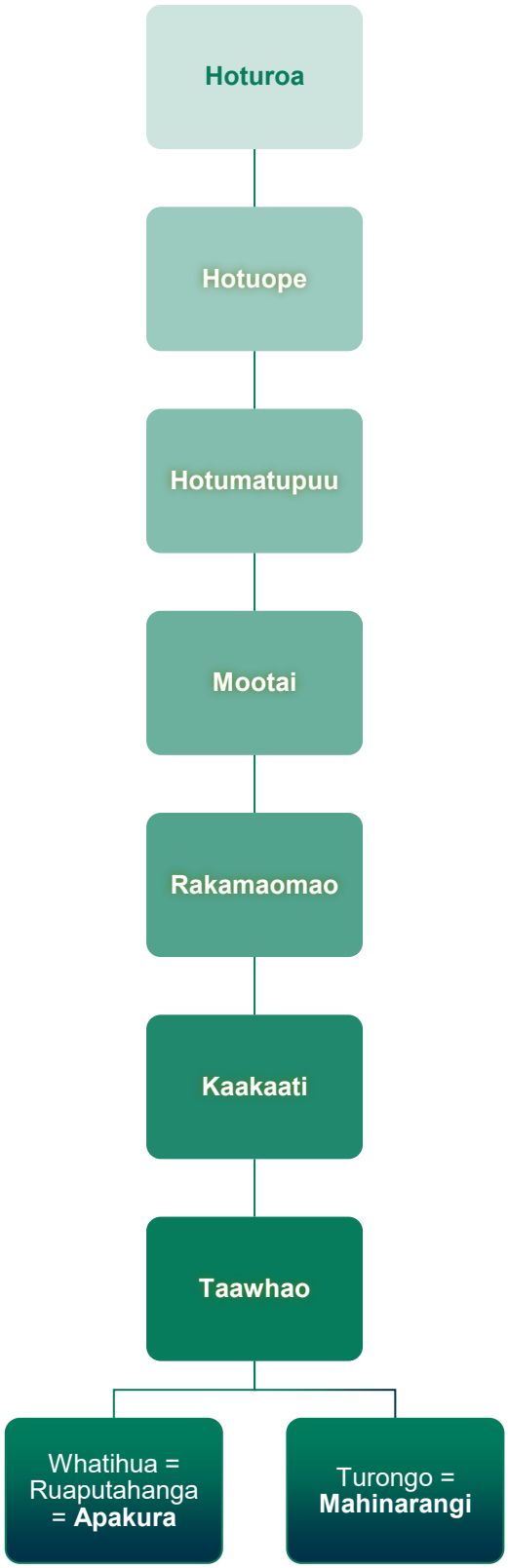
The history of Ngāti Apakura is inseparable from the arrival of the Tainui waka and the establishment of Tainui communities throughout the Waikato and Waipā regions.

According to tribal traditions, Tainui departed from Hawaiki during the period of Polynesian migration to Aotearoa and eventually made landfall in Tāmaki Makaurau. After exploring the waterways of the region, the crew transported the waka across the Te Tō Waka portage at Ōtāhuhu before travelling south along the western coastline.

The voyage included landings at Whāingaroa and Mōkau before eventually reaching Kāwhia Harbour, where Tainui was drawn ashore at Maketū. This location remains one of the most significant ancestral places within the Tainui confederation and serves as a physical reminder of the arrival of the waka and the establishment of enduring whakapapa relationships throughout the region.

The descendants of Hoturoa, captain of the Tainui waka, gradually established occupation throughout Waikato and Waipā. Through successive generations, these ancestral lines gave rise to numerous iwi and hapū, including Ngāti Apakura, whose identity and authority derive from those original Tainui foundations.

For Ngāti Apakura, these traditions are more than historical accounts. They establish whakapapa connections to whenua, define relationships with neighbouring iwi and hapū, and provide the basis for the exercise of mana whakahaere and kaitiakitanga throughout the Waipā landscape.



3.3 Whakapapa and the Emergence of Ngāti Apakura

The identity of Ngāti Apakura is founded upon the ancestral union of Whatihua and Apakura, whose descendants established enduring relationships with the inland landscapes of Waipā.

Apakura = **Whatihua**
|
Marumāhanga
|
Rakamāhanga
|
Pikirangi = Waitaweke
Ngāti Apakura

Through this line of descent, Ngāti Apakura trace their ancestry through Marumahanga, Rakamahanga, and Pikirangi, creating the genealogical foundations upon which tribal identity continues to rest today.

Whakapapa serves as more than a record of ancestry. It defines relationships between people, landscapes, waterways, and resources while establishing the rights and responsibilities inherited by successive generations. Through whakapapa, Ngāti Apakura maintain responsibilities of kaitiakitanga over culturally significant landscapes and retain enduring relationships with the waterways, wetlands, and customary resources that sustained their ancestors.

Traditional accounts record that following the death of Whatihua, Apakura and her descendants established themselves within the inland districts surrounding Ngā Roto and the extensive wetland systems of the Waipā basin. The abundance of tuna, manu, kākahi, harakeke, raupō, and fertile soils enabled communities to flourish and develop extensive networks of trade and exchange.

This relationship is encapsulated within the whakataukī:

"Whatihua ki tai, Apakura ki uta" (Coromandel-Wander, 2013)

The expression acknowledges the complementary relationship between coastal and inland communities and reflects the strategic occupation of both environments by related Tainui peoples connected through whakapapa, exchange, and mutual support.

3.4 Ngā Roto, Hingakākā and Cultural Memory

Among the most significant historical events associated with the landscape surrounding the proposed development site is the Battle of Hingakākā. Fought within the Ngā Roto district during the late eighteenth century, Hingakākā remains one of the most significant intertribal conflicts in Aotearoa prior to the arrival of muskets and is widely regarded as one of the defining events in the history of the Waipā region.

The conflict arose during a period of shifting political alliances and growing tensions between tribal groups throughout Te Ika-a-Māui. Oral traditions record that disputes involving Ngāti Apakura, Ngāti Kauwhata, and associated groups eventually escalated into a confrontation of unprecedented scale. The rangatira Pikauterangi travelled extensively seeking support for a military campaign against Waikato and its allies, ultimately assembling a large confederation of tribes from across the North Island.

As news of the approaching taua spread throughout the district, communities mobilised to protect their lands, people, and authority. For the tribes of Waikato and Waipā, the conflict represented far more than a military confrontation. It was a defence of whakapapa, occupation, mana, and the continuing relationship between people and place.

For Ngāti Apakura, the significance of Hingakākā extends beyond the battle itself. It remains a powerful expression of tribal resilience, leadership, and collective responsibility. The events of the battle continue to be remembered through kōrero tuku iho and contribute significantly to the cultural significance of the wider Ngā Roto landscape.

The traditions associated with Te Rauangaanga, Tiriwa, Te Waha a Tuarā-a-Tini, and the sacred taonga Uenuku reinforce the importance of this area within the cultural history of Waikato-Tainui and Ngāti Apakura. Through these narratives, Ngā Roto is understood not simply as a lake system, but as a repository of history, memory, whakapapa, and ancestral mana.

3.4.1 Te Rauangānga and the Defence of the District

Among the most significant figures associated with Hingakākā is the renowned Waikato rangatira Te Rauangānga, father of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, who would later become the first Māori King.

Te Rauangānga is remembered as a leader of exceptional strength, strategic skill, and political influence. As the threat posed by Pikauterangi confederation grew, Te Rauangānga united tribes from throughout Waikato and Waipā, including Ngāti Apakura, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Hikairo, Ngāti Tamaoho, and others (Jones, 1959).

His leadership represented more than military command. It reflected the responsibilities of rangatiratanga, bringing together multiple tribal interests in defence of a shared homeland. Through his actions, Te Rauangaanga became a symbol of unity, leadership, and collective responsibility that continues to resonate throughout Waikato-Tainui traditions today.

3.4.2 Tiriwa and Te Waha a Tuarā-a-Tini

For Ngāti Apakura, one of the most significant figures associated with the Battle of Hingakākā is the rangatira Tiriwa, whose whakapapa traces directly to the founding ancestors of the iwi. Through the lineage of Whatihua and Apakura, descending through Marumāhanga, Pikirangi, Tuihu, Te Aotūtahanga, Puhiawe, and Whātitiri, Tiriwa belonged to one of the senior Ngāti Apakura whakapapa lines associated with the occupation and stewardship of the inland Waipā landscape. Through this lineage, Tiriwa was not only a leader in battle but also a representative of the enduring authority, identity, and responsibilities inherited from the ancestors of Ngāti Apakura.

For Ngāti Apakura, the significance of Tiriwa rests not solely on his military achievements but on the qualities of rangatiratanga he embodied. He is remembered as a leader who stood at the forefront of his people during one of the defining conflicts of the Waipā district and whose actions continue to be recalled through kōrero tuku iho.

As the opposing forces assembled at Ngā Roto and the ceremonial exchanges preceding battle came to an end, Tiriwa is said to have challenged Huahua of Ngāti Matakore (Kelly, 1949), calling:

“E Hua e! Māu te titi, māku te whewhera!”

Often translated as:

“O Hua! Be you the wedge and I will open the way.”

The challenge was both strategic and symbolic, inviting Huahua to lead the first assault against the advancing force. Tiriwa is remembered in tribal tradition as a decisive leader, reflected in the challenge attributed to him:

"Māku te titi, māku te whewhera."
"I will be the wedge and I will open the way."

Accepting the responsibility himself, Tiriwa rose and seized two hue (calabashes), throwing them into the air before striking them with his taiaha as they fell. As the calabashes shattered, he proclaimed:

"Kei ahau te matangohi!"
"Mine is the first man!"

This act carried powerful cultural symbolism. The hue were understood to represent the heads of warriors, and their destruction signified Tiriwa's commitment to lead the charge and his confidence in the outcome of the battle. Traditions record that the opposing force viewed the act with apprehension, recognising it as a significant omen before the conflict commenced.

As the shattered calabashes fell to the ground, the defending forces of Waikato and Waipā surged forward under the leadership of **Te Rauangānga**, commencing the decisive assault that would ultimately secure victory at Hingakākā. Through these traditions, Tiriwa is remembered as a leader who demonstrated courage, determination, and an unwavering commitment to the protection of his people and their whenua.

