

BEFORE THE FAST-TRACK EXPERT PANEL

IN THE MATTER

An application for approvals under section 42 of
the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (“FTAA”)

AND

IN THE MATTER

Te Ākau Bream Bay sand extraction, a project
listed in Schedule 2 to the FTAA

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL EVIDENCE OF RIKI JAMES SOLOMON FOR THE WHANGĀREI TE
RERENGA PARĀOA ROHE MOANA (WTPRM)

26 MAY 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is Riki SOLOMON

1.2 I am Tangata Kaitiaki for Te Rerenga Parāoa Rohe Moana and Patuharakeke Rohe Moana.

1.3 My relationship with Patuharakeke is that we are, in essence, the same hapū, sharing connected tūpuna. My role as Tangata Kaitiaki is to maintain and uphold that connection across the rohe moana.

1.4 My pepeha is as follows:

Ko Te Rerenga Parāoa te moana
Ko Rahui Kuri, ko Te Ākau te takutai
Ko Hikurangi te maunga
Ko Parua te awa
Ko Ngā Iwi Tū te hapū
Ko Ngāi Tahu te iwi
Ko Riki Solomon ahau,
he Tangata Kaitiaki mō Te Rerenga Parāoa Rohe Moana
me Patuharakeke Rohe Moana.
Ko taku mahi he tiaki, he manaaki i te mauri o te moana
me ngā taonga tuku iho o ngā tūpuna.

1.5 In my role as Tangata Kaitiaki, I actively exercise kaitiakitanga across our rohe moana. This includes monitoring the state of the moana and its resources, supporting and upholding rāhui, and engaging with regulatory agencies including Fisheries New Zealand (MPI) and local authorities on matters affecting our coastal environment.

1.6 A key part of my role is maintaining ongoing engagement with the hapū to ensure that our tikanga, mātauranga, and collective decisions guide how our rohe moana is managed and protected. This includes, where appropriate, the issuing of customary authorisations in accordance with tikanga and recognised frameworks, ensuring that customary practices are sustained and exercised appropriately.

1.7 Through this work, I contribute to the protection of the mauri of the moana and uphold the obligations we carry as kaitiaki for present and future generations.

1.8 In this statement, I set out my relationship with Te Ākau and its significance to us as hapū, particularly in relation to the taonga species that the area sustains, including pipi, tuatua, kōura and tipa. Te Ākau is a vital part of a wider interconnected coastal system with Te Rerenga Parāoa, which plays an important role in the reseeded and ongoing restoration of tipa (scallop) populations.

1.9 I strongly oppose the proposed sand extraction. In my view, the activity will have significant adverse effects on the moana and seabed and will directly impact our

hapū. These impacts extend beyond the physical environment and affect our tikanga, our relationship with Te Ākau, and our ability to exercise kaitiakitanga.

2. CONNECTION WITH TE ĀKAU

- 2.1 We have an unbroken connection to the whenua and moana of Te Ākau that extends back to pre-European settlement. This connection is grounded in the occupation and use of this area by our tūpuna and has been maintained continuously by us as their descendants through to the present day.
- 2.2 Our connection to Te Ākau has been maintained through ongoing and active use of the area across generations. This includes the customary gathering of kaimoana such as pipi, tuatua, kōura and tipa, which remain important taonga species for our hapū.
- 2.3 We have maintained a consistent presence within this area through practices that reflect our tikanga, including monitoring the health of the moana, the exercise of rāhui where required, and the active protection and restoration of marine resources.
- 2.4 More recently, this has included efforts to support the recovery and reseedling of tipa (scallops), recognising both their cultural importance and the need to restore their populations within Te Ākau and its interconnected coastal systems.
- 2.5 Our role as kaitiaki is also expressed through the continued transmission of mātauranga and tikanga, and through active engagement with our hapū to ensure that decisions relating to the moana are guided by our collective responsibilities.
- 2.6 This continuity of use and presence reflects our enduring relationship with Te Ākau, which has adapted over time but has never ceased.
- 2.7 We have an unbroken connection to the whenua and moana of Te Ākau that goes back more than

3. CONSEQUENCES OF UNBROKEN CONNECTION

- 3.1 This long-standing, unbroken connection means that we hold ahikātanga and mana moana over Te Ākau and the surrounding rohe.
- 3.2 These concepts reflect not only our rights in relation to the area, but also our responsibilities. Our tikanga applies within this rohe and guides how the moana and its resources are to be respected, managed, and protected.
- 3.3 Holding mana moana carries with it clear obligations of kaitiakitanga. These obligations require us to actively protect the mauri of the environment, ensure the sustainability of taonga species, and maintain balance within the natural systems that sustain life.
- 3.4 As Tangata Kaitiaki, I have actively exercised these responsibilities in a number of ways. This includes supporting and upholding rāhui, particularly in relation to the protection and recovery of species such as tipa (scallops) and contributing to restoration and reseedling efforts.

- 3.5 I have also been involved in compliance-related matters where required, including addressing inappropriate or unsustainable take of kaimoana, and supporting the protection of the area in accordance with both tikanga and regulatory frameworks.
- 3.6 In addition, I engage regularly with our hapū, including through the issuing of customary authorisations where appropriate, ensuring that customary practices are carried out in accordance with tikanga and in a sustainable manner.
- 3.7 As part of maintaining our ahikātanga and mana moana, we are actively engaged in a Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act (MACA) application over our rohe. This application has been filed and is now approaching the hearing stage for the second time.
- 3.8 This process reflects our ongoing assertion of mana moana and demonstrates that our connection is not only historical but continues to be actively exercised and recognised within contemporary legal frameworks.

4. INVOLVEMENT IN APPLICATION TO DATE

- 4.1 This proposed activity will have significant adverse impacts on the cultural values of Te Ākau and on our relationship with the moana and its taonga.
- 4.2 Based on my direct observations, I have seen clear signs of regeneration within the moana following protective measures such as rāhui. This includes the presence of juvenile tipa, evidence of reseeding within the wider Te Ākau and Te Rerenga Parāoa system, and gradual improvement in some areas.
- 4.3 However, these environments remain fragile and are still in a recovery phase. The regeneration that is occurring has taken time and reflects both natural processes and the active exercise of kaitiakitanga.
- 4.4 In my view, the proposed sand extraction would place this recovery at significant risk by disrupting seabed conditions and undermining the progress that has been made.
- 4.5 From a tikanga perspective, the sand within Te Ākau is not simply a physical resource, but forms part of a living system that sustains the mauri of the moana. It supports the habitats of taonga species such as pipi, tuatua and tipa, and contributes to the natural balance of the coastal environment.
- 4.6 The sand is effectively a non-renewable resource within human timeframes. Its removal represents a permanent change to the seabed and the ecological systems that depend on it.
- 4.7 Disturbance at this scale creates imbalance within the moana, disrupts natural regeneration processes, and undermines the ability of the environment to sustain itself.