Associated with Tiriwa is the Ngāti Apakura battle formation known as **Te Waha a Tuarā-a-Tini**. More than a military strategy, the formation reflected principles of collective strength, discipline, and mutual responsibility. Like the backbone of a living being, each rank supported the next, reinforcing the understanding that leadership and success were achieved through unity and the coordinated effort of the collective rather than the actions of any individual alone. (Kelly, 1949)

Today, the traditions of Tiriwa and Te Waha a Tuarā-a-Tini remain important expressions of Ngāti Apakura identity. They reinforce the longstanding relationship of the iwi with the Ngā Roto landscape and serve as enduring reminders of the responsibilities, resilience, and rangatiratanga that have shaped Ngāti Apakura throughout successive generations.

Oral histories record that Tiriwa occupied the summit of the hill overlooking Te Awamutu area and while the precise extent and location of that occupation can no longer be definitively identified, his association with the surrounding landscape remains an important aspect of local tribal history and identity (Coromandel-Wander, 2013).

The subject site sits within a wider cultural landscape that possesses many of the characteristics valued by Māori as places of settlement and resource use. These include access to freshwater, fertile land, natural resources, and elevated terrain offering visibility across the surrounding area. The presence of watercourses and associated natural resources would have contributed to the suitability of the wider locality for occupation, food gathering, and other customary activities.

Although there is currently no direct evidence linking Tiriwa to the specific footprint of the proposed development, it is reasonable to recognise the site as forming part of the broader cultural landscape within which traditions relating to Tiriwa are situated. The cultural significance of the area is therefore derived not only from any known archaeological features, but also from its relationship to ancestral narratives, occupation patterns, and the enduring connections of mana whenua to the whenua.

3.4.3 Uenuku and the Mauri of Ngā Roto

Central to the kōrero of Hingakākā and the cultural significance of Ngā Roto is the sacred taonga Uenuku. Regarded as one of the most important ancestral treasures of Tainui, Uenuku embodies whakapapa, spiritual authority, divine protection, and the enduring relationship between descendants and their tūpuna.

According to Tainui traditions, Uenuku was carried to Aotearoa aboard the Tainui waka and preserved through successive generations as a taonga of immense importance. More than a physical object, Uenuku was understood as a living repository of ancestral mana and spiritual influence. Through its connection to the ancestors and atua, Uenuku served as a source of guidance, protection, and continuity for the descendants of Tainui.

The events surrounding Hingakākā elevated the significance of Uenuku within the history of Waikato and Waipā. As the invading taua assembled and conflict became imminent, traditions record that Te Rauangānga and the tohunga sought spiritual guidance and protection through karakia. At this pivotal moment, Uenuku is said to have instructed that it be placed within the waters of Ngā Roto.



Figure 3.4.4: Artistic interpretation of traditional Māori use and occupation of the Ngā Roto wetland environment. (Waipa District Council, 2019)

Following these instructions, Uenuku was entrusted to the lake and concealed beneath its waters. There it remained hidden for more than a century before being rediscovered in the early twentieth century. Through this act, the lake became the guardian of one of the most sacred taonga associated with the Tainui waka tradition.

For Ngāti Apakura, the story of Uenuku reinforces the understanding that lakes, wetlands, and waterways are not simply physical features within the landscape. They are living taonga capable of holding memory, identity, history, and spiritual significance. Wai possesses its own mauri and is recognised as a conduit between the physical and spiritual worlds. The placement of Uenuku within Ngā Roto transformed the lake from a place associated with an important historical battle into a repository of ancestral mana and sacred history.

The association between Uenuku and Ngā Roto also illustrates the reciprocal relationship between people and the environment. The lake was entrusted with the protection of the taonga, while the taonga in turn enhanced the spiritual significance of the lake. Through this relationship, the landscape itself became part of the tribal narrative, carrying the histories and responsibilities of successive generations.

Today, the traditions of Uenuku continue to contribute to the cultural significance of the wider Ngā Roto landscape. They affirm the importance of recognising wai as a living entity and reinforce the enduring relationship of Ngāti Apakura and Waikato-Tainui with the lakes, wetlands, and waterways of the Waipā district. Through Uenuku, Ngā Roto remains a place where whakapapa, memory, mana, and mauri converge, linking the present generation with those who came before them.

3.5 Ngāti Apakura Rohe and Cultural Landscape

The traditional rohe and sphere of influence of Ngāti Apakura extends across the southern Waikato and upper Waipā districts, encompassing a network of interconnected wetlands, waterways, lakes, settlements, pā sites, mahinga kai areas, and travel routes that collectively formed the cultural and economic heartland of the iwi.

This landscape includes Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Pekapekarau, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, Te Awamutu, Pirongia, Kaipaka, Rangiaowhia, and the surrounding catchments that ultimately connect to the Waipā River system. Rather than existing as isolated places, these locations formed part of a highly connected cultural landscape through which people, resources, knowledge, and whakapapa relationships moved across generations (McCraw, 2011).

For Ngāti Apakura, authority and occupation were expressed through active use, stewardship, and intergenerational relationships with the land and waters. The landscape was utilised for settlement, food production, resource harvesting, trade, ceremony, travel, and defence.

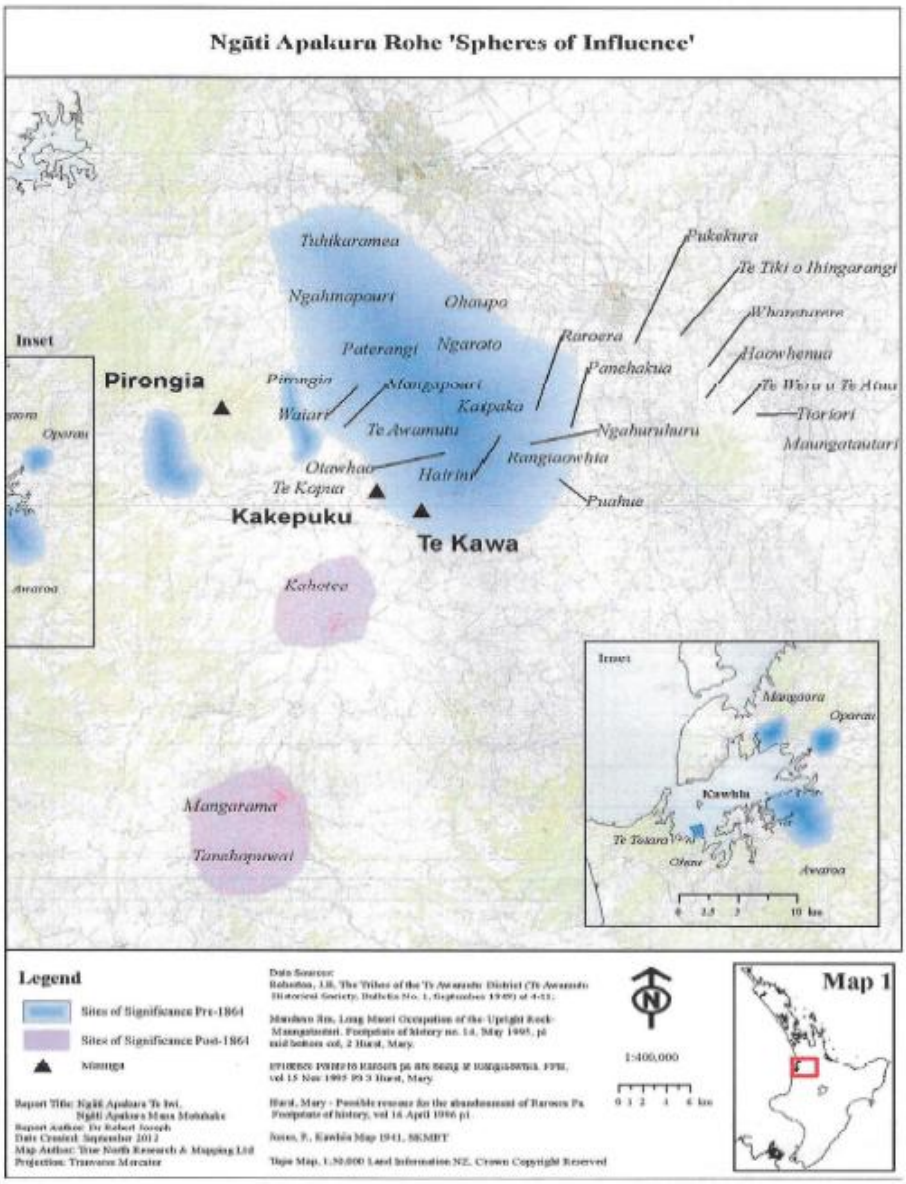


Figure 3.5.1: Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape, kāinga, pā and wāhi tūpuna within the wider Waipā district (Joseph, 2013).

Whenua and wai were regarded as living entities, each possessing mauri and requiring reciprocal relationships of care and respect.

The proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village site sits within this wider cultural landscape and is connected to a broader network of cultural values that extend well beyond the immediate development footprint.

3.6 Wetlands as Cultural and Ecological Heartlands

The cultural landscape of Ngāti Apakura was shaped by the extensive wetland systems that once dominated the Waipā basin. Prior to large-scale drainage and land modification, the region comprised a vast network of lakes, peatlands, swamps, waterways, and seasonally inundated landscapes that sustained both people and the natural environment.

Among the most significant of these were the Rukuhia and Moanatuatua wetlands, which formed part of one of the largest inland wetland complexes in Aotearoa (McCraw, 2011). Together with Ngā Roto and numerous smaller wetlands and watercourses, these environments created a rich and highly productive cultural landscape that supported settlement, mobility, resource gathering, trade, and environmental stewardship.

For Ngāti Apakura, wetlands were not simply physical environments or sources of sustenance. They were living repositories of whakapapa, mātauranga, and cultural memory. Relationships between people and place were expressed through customary practices associated with tuna, manu, kākahi, harakeke, raupō, and other taonga species that flourished within these environments. Seasonal harvesting cycles, environmental indicators, and resource management practices were passed from one generation to the next, creating a body of knowledge that reflected a deep understanding of the natural world.

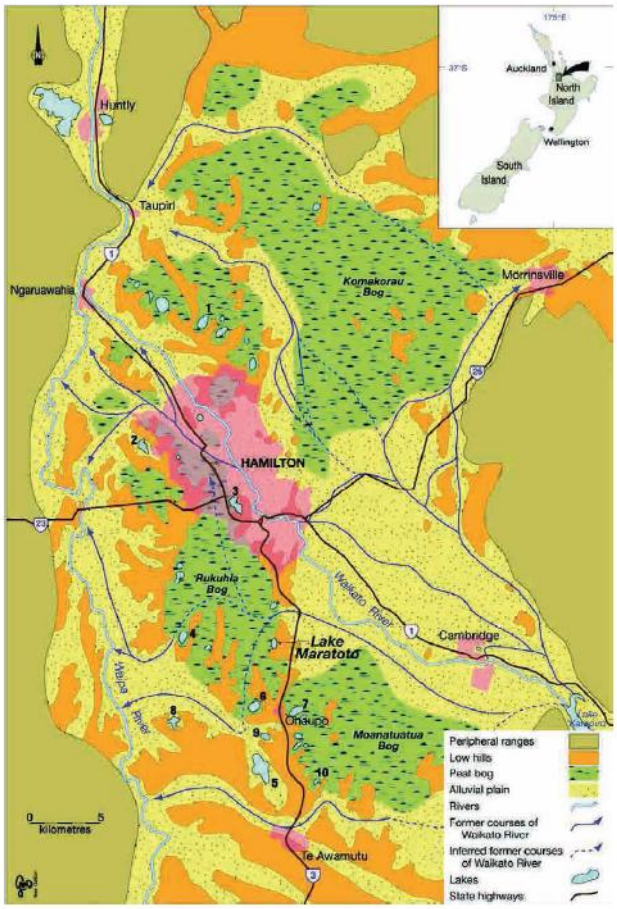


Figure 3.6.1: Geomorphology and former peat wetland systems of the Waikato-Waipā Basin, illustrating the extent of the Rukuhia and Moanatuatua peat bog complexes and associated landforms (Lowe, 2010).

The Rukuhia and Moanatuatua wetlands formed part of an extensive network of bogs, swamps, lakes, and floodplain environments that shaped settlement patterns, resource use, travel routes, and ecological relationships throughout the region.

Figure 3.6.1 illustrates the relationship between the peat bog systems, alluvial plains, rivers, lakes, and surrounding hill country that characterise the Waikato-Waipā landscape (Lowe, 2010). The proposed development site sits within this broader environmental setting, positioned on elevated land between significant wetland systems that historically provided abundant food resources, transport corridors, and ecological connectivity.

The wetlands also functioned as transport corridors linking settlements and resource areas throughout the district. Travel by waka and along established pathways enabled movement between communities and facilitated trade with neighbouring hapū and iwi.

Beyond their economic value, wetlands held deep cultural and spiritual significance. They were places where whakapapa relationships with the natural world were expressed and maintained. The health of the wetlands reflected the health of the people, while the abundance of resources was understood as an indicator of environmental wellbeing and effective kaitiakitanga.

For these reasons, wetlands occupied a central place within the identity and cultural practices of Ngāti Apakura and remain culturally significant today despite substantial historical loss and modification.

3.7 Settlement, Mahinga Kai and Resource Management

The abundance of resources throughout the wetlands and waterways of the Waipā basin supported a network of permanent and seasonal settlements occupied by Ngāti Apakura. The location of kāinga and pā was closely linked to access to freshwater, fertile soils, transportation routes, and the rich food resources provided by surrounding lakes, streams, and wetlands (Joseph, 2013).

The interconnected landscapes of Ōhaupō, Ngā Roto, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, Kaipaka, and Rangiaowhia provided an environment capable of sustaining large populations. Communities established throughout these areas developed extensive knowledge of local ecosystems and adapted their settlement patterns to seasonal cycles of resource availability.

Central to this relationship was the practice of mahinga kai, which encompassed the harvesting, management, and protection of food resources. Wetlands and waterways provided abundant tuna, kākahi, waterfowl, fish, and plant resources, while surrounding lands supported cultivations and gathering activities that contributed to the wellbeing of communities (Maki-Midwood, 2016). The productivity of these environments enabled Ngāti Apakura to develop thriving settlements supported by diverse food sources and strong environmental knowledge.

The management of tuna was of particular importance within the Waipā landscape. Tuna represented both a staple food source and a taonga species of cultural significance (Kapua, 2025). Harvesting was governed by tikanga and supported by sophisticated systems of environmental management, including the construction of **pā tuna** and associated weir structures designed to capture migrating tuna while maintaining the long-term sustainability of the resource.

Evidence of these practices remains visible today. Remnants of traditional pā tuna structures located near Kaipaka provide tangible confirmation of the intensive and highly organised management of wetland and waterway resources by Ngāti Apakura and their tūpuna.



Figure 3.7.1: Remnants of historic pā tuna structures identified within a tributary of the Mangapiko catchment near Kaipaka Pā, Christie Ave, Te Awamutu. The timber elements highlighted in red are consistent with traditional eel-weir construction and support kōrero tuku iho describing the importance of tuna harvesting, mahinga kai, and wetland resource management within the Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape.

The presence of these structures demonstrates that waterways were not merely places where resources were harvested, but landscapes actively cared for and managed. Resource use was guided by an understanding that tangata and taiao existed within a reciprocal relationship (Kapua, 2025). Harvesting practices therefore incorporated responsibilities to protect the mauri of waterways and ensure resources remained available for future generations.

The importance of these wetland resources also contributed to the political and strategic significance of the district. Control of productive waterways, tuna migrations, and associated resource areas was closely linked to tribal wellbeing and prosperity. As a result, many of the histories associated with the Waipā landscape, including conflict, alliance, and reconciliation, were intimately connected to the management and protection of these valuable environments (Joseph, 2013).

For Ngāti Apakura, the surviving remains of pā tuna, together with the oral histories associated with them, continue to affirm longstanding relationships with the waterways, wetlands, and mahinga kai resources of the district. They provide enduring evidence of occupation, environmental stewardship, and the exercise of kaitiakitanga across the cultural landscape of Waipā.

3.8 Trade, Prosperity and Regional Connections

The abundance of natural resources within the Waipā landscape provided the foundation for a prosperous Māori economy that flourished throughout the nineteenth century. Fertile soils, extensive wetland systems, reliable waterways, and established networks of occupation enabled Ngāti Apakura and neighbouring iwi to develop thriving settlements across the district (Joseph, 2013). The productivity of the landscape supported both customary food production and participation in emerging commercial markets.

Building upon generations of environmental knowledge and resource management, Ngāti Apakura readily adopted new technologies, crops, and farming practices introduced through contact with missionaries and traders. Wheat cultivation, orchards, flour milling, horse-drawn transport, and commercial agriculture were incorporated into an already productive cultural landscape. These innovations were not a replacement for existing systems but were adapted to complement established Māori methods of land management and economic organisation.

By the 1840s and 1850s, the Rangiaowhia-Ōtāwhao district had become one of the most productive agricultural regions in Aotearoa. Flour mills, extensive cultivations, orchards, livestock, and transport infrastructure supported a flourishing local economy. Contemporary accounts described the district as a place of remarkable abundance, often referred to as the "granary of the North Island" (Malley, 2016). In 1851

alone, the region was producing approximately 150 tons of flour and supported hundreds of acres of wheat cultivation, together with carts, drays, horses, orchards, and vegetable gardens.

The success of this economy relied upon well-established trade networks connecting inland production centres with external markets. Produce grown and processed within the Rangiaowhia, Ōtāwhao, Pekapekarau, and wider Waipā district was transported by dray to river landing sites at Te Rore, before being loaded onto waka for transport down the Waipā and Waikato Rivers (Joseph, 2013). From there, goods travelled across the Awaroa portage to Waiuku and onward to Auckland markets. During periods of strong demand, products from the district reached destinations as far afield as Australia and California.

Figure 3.8.1 illustrates the network of trade routes linking Ngāti Apakura economic centres and Māori flour mills with regional and international markets during the mid-nineteenth century.

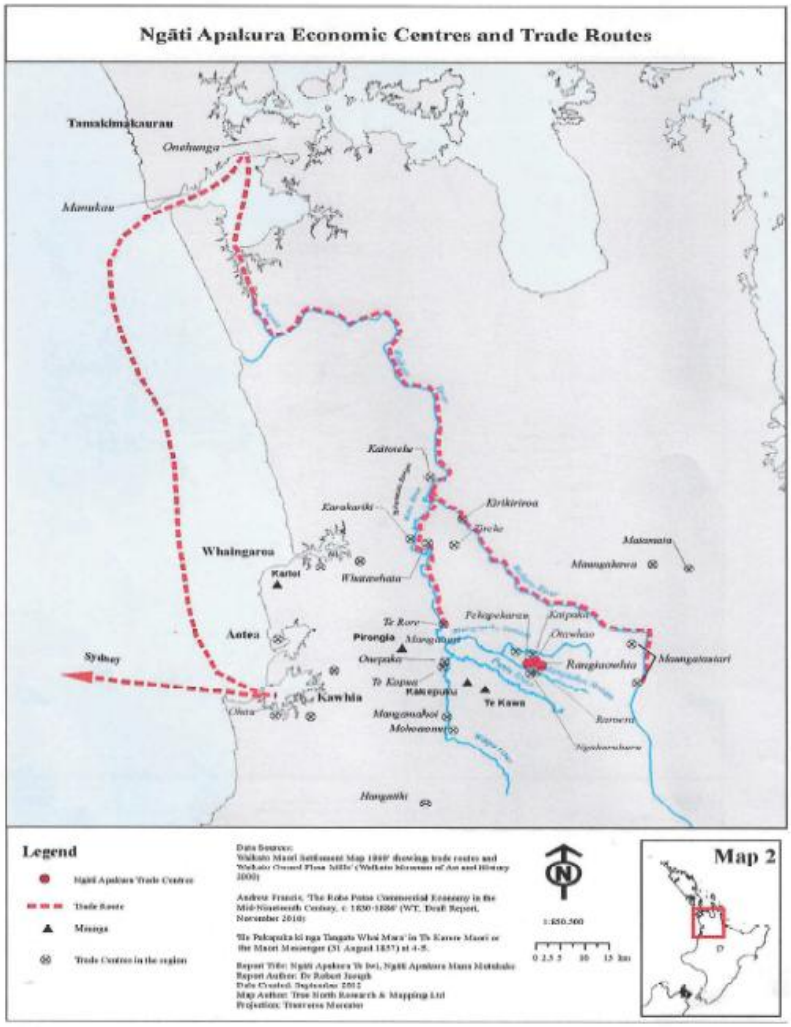


Figure 3.8.1: Trade routes connecting Rangiaowhia, Ōtāwhao, Te Rore and other Ngāti Apakura economic centres to Auckland, Australia, and international markets through the Waipā and Waikato River transport networks (Joseph, 2013)

The prosperity achieved during this period reflects the adaptability, innovation, and leadership of Ngāti Apakura and neighbouring iwi. Far from being isolated communities, they were active participants in regional and international economies, combining mātauranga Māori, environmental stewardship, and emerging technologies to create thriving centres of production and trade. The wealth generated from these activities contributed to the growth of the district and supported the social, cultural, and political development of the communities who occupied it.

This period of prosperity would, however, be profoundly disrupted by the Waikato War, the invasion of the district, and the subsequent confiscation of Māori land. The loss of these productive landscapes would have lasting consequences for the economic wellbeing, mana motuhake, and cultural continuity of Ngāti Apakura.

3.9 Waikato War, Raupatu and the Loss of Prosperity

The prosperity enjoyed by Ngāti Apakura and neighbouring communities throughout the Waipā district during the mid-nineteenth century was profoundly disrupted by the Waikato War and the subsequent confiscation of Māori land. What had become one of the most productive agricultural regions in Aotearoa was transformed within a relatively short period through military invasion, displacement, and raupatu (Malley, 2016).

For Ngāti Apakura, these events represented far more than the loss of land. They marked a fundamental disruption of the social, economic, cultural, and political systems that had sustained the iwi for generations. Productive cultivations, flour mills, transport networks, settlements, and customary resource areas were either abandoned, destroyed, or placed beyond the control of their traditional owners.

Particularly significant was the invasion of Rangiaowhia in February 1864. At the time, Rangiaowhia was widely recognised as one of the principal centres of agricultural production within the Waikato region and a location closely associated with Ngāti Apakura (Joseph, 2013). The settlement was known for its extensive cultivations, orchards, churches, flour mills, and thriving Māori economy. Following Rangiriri, it was agreed that women, children and kaumātua would remain separated from the principal theatres of conflict while the toa established and occupied the extensive defensive complex at Pāterangi (Malley, 2016). Located within the wider cultural landscape of Ngāti Apakura and in close proximity to Ngā Roto, Pāterangi became one of the largest and most formidable pā constructed during the Waikato War. The scale of the fortification was such that it dominated the surrounding landscape, giving rise to associations with its prominent skyline position. Pāterangi is commonly understood as referring to a fortified pā situated against the sky or on the skyline.Recognising the strength of the defences and the likely cost of an assault, General Cameron chose not to attack Pāterangi directly. Instead, Crown forces marched by night around the pā and entered Rangiaowhia, (Malley, 2016) (Coromandel-Wander, 2013).

The attack on Rangiaowhia and the subsequent engagements at Hairini and Ōrākau had profound consequences for Ngāti Apakura and the wider communities of Waipā (Malley, 2016). Beyond the immediate loss of life, these events accelerated the collapse of a prosperous regional economy and contributed to widespread displacement throughout the district. The flourishing centres of production and trade that had characterised Rangiaowhia and Ōtāwhao prior to 1864 were irreversibly altered.

The confiscation of approximately 1.2 million acres of Waikato land following the war further entrenched these impacts. For Ngāti Apakura, raupatu resulted in the loss of significant areas of whenua, including lands associated with Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Rangiaowhia, Te Awamutu, Ngāhinapōuri, and surrounding districts. These losses extended beyond ownership and occupation. They affected access to waterways, wetlands, mahinga kai resources, and locations central to the identity and wellbeing of the iwi (Coromandel-Wander, 2013).

The consequences of raupatu were experienced not only economically, but culturally and spiritually. Relationships with ancestral landscapes were disrupted, historic patterns of occupation were fragmented, and opportunities for future development were severely constrained. Wetlands, waterways, cultivations, and trade routes that had once supported thriving communities became increasingly disconnected from the people who had maintained them for generations.

Despite these challenges, Ngāti Apakura maintained their identity, whakapapa, and cultural connection to the landscape. Oral histories, marae affiliations, wāhi tūpuna, and responsibilities of kaitiakitanga continued to preserve relationships with the whenua and wai despite the significant disruptions caused by war and confiscation. The enduring presence of these connections reflects the resilience of Ngāti Apakura and the continuing importance of the Waipā landscape to the iwi today.

3.10 Enduring Relationships and Contemporary Kaitiakitanga

Despite the profound impacts of war, displacement, land confiscation, and environmental transformation, the relationship of Ngāti Apakura with the whenua and wai of the Waipā district has endured.

While many of the physical landscapes that sustained earlier generations have been modified through agricultural development, urban expansion, drainage works, and changes in land ownership, the cultural relationships that connect Ngāti Apakura to these places remain intact. These relationships continue through whakapapa, kōrero tuku iho, wāhi tūpuna, marae affiliations, customary knowledge, and the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga.

For Ngāti Apakura, connection to the landscape has never been solely dependent upon ownership or occupation. Rather, it is founded upon whakapapa and the inherited responsibilities that arise from ancestral relationships with whenua, wai, and the wider natural environment (Coromandel-Wander, 2013). These obligations have continued across successive generations despite the significant disruptions experienced following the Waikato War and raupatu.

Today, Ngāti Apakura continue to participate in the protection, restoration, and enhancement of culturally significant landscapes throughout the Waipā district. Particular emphasis has been placed on the restoration of wetlands, waterways, indigenous biodiversity, and the revitalisation of mātauranga associated with traditional resource management practices. These activities reflect the continuing responsibility of the iwi to protect and enhance the mauri of the environment for future generations.

The restoration of wetlands and ecological systems is of particular importance given the historical significance of these environments to Ngāti Apakura identity and wellbeing. Remaining wetland remnants continue to provide important ecological functions while also serving as tangible connections to the landscapes that sustained earlier generations. Opportunities to restore these environments are therefore viewed not only as ecological outcomes but also as expressions of cultural renewal and kaitiakitanga (Coromandel-Wander, 2013).

The contemporary aspirations of Ngāti Apakura are informed by both historical experience and future responsibilities (Joseph, 2013). They seek to ensure that development within the rohe recognises cultural values, protects significant environmental features, restores degraded ecosystems where possible, and contributes positively to the wellbeing of future generations.

It is within this context that the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village is considered. The site does not exist in isolation but forms part of a wider cultural landscape that continues to hold significance for Ngāti Apakura. Understanding this cultural context provides the foundation for assessing the cultural effects of the proposal and identifying opportunities to support positive cultural and environmental outcomes.

4. Site Context and Receiving Environment

4.1 Introduction

The proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village is located at 2025 Ōhaupō Road, Te Awamutu, within the wider cultural landscape of Ngāti Apakura. As outlined in the preceding sections, the site forms part of a broader network of culturally significant landscapes associated with Ngāti Apakura occupation, resource use, trade, environmental stewardship, and historical events throughout the Waipā district.

While the site itself may not contain recorded cultural sites of significance, its location within a landscape shaped by generations of Māori occupation means that it cannot be considered in isolation. The whenua retains connections to surrounding wetlands, waterways, settlements, and ancestral places that collectively contribute to the cultural significance of the wider environment.

Understanding the cultural values associated with the site therefore requires consideration not only of the activities proposed within the development footprint, but also of the relationship between the site and the surrounding cultural landscape of Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, Rangiaowhia, Kaipaka, and the wider Waipā catchment.

4.2 Site Location

The proposed development site comprises approximately 25 hectares of land situated on Ōhaupō Road immediately north of Te Awamutu. The site occupies relatively elevated land within the wider Waipā basin and forms part of a landscape that historically sat between significant wetland and lake systems.

The site is located within the broader sphere of influence of Ngāti Apakura and is positioned within a cultural landscape historically associated with settlement, cultivation, travel, and food production. The surrounding area contains numerous wāhi tūpuna, pā sites, mahinga kai areas, and locations associated with important historical events that collectively contribute to the cultural significance of the district.

Although contemporary land use is primarily rural in character, the site remains connected to the wider hydrological and ecological systems that once linked Ōhaupō with the extensive wetland environments of Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, and Ngā Roto.

4.3 Relationship to the Wider Cultural Landscape

The proposed development site forms part of the broader Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape extending across Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, Rangiaowhia and the wider Waipā basin. As outlined in Section 3, this landscape reflects longstanding relationships between Ngāti Apakura, the whenua, wai and associated cultural resources.

While the site has been substantially modified through agricultural land use, it remains connected to the wider environmental and cultural systems that define the Waipā landscape. These broader cultural relationships provide the context for the assessment contained within Section 6.

4.4 Cultural Values of the Site

The cultural values associated with the site arise primarily from its location within the wider Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape and its relationship with the whenua, wai and ecological systems of the Waipā catchment.

Although no known sites of significance have been identified within the development footprint, the site remains connected to broader cultural, environmental and ancestral relationships that continue to inform contemporary expressions of kaitiakitanga and environmental stewardship.

These values form the basis of the cultural assessment undertaken through the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework.

5. Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework

The Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework provides a culturally grounded methodology for understanding, assessing, and responding to environmental and cultural effects within the Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape.

Developed by Te iti o Apakura (Kapua, 2025) , the framework draws together mātauranga Māori, tikanga, pūtaiao, and statutory processes to support holistic environmental decision-making. It recognises that cultural values cannot be separated from the wider relationships that exist between people, whenua, wai, biodiversity, and the natural environment.

The framework has been developed through the experiences, history, and cultural practices of Ngāti Apakura. In particular, it draws inspiration from traditional pā tuna systems and the enduring relationship of Ngāti Apakura with the wetlands, waterways, and mahinga kai resources of the Waipā district.

This relationship is reflected in the remains of traditional pā tuna structures identified within waterways near Kaipaka Pā and can be seen at Christies Road, Te Awamutu. Together with oral histories and historical accounts, these features demonstrate the sophisticated environmental knowledge and resource management practices exercised by Ngāti Apakura throughout the wider wetland landscape.

The framework recognises that the effectiveness of a pā tuna depended upon the health of the wider environmental system. Tuna abundance relied upon functioning wetlands, healthy waterways, seasonal flows, habitat connectivity, and the careful stewardship of resources across generations. In the same way, environmental and cultural wellbeing can only be understood by considering the interconnections between all parts of the landscape.

The Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework provides the approach through which the Harlow Lifestyle Village proposal is assessed. It enables cultural values, environmental science, planning considerations, and statutory requirements to be considered together, ensuring that effects on whenua, wai, taiao, and cultural wellbeing are evaluated through a Ngāti Apakura lens.

A detailed description of the framework is provided in **Appendix A**.

5.1 Conceptual Model

The framework uses the pā tuna as a metaphor for environmental assessment and decision-making.

Within the framework, the **hīnaki** represents the space where knowledge, evidence, and perspectives are gathered, tested, and woven together. Just as a hīnaki relies upon many strands working collectively to function effectively, environmental assessment requires the integration of multiple knowledge systems.

Supporting the hīnaki are four interconnected pou:

- **Pou Atua** – spiritual and whakapapa relationships.
- **Pou Tikanga** – cultural values, responsibilities, and practice.
- **Pou Pūtaiao** – environmental science and evidence.
- **Pou Ture** – legislation, policy, and governance.

Together these four pou provide the foundation upon which cultural and environmental assessments are undertaken.

Where the hīnaki brings knowledge together, the four pou provide the framework through which that knowledge is interpreted and applied.

5.2 The Four Pou

5.2.1 Pou Atua – Whakapapa and Spiritual Relationships

Pou Atua recognises the whakapapa relationships that connect people, whenua, wai, indigenous species, and the wider natural world to the atua.

This pou considers:

- Mauri and environmental wellbeing.
- Whakapapa relationships with place.
- Sacred and ancestral associations.
- Cultural and spiritual significance.
- Intergenerational responsibilities inherited through whakapapa.

Through this lens, the environment is understood as a living entity rather than a collection of natural resources.

5.2.2 Pou Tikanga – Cultural Values and Practice

Pou Tikanga provides the cultural principles that guide relationships between people and the environment.

This pou considers:

- Kaitiakitanga.
- Rangatiratanga.
- Manaakitanga.
- Whanaungatanga.
- Cultural traditions and customary practice.

Assessment through this pou seeks to understand whether a proposal protects, respects, and enhances the cultural values associated with the landscape.

5.2.3 Pou Pūtaiao – Environmental Knowledge and Science

Pou Pūtaiao recognises the contribution of environmental science and evidence-based assessment to understanding the state of the natural environment.

This pou considers:

- Ecology and biodiversity.
- Hydrology and water quality.
- Wetland processes.
- Habitat values.
- Environmental resilience and restoration opportunities.

The integration of mātauranga Māori and pūtaiao enables a more comprehensive understanding of environmental effects and opportunities for enhancement.

5.2.4 Pou Ture – Law, Planning and Governance

Pou Ture recognises that environmental management occurs within a framework of legal and policy obligations.

This pou considers:

- Fast Track Approvals legislation.
- Resource management planning instruments.
- Environmental compliance and consent requirements.
- Treaty-based considerations.
- Governance and decision-making processes.

Pou Ture provides the mechanism through which cultural aspirations and environmental outcomes may be incorporated into practical management responses and consent conditions.

5.3 Applying the Framework

The Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework is applied throughout this assessment to evaluate the relationship between the proposed development and the cultural values of Ngāti Apakura.

Rather than assessing effects solely through technical or environmental measures, the framework considers how the proposal performs across the four interconnected pou of Atua, Tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ture. Together these perspectives provide a holistic understanding of effects on whenua, wai, taiao, mauri, and the exercise of kaitiakitanga.

The following assessment applies the framework to identify both potential effects and opportunities for positive cultural, environmental, and intergenerational outcomes associated with the Harlow Lifestyle Village proposal.

6. Cultural Values Assessment

6.1 Introduction

This section applies the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework to assess the cultural values and potential effects associated with the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village development.

The assessment is informed by site information, technical reports, cultural knowledge, historical context, and the broader cultural landscape values identified throughout this report. Consistent with the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework, the proposal is considered through the four interconnected pou of Atua, Tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ture.

The assessment recognises that cultural effects are not limited to adverse outcomes alone. Consideration is also given to opportunities for restoration, enhancement, cultural recognition, and the exercise of kaitiakitanga.

6.2 Pou Atua Assessment

Pou Atua Value	Cultural Assessment	Effect Rating	Recommended Response
Whakapapa Relationships and Cultural Landscape Values	The site forms part of the wider Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape extending across Ōhaupō, Ngāroto, Rukuhia, Moanatuatua, Rangiaowhia, and the Waipā basin. This landscape reflects generations of occupation, resource use, environmental stewardship, and historical events that continue to shape the cultural identity of Ngāti Apakura. Traditions relating to Tiriwa place him within this wider landscape, with oral histories recording his occupation of a nearby hill prior to relocating into the Te Awamutu district. While no direct evidence links Tiriwa to the specific development footprint, the site remains situated within the broader ancestral landscape associated with these traditions. The presence of freshwater resources, wetlands, fertile soils, and other natural resources further contributes to the significance of the area as a place that would have supported occupation and customary use.	Low to Moderate	Undertake a pōwhiri, whakatau, or karakia prior to the commencement of earthworks to acknowledge the cultural and ancestral values associated with the whenua. Maintain ongoing engagement with mana whenua throughout project implementation and recognise the site's place within the wider Ngāti Apakura cultural landscape.
Mauri	Development will result in a permanent change to the existing rural environment and therefore has the potential to affect the mauri of both whenua and wai. However, the proposal also provides opportunities to enhance environmental outcomes through wetland restoration, indigenous planting, habitat enhancement, and biodiversity initiatives. These measures have the potential to improve ecological health and strengthen the relationship between land, water, and the natural environment over time.	Low to Moderate, with opportunities for positive enhancement	Implement ecological restoration measures, wetland enhancement, indigenous planting, and ongoing environmental management. Provide cultural monitoring during ground-disturbing activities and apply an Accidental Discovery Protocol if kōiwi tangata, taonga, or archaeological material are encountered.

6.2.1 Overall Finding

From a Pou Atua perspective, the proposal is assessed as having low to moderate cultural effects. While the development will introduce permanent change within a culturally significant landscape, the identified effects can be appropriately managed through cultural recognition, ecological enhancement, cultural monitoring, and ongoing engagement with mana whenua.

The recommended pōwhiri or karakia, combined with cultural monitoring during earthworks, provides a practical means of recognising the ancestral associations of the area while ensuring development proceeds in a culturally appropriate manner. Opportunities for wetland restoration, indigenous planting, and biodiversity enhancement also provide for the protection and strengthening of mauri across the site over the long term.

6.3 Pou Tikanga Assessment

Tikanga Value	Cultural Assessment	Effect Rating	Recommended Response
Kaitiakitanga	A key consideration from a tikanga perspective is whether the proposal supports the ability of Ngāti Apakura to exercise kaitiakitanga responsibilities within the landscape. The proposed wetland restoration, indigenous planting, ecological enhancement, and protection of significant natural features are generally consistent with kaitiakitanga outcomes and provide opportunities for environmental improvement. Active participation by mana whenua in restoration planning, environmental monitoring, cultural design, and planting programmes would further strengthen these outcomes and support intergenerational environmental stewardship.	Positive	Provide opportunities for mana whenua participation in restoration planning, indigenous planting, ecological monitoring, and environmental management. Support the long-term enhancement of wetland and biodiversity values across the site.
Cultural Recognition	The development presents opportunities to recognise and celebrate the history, identity, and cultural values of Ngāti Apakura through landscape design, interpretation, naming, planting strategies, and the incorporation of local cultural narratives. Particular opportunities exist to acknowledge Ngāti Apakura whakapapa and occupation of the area, historic wetland systems, tuna and mahinga kai traditions, the wider Ngā Roto cultural landscape, and the ongoing responsibilities of kaitiakitanga.	Positive	Incorporate cultural narratives, te reo Māori place names, interpretation signage, culturally significant planting, and design elements that reflect the identity and history of Ngāti Apakura and the wider cultural landscape.

6.3.1 Overall Finding

From a Tikanga and Pou Atua perspective, the proposal is assessed as having low to moderate cultural effects overall, with several opportunities for positive cultural and environmental enhancement. While development will introduce permanent change within a culturally connected landscape, the proposal also provides opportunities to strengthen kaitiakitanga, recognise Ngāti Apakura cultural identity, enhance environmental mauri, and maintain meaningful connections between mana whenua and the whenua.

The implementation of a pōwhiri or karakia prior to earthworks, cultural monitoring during ground disturbance, wetland restoration, indigenous planting, and cultural recognition initiatives will assist in ensuring the development proceeds in a manner that is both culturally appropriate and reflective of Ngāti Apakura values.

6.4 Pou Pūtaiao Assessment

Assessment Component	Scientific Assessment	Effect Rating / Outcome	Recommended Response
Ecology	The ecological assessment identifies the majority of the site as highly modified pastoral land with relatively low ecological value. Areas of higher ecological significance are associated with wetlands, waterways, long-tailed bat habitat, and the kahikatea Significant Natural Area (SNA). A significant finding is the confirmed presence of long-tailed bats throughout the site, with activity concentrated around waterways, vegetated corridors, ponds, and the kahikatea remnant. Long-tailed bats are classified as Threatened - Nationally Critical.	Low ecological effect, subject to mitigation and enhancement measures.	Implement all ecological mitigation measures identified within the ecological assessment, including bat management protocols, habitat protection measures, and retention of significant ecological features where practicable.
Wetlands and Waterways	The proposal will result in the loss of approximately 33m² of degraded wetland habitat, removal of two artificial ponds, culvert upgrades, and the construction of stormwater infrastructure. These effects have been assessed against proposed restoration, habitat enhancement, and ecological management measures.	Low adverse effect, with opportunities for ecological enhancement and long-term environmental gain.	Undertake wetland restoration and enhancement works, improve riparian margins, and implement stormwater treatment measures that support water quality and ecological function.
Ecological Restoration and Biodiversity Enhancement	Proposed restoration measures include wetland enhancement, indigenous planting, habitat creation, and biodiversity improvements. The ecological assessment concludes that these measures will offset identified effects and contribute to improved ecological functioning over time.	Positive net ecological outcome over the long term.	Establish indigenous planting programmes, ecological corridors, and long-term management plans to support biodiversity and habitat connectivity across the site.
Geotechnical Suitability	Geotechnical investigations demonstrate that the site is suitable for residential development subject to the implementation of recommended earthworks, drainage controls, settlement monitoring, and engineering design requirements.	Acceptable and manageable risk.	Implement all geotechnical recommendations relating to earthworks, ground improvement, drainage, settlement monitoring, and foundation design throughout construction.
Contaminated Land	Contaminated land investigations indicate that the site presents a low risk to human health and is suitable for the proposed residential land use.	Low risk.	Apply standard construction and health and safety procedures during earthworks and manage any unexpected contamination in accordance with relevant regulatory requirements

6.4.1 Overall Assessment Finding

From a Pou Pūtaiao perspective, the proposal is assessed as Positive. Scientific investigations indicate that the site is suitable for development and that identified environmental effects can be appropriately managed through mitigation, restoration, and enhancement measures. The implementation of wetland restoration, indigenous planting, ecological management, bat habitat protection, stormwater treatment, and geotechnical controls is expected to result in positive long-term environmental outcomes and an overall net gain in ecological values.

6.5 Pou Ture Assessment

Assessment Component	Assessment	Effect Rating / Outcome	Recommended Response
Statutory Framework	The proposal is being considered through the Fast Track Approvals process and is supported by specialist ecological, geotechnical, and contaminated land assessments. The proposal is required to demonstrate consistency with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements applicable to the development.	Positive	Ensure all statutory approvals, consent conditions, and management plans are implemented throughout construction and operation.
Resource Management and Planning Provisions	The proposal has been designed with consideration of relevant resource management planning provisions, including environmental effects management, infrastructure requirements, and sustainable land-use outcomes.	Positive	Continue to align project design, construction, and environmental management measures with relevant planning provisions and approval requirements.
Indigenous Biodiversity and Wetland Protection	Ecological investigations identify areas of ecological significance, including wetlands, waterways, long-tailed bat habitat, and the kahikatea SNA. The proposal incorporates mitigation, restoration, and enhancement measures intended to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse effects and deliver long-term biodiversity gains.	Positive, subject to implementation of mitigation measures.	Implement all ecological mitigation measures, wetland restoration initiatives, biodiversity enhancement programmes, and habitat protection recommendations identified by specialist assessments.
Cultural Values and Mana Whenua Interests	Pou Ture recognises that legal compliance alone does not necessarily achieve cultural wellbeing. However, when considered alongside the findings of Pou Atua, Tikanga, and Pou Pūtaiao, the proposal demonstrates a reasonable capacity to support cultural values through mana whenua engagement, cultural recognition initiatives, ecological restoration, and environmental stewardship.	Positive	Maintain engagement with Ngāti Apakura throughout the development process, provide opportunities for cultural monitoring, undertake a pōwhiri, whakatau or karakia prior to earthworks, and incorporate cultural recognition measures where practicable.
Environmental Governance and Sustainability Outcomes	The proposal includes measures intended to avoid, mitigate, remedy, and enhance environmental outcomes through wetland restoration, biodiversity enhancement, ecological monitoring, and long-term environmental management. These measures contribute to broader sustainability objectives and environmental resilience.	Positive	Establish long-term environmental monitoring and management programmes to ensure restoration and enhancement commitments are achieved and maintained.

6.5.1 Overall Assessment Finding

From a Pou Ture perspective, the proposal is assessed as Positive. The proposal demonstrates a strong capacity to satisfy statutory and regulatory requirements while also supporting wider environmental and cultural outcomes. Importantly, the integration of ecological restoration, biodiversity enhancement, wetland protection, cultural recognition, mana whenua participation, and environmental monitoring provides a pathway for achieving outcomes that extend beyond regulatory compliance and contribute positively to the long-term wellbeing of the landscape and community.

6.6 Overall Pā Tuna Mātauranga Assessment

When assessed through the four interconnected pou of Atua, Tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ture, the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village presents a mixed but ultimately positive outcome from a Ngāti Apakura perspective.

The proposal will permanently alter the existing rural character of the site and remove a portion of productive land from rural use. However, these changes are accompanied by significant opportunities for ecological restoration, biodiversity enhancement, wetland recovery, protection of significant natural areas, and the exercise of contemporary kaitiakitanga.

Like the pā tuna from which the framework derives its inspiration, the success of the proposal relies upon maintaining the health and connectivity of the wider environmental system. The protection of wai, restoration of wetlands, enhancement of biodiversity, and recognition of cultural values will therefore be critical to achieving the positive outcomes identified through this assessment.

6.7 Weaving the Hīnaki: Integrated Assessment

The Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework recognises that environmental and cultural wellbeing cannot be fully understood through a single measure or discipline. Just as a hīnaki relies upon many strands woven together to function effectively, the assessment of the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village requires the integration of cultural knowledge, environmental science, tikanga, planning processes, and intergenerational aspirations.

Assessment across the four pou indicates that the proposal occupies a landscape of recognised importance to Ngāti Apakura and sits within a wider cultural system shaped by whakapapa, wetlands, waterways, settlement, mahinga kai, and enduring relationships with the Waipā environment.

The assessment identifies that the proposal will result in the permanent conversion of rural land and modification of parts of the existing environment. However, the proposal also provides significant opportunities to restore ecological values through wetland enhancement, indigenous planting, habitat restoration, stormwater treatment, and the protection of significant natural features. These initiatives support the restoration of mauri and contribute positively to contemporary expressions of kaitiakitanga.

From a Pā Tuna Mātauranga perspective, the proposal performs most strongly where it contributes to the restoration of interconnected environmental systems. The protection of the kahikatea SNA, restoration of approximately 10,983m² of wetland habitat, enhancement of bat habitat, ecological corridors, and improvements to water management all contribute positively to the health of the wider landscape.

The framework therefore concludes that, while some cultural and environmental change will occur, the proposal has the potential to achieve positive outcomes where restoration, enhancement, and long-term stewardship commitments are implemented and maintained.

6.7.1 Overall Framework Assessment

Pou	Assessment Outcome
Atua	Positive with enhancement opportunities
Tikanga	Positive
Pūtaiao	Positive
Ture	Positive
Overall Pā Tuna Mātauranga Assessment	Positive with enhancement opportunities

The proposal is therefore considered capable of supporting both environmental improvement and cultural wellbeing, provided that the recommendations outlined in this assessment are incorporated into the detailed design, construction, and operational phases of the development.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The following recommendations have been developed through application of the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework and are intended to support positive cultural, environmental, and intergenerational outcomes associated with the proposed development.

The recommendations seek not only to avoid or mitigate potential adverse effects, but also to identify opportunities to enhance the relationship between people, whenua, wai, and the wider natural environment.

7.2 Cultural Landscape Recognition

1. Ngāti Apakura cultural narratives should be incorporated into the development through naming, interpretation, public artwork, or cultural design elements where appropriate.

2. Consideration should be given to recognising the wider cultural landscape associations of Ngā Roto, Rangiaowhia, Kaipaka, Rukuhia, and Moanatuatua within future landscape design and interpretation initiatives.

3. Opportunities should be explored to acknowledge the historical relationship of Ngāti Apakura with wetlands, tuna, and mahinga kai traditions throughout communal open space areas.

7.3 Wetland Restoration and Enhancement

1. Wetland restoration areas should be established and maintained in accordance with the ecological restoration objectives identified within the ecological assessment.

2. Indigenous species appropriate to the local ecological district should be prioritised for restoration planting.

3. Wetland restoration areas should be protected from future disturbance and managed to ensure long-term ecological outcomes are achieved.

4. Pest plant and pest animal management should be incorporated into wetland management programmes where required.

7.4 Biodiversity and Habitat Protection

1. The kahikatea Significant Natural Area (WP312) should be permanently protected and managed as an ecological asset.

1. Recommendations relating to long-tailed bat habitat protection and lighting design should be fully implemented.

2. Wildlife-sensitive lighting should be employed adjacent to ecological areas, wetlands, and the kahikatea remnant.

3. Ecological buffers proposed around significant habitat areas should be maintained throughout the life of the development.

7.5 Kaitiakitanga and Ongoing Stewardship

1. Opportunities should be provided for Ngāti Apakura participation in restoration, planting, and environmental monitoring programmes.

2. Long-term stewardship arrangements should be established to support the ongoing health of wetlands, waterways, and ecological restoration areas.

3. Environmental management plans developed for the site should recognise the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki within the wider cultural landscape.

4. Future restoration initiatives should seek to improve ecological connectivity throughout the site and surrounding catchment.

7.6 Accidental Discovery Protocol

1. An Accidental Discovery Protocol should be implemented during earthworks to address the potential discovery of kōiwi tangata, taonga, wāhi tapu, or archaeological material.

2. In the event of any discovery, works should cease immediately in the vicinity of the find until appropriate assessments and statutory processes have been completed.

3. Ngāti Apakura should be notified as soon as practicable following the discovery of any cultural material.

8. Conclusion

This Cultural Values Assessment has been prepared by Apakura Rūnanga Trust to assess the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village development at 2025 Ōhaupō Road, Te Awamutu, through the application of the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework.

The assessment has demonstrated that the site sits within the wider cultural landscape of Ngāti Apakura and forms part of a network of interconnected whenua, wai, wetlands, settlements, and historical landscapes that have sustained generations of occupation throughout the Waipā district. The cultural significance of the area arises not from individual sites alone, but from the enduring relationships between people, place, whakapapa, and the natural environment.

The historical narratives of Whatihua and Apakura, the traditions of Ngā Roto and Hingakākā, the leadership of Tiriwa and Te Rauangānga, and the sacred traditions associated with Uenuku collectively reinforce the cultural importance of this landscape and the continuing relationship of Ngāti Apakura with the wider Waipā basin.

Through the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework, the proposal has been assessed across the interconnected pou of Atua, Tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ture. The assessment recognises that the proposed development will result in the permanent conversion of rural land and the modification of parts of the existing environment. However, it also identifies significant opportunities to achieve positive cultural and environmental outcomes through ecological restoration, wetland enhancement, biodiversity protection, and the ongoing exercise of kaitiakitanga.

Particular significance is placed on the protection of the kahikatea Significant Natural Area, restoration and enhancement of approximately 10,983m² of wetland habitat, protection of long-tailed bat habitat, improvements to ecological connectivity, and the integration of restoration-focused stormwater management systems. Together, these initiatives have the potential to enhance the mauri of the wider environment and contribute positively to the health and resilience of the Waipā landscape.

The Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework draws inspiration from the traditional pā tuna systems developed by Ngāti Apakura throughout the wetlands and waterways of the district. Just as a pā tuna depends upon the health of the wider environmental system to function effectively, the success of this proposal will depend upon maintaining and enhancing the interconnected relationship between whenua, wai, biodiversity, and community wellbeing.

From a Ngāti Apakura perspective, the proposal represents both change and opportunity. While development inevitably alters the existing landscape, the proposed restoration initiatives provide an opportunity to re-establish ecological functions, strengthen environmental health, and support contemporary expressions of kaitiakitanga within an area that has experienced significant environmental modification over time.

Overall, the Pā Tuna Mātauranga assessment concludes that the proposed Harlow Lifestyle Village can be supported in principle, provided that the recommendations contained within this assessment are implemented and that the proposed ecological restoration, wetland enhancement, and environmental stewardship outcomes are delivered and maintained over the long term.

In doing so, the proposal has the potential to contribute positively to the environmental, cultural, social, and intergenerational wellbeing of the Waipā landscape, while recognising and respecting the enduring relationship of Ngāti Apakura with the whenua and wai of this place.

Appendix A
Pā Tuna Mātauranga

Cultural models and frameworks that incorporate mātauranga and science are increasingly being used in various jurisdictions to inform environmental management, policy, processes and decision-making (Harmsworth & Awatere, 2013) (Hikuroa, 2017)

The incorporation of mātauranga into environmental decision-making has largely been driven by rights-based environmental pressure by Māori, mainly based around:

- The Resource Management and Local Government Acts
- Treaty of Waitangi settlements
- Waitangi Tribunal reports
- Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato
- Waikato Environmental Plan
- Maniapoto Environmental Management Plan
- Te Mana o te Wai
- Growing recognition and understanding of Māori rights and interests by institutions and agencies
- Informing sustainable environmental management, using a more holistic understanding of the relationships among Te Taiao

Background and Context

The two main species of freshwater eel found in New Zealand are the **longfin eel** (*Anguilla dieffenbachii)* and the **shortfin eel** (*Anguilla australis*).

On a longfin eel, the dorsal (top) fin extends a lot further forward than the anal (bottom) fin. The dorsal fin of a shortfin eel only extends a little further forward than the anal fin.

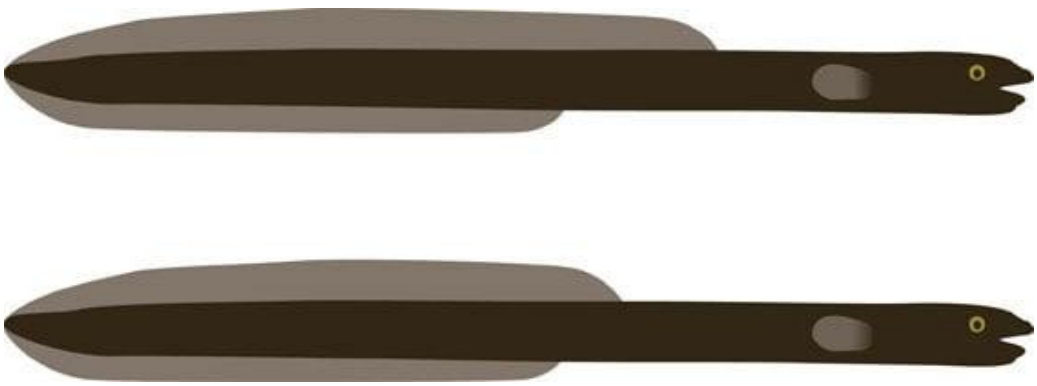


Diagram of eels with longfin eel at top and shortfin eel below

A species in decline

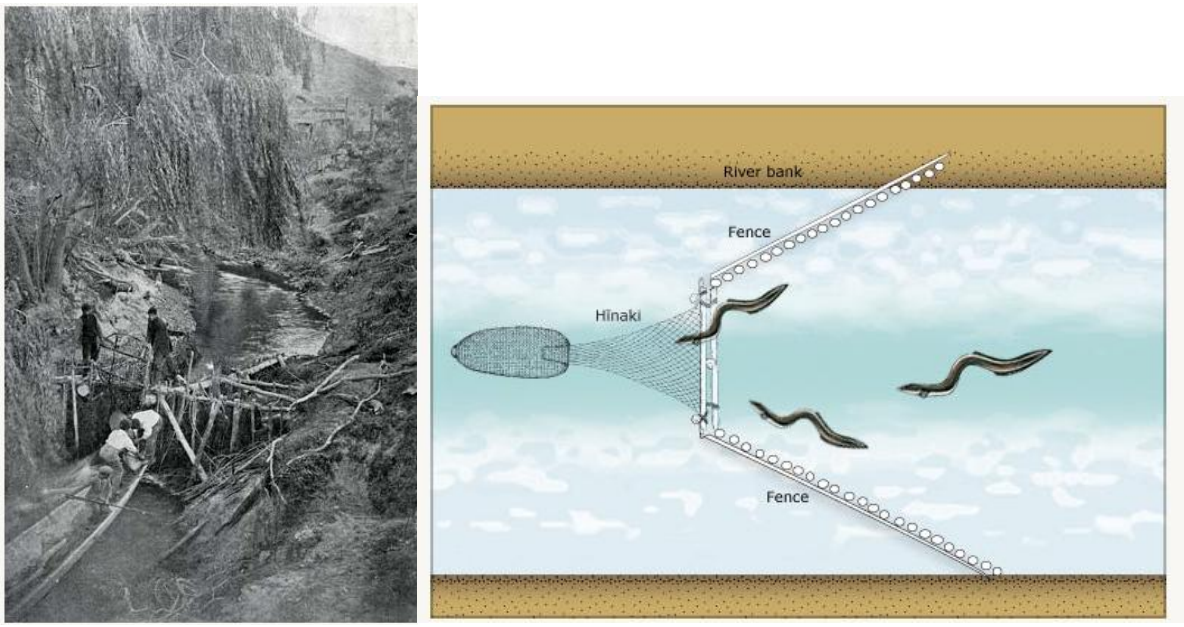
The longfin eel is ranked as ‘At Risk - Declining’ in the New Zealand Threat Classification System listings (2014). It is only found in New Zealand. The shortfin eel is ‘Not Threatened’ and is found in New Zealand, Australia and some Pacific Islands.

Longfin eels, as well as being rare, are less able to cope with changes to their environment than their shorter-finned relative. They are heavily affected by human activities, such as pollution, the building of dams, loss of vegetation near their habitat, and overfishing.

New Zealand freshwater eels can live up to 100 years and breed only once at the end of their lives. In order to breed, they undergo mass spawning migrations, leaving the familiarity of lakes and rivers to swim all the way up to the subtropical Pacific Ocean, where they spawn on masse in very deep water. (Department of Conservation, 2024)

Māori developed sophisticated trapping methods, such as hiinaki[1], Pā-tuna [2], patu tuna [3], toi [4], koumu[5] , korapa[6] and mata rau[7]. Pā tuna represented a permanent institution in many districts, as in rivers and streams, also at the outlets of lagoons and lakes however, the arrival of settlers and their desire to make waterways more navigable saw the interruption of the use of eel weirs.

Below is a example of small Pā tuna of the Pā tauremu type that used two fences funnelling the eels in a hiinaki at Ngutuwera on the Moumaahaki awa, Taranaki area. The fences were made of strong stakes (usually mānuka) driven into the river bed, with mānuka brush or bracken fern between the posts. Water could get through, but the eels, coming downstream in large numbers, could not. The two fences were set in a V shape – upstream they were wide apart, but downstream the gap between them narrowed, and a pūrangi (net) guided the eels into a hīnaki.



Value of Tuna

[1] Eel pot
[2] Eel weir
[3] Eel striking
[4] Using fishhooks
[5] Eel trench
[6] Hand netting
[7] spearing

Tuna (eel) are of great significance to Māori culturally, nutritionally and economically. Eels are a significant resource for kai for Māori they are used by some iwi as a kaitiaki[8], ecological health indicator to assess water and habitat quality. The places where Tuna were harvested are important tribal resources for good reason and these areas would be vigorously defended.

There exist many stories, artefacts, and songs dedicated to eels, which reinforces their importance to Māori and the inspiration for the Paa tuna mātauranga is based on the historic Paa tuna at Kaipaka Paa where the remnants can still be seen today.

Kaipaka Pā

Kaipaka Pā itself was essentially a fortified village or kainga[9] which was situated on both northern and southern banks of the Mangaohoi stream with the fortified paa site itself on the north side ranging up to the junction with the Mangapiko stream. Situated alongside two well-flowing streams lands on either side of the streams and Ngāti Apakura who lived at Kaipaka Pā used the natural landscape and topography as its bases for its defences. This Pā had the ability for Apakura to access water including being able to continue to grow food as a food source which is ideal when under siege from a war party (Maki-Midwoord, 2016).

Kaipaka Pā derives it name from when the tuna is cooked and the skin becomes crispy or in other words pakapaka[10]. At the confluence of the Mangapiko and Mangaohoi river is where Te Awamutu townships derives its name from as settlers found that this was where the navigable waterway ended due to many tuna pā along the waterway.



Legend

- (3) Kaipaka Pā
- (5) Confluence of Mangapiko and Mangaohoi streams
- (7) Pā Tuna
- (8) Memorial Park

The base of the Kaipaka eel weir can still be seen today in the above below and is located a stone's throw away from Christies Avenue, Te Awamutu. This eel weir is at the end of the Mangaohoi river and during the Tuna Heke[11] large numbers of eels were caught.

The lakes and giant Kahikatea forests to the north and east of Kaipaka were a rich and vital source of a veritable warehouse of medicinary and staples of the Māori diet including eels and Karaka and other berries, edible rhizomes and all manner of forest and aquatic birdlife. Being in close proximity to the vast Rukuhia, Pekapekarau and Moanatuatua swamps Kaipaka was a kainga or community of relatively plentiful means with many near and distantly related hapū sharing the rich abundance that the swamp regions had to offer.

[8] Guardian and some cases seen as a tupuna.
[9] village
[10] crispy
[11] Tuna Heke – eel migration

Some parts of the swamps were navigable by canoe and others only by foot. Parts of swamps would have been fortified defensively or even as refuges by blocking access-ways or by natural traps such as quick sands or mud. They were also utilised as safe storage areas whereby tribal heirlooms e.g carvings might be secreted away from prospective marauders. Although encompassing tens of thousands of acres all areas of such lands were identifiable and even delineated to each whanau, hapū or iwi as being their responsibility in terms of sustainability.

Each hapū would effectively have its own catchment area which would have been rigorously monitored, maintained, protected from usurpers and managed (Maki-Midwoord, 2016).



Elements to understanding Mātauranga

Mātauranga embraces intergenerational continuity. Drawing on the knowledge of ancestors, it allows contributions to knowledge in the present to be passed on to descendants in the future (Harmsworth & Awatere, Indigenous Māori knowledge and perspectives of ecosystems. Ecosystem services in New Zealand- conditions and trends, 2013). It can therefore be dynamic, regenerative, and capable of evolving to respond to modern day situations. As landowners, kaitiaki, governors and managers of significant natural resources, Māori contribute a unique range of knowledge, skills, and experience. The insights from mātauranga can assist both robust, effective decision-making, and a holistic approach to environmental management. While key principles and features of mātauranga are consistent between hapūu and iwi, there are important regional and tribal differences.

Mātauranga has its own unique characteristics which are as valid as, but different from, other knowledge systems, including science. However, some disregard mātauranga, because they perceive it as “myth and legend, fantastic and implausible”. In fact, mātauranga includes knowledge generated using techniques consistent with a scientific approach, but which are explained according to a Māori world view (Hikuroa, 2017)

Mātauranga pertains to universal phenomena of life experienced by all living beings, not only to knowledge specific to human beings. It makes no distinction between the spiritual and material worlds, which are conceived of as constantly interacting with one another. “Mātauranga is essentially a system of knowledge and understanding about Māori beliefs relating to creation, the phases of creation and the relationship between atua (supernatural guardians), and tangata (mankind). This relationship or whakapapa (genealogy) determines the way people behave in the context of their environmental ethnical practices.

Mātauranga has a strong oral tradition – it is transmitted in a variety of forms, including whakapapa, waiata, haka, whakatauki, pūraakau, kōrero tuku iho, and whakairo. Whakapapa is a central principle that connects and orders the universe, linking the physical and spiritual worlds, tracing the universe back to its origins.

Underlying Principles for developing this Mātauranga.

- framework design being underpinned by tikanga Māori and informed by Te Tiriti
- decision-makers should consider mātauranga – including Māori cultural concepts, values and practices – from a Māori point of view, rather than a scientific or non-Māori perspective.
- decision-makers will be aware of how to respectfully test and probe mātauranga evidence.
- decision-makers can effectively incorporate mātauranga into their decisions
- decision-makers will understand that mātauranga is a taonga to Māori, whaanau, hapūu, and iwi, and will ensure that the integrity of mātauranga is protected.

Pā Tuna Mātauranga

The concept of the Pā Tuna mātauranga framework is an insightful approach that integrates two distinct knowledge systems—tikanga and Pūtaiao—to collaboratively enhance environmental management. This framework is rooted in the recognition that both traditional Māori knowledge and modern scientific methods contribute valuable perspectives and methodologies for understanding and managing the environment. Equal value must be given to both fields of knowledge systems in order for the Pā Tuna to maximise its performance.

Key Components of the Pā Tuna Mātauranga Framework

1. **Tikanga (Traditional Māori Knowledge):**
    - **Holistic Understanding**: Tikanga emphasizes a holistic view of the environment, considering the interconnectedness of all living and non-living things.
    - **Cultural Practices**: It includes customary practices, rituals, and values that have been passed down through generations, focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources.
    - **Spiritual Connections**: Tikanga incorporates the spiritual relationships that Māori have with the land, water, and all elements of nature, which influence their environmental stewardship.
2. **Pūtaiao (Scientific Knowledge):**
    - **Empirical Methods**: Puutaiao involves systematic observation, experimentation, and analysis to understand environmental phenomena.
    - **Technological Advancements**: It leverages technology and innovation to monitor, model, and manage environmental systems.
    - **Data-Driven Decisions**: Scientific knowledge relies on data and evidence to inform environmental management practices and policies.

Integrating Tikanga and Pūtaiao

- **Equal Partnership**: The framework acknowledges the equal contribution of both knowledge systems, fostering a partnership where each system complements and enhances the other.
- Collaborative Decision-Making: Decisions regarding environmental management are made through a collaborative process that respects and incorporates insights from both tikanga and Pūtaiao.
- Sustainable Practices: By integrating the strengths of both systems, the framework promotes sustainable practices that are culturally appropriate and scientifically sound.

Benefits of the Paa Tuna Mātauranga Framework

- **Enhanced Environmental Stewardship:** Combining traditional and scientific knowledge leads to a more comprehensive understanding of environmental challenges and solutions.
- **Cultural Revitalization:** The inclusion of tikanga helps preserve and revitalize Māori cultural practices and knowledge.
- **Innovation in Management:** The integration of different perspectives fosters innovation and adaptive management strategies that are resilient to environmental changes.

Application in Environmental Management

- **Biodiversity Conservation**: Implementing the framework in conservation efforts ensures that traditional ecological knowledge is used alongside scientific methods to protect native species and ecosystems.
- **Water Resource Management**: In managing water resources, the framework ensures that the spiritual and cultural significance of water bodies is respected while applying scientific techniques for water quality and quantity management.
- **Land Use Planning**: The framework can guide land use planning by balancing cultural heritage with modern development needs, ensuring that land is used sustainably and respectfully.

The Paa Tuna mātauranga framework embodies a sophisticated integration of traditional Māori knowledge (tikanga) and modern scientific understanding (Pūtaiao) to achieve effective environmental management, particularly in the context of tuna (eel) migration. This framework is symbolized by four foundational pillars (pou) that represent different aspects of knowledge and practice: Atua, tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ngā ture . These pillars together support the hīnaki (eel trap), which metaphorically captures the migration of tuna, demonstrating the harmony and balance necessary for successful environmental management.

Key Elements of the Paa Tuna Mātauranga Framework

1. **Four Pou (Pillars):**
    - **Pou Atua (Spiritual/Cultural Authority)**: Located on the riverbank, Pou Atua represents the spiritual and cultural dimensions that provide guidance and authority within the framework. It is deeply connected to the river and the natural world, reflecting the spiritual relationships that inform tikanga. It may include:
        - **Io matua kore**
        - **Rangi and Papa**
        - **Taawhaki**
        - **Uenuku**
        - **Patupairehe**
        - **Pekehawani**
        - **Waiwaia**

- **Pou Tikanga (Traditional Practices)**: Connected to one side of the hiinaki and the Pou Atua, Pou tikanga embodies the traditional practices and values that guide sustainable resource use. It derives its mana (authority) from Pou Atua, emphasizing the interdependence between spiritual guidance and practical application. It may include:
  - **Karakia**
  - **Whaikōrero**
  - **Karanga**
  - **Kawa**

- **Pou Pūtaiao (Science)**: Representing empirical, data-driven approaches and modern technology, Pou Puutaiao focuses on scientific methods and evidence-based practices to understand and manage the environment.

- **Pou Ture (Law)**: Anchored on the opposite riverbank, Pou Ture represents the legal and regulatory frameworks that govern environmental management, ensuring that both traditional and scientific practices comply with formal laws and policies. It may include:
  - **the Resource Management and Local Government Acts**
  - **Treaty of Waitangi settlements**
  - **Waitangi Tribunal reports**
  - **Iwi environmental plans**
  - **Te Ture whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato**
  - **Te Mana o te Wai**

Framework Dynamics

1. **Integration of Knowledge Systems**: The framework highlights the necessity of both tikanga and Pūtaiao working in unison, recognizing the equal contributions of traditional knowledge and modern science. This integration is crucial for capturing the essence of tuna migration and achieving sustainable management.

2. **Balanced Approach**: The framework emphasizes a balanced approach, where each of the four pou must work together to withstand the pressures of the river. This balance is necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the hīnaki in capturing tuna, symbolizing the need for harmony between cultural, scientific, and legal dimensions.

3. **Implicit Relationships**: The relationship between Pou Atua and Pou tikanga is implicit and foundational, with Pou tikanga drawing its mana from Pou Atua. This connection ensures that traditional practices are grounded in spiritual authority and cultural heritage.

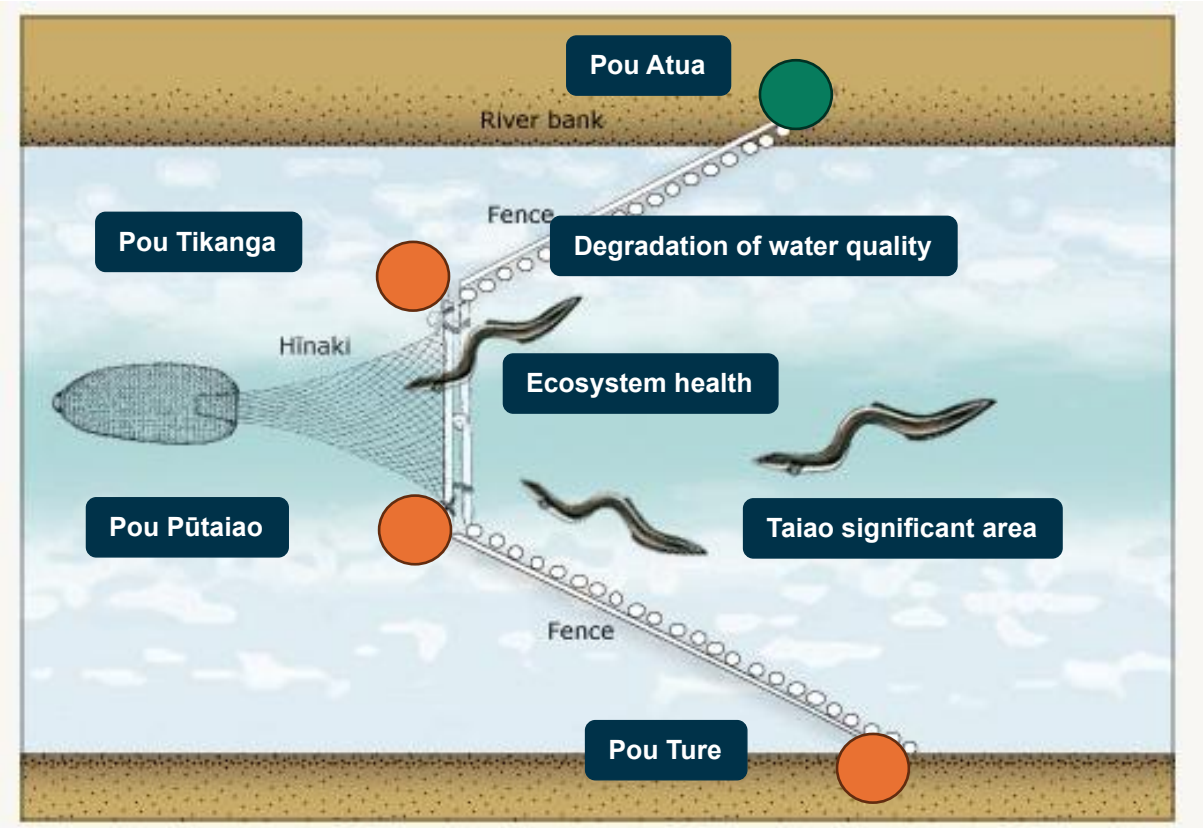
4. **Empirical Support and Regulation**: On the Pūtaiao side, the relationship between scientific methods and legal frameworks ensures that environmental management practices are both innovative and compliant with regulations, providing a structured and accountable approach to resource management.

Practical Application in Environmental Management

- **Holistic Conservation Strategies**: By integrating traditional knowledge with scientific methods, the framework can be applied to biodiversity conservation efforts, ensuring that both cultural and empirical insights inform conservation strategies.
- **Sustainable Resource Management**: The framework guides sustainable management of natural resources, such as water and land, by balancing traditional practices with scientific data and legal requirements.

The Paa Tuna mātauranga framework exemplifies a model of environmental management that honours the contributions of both traditional Māori knowledge and modern scientific understanding. By anchoring the hiinaki with the four pou—Atua, tikanga, Pūtaiao, and Ngā ture—the framework not only captures the migration of tuna but also embodies the balance and integration necessary for sustainable environmental stewardship.

Paa Tuna Mātauranga Framework



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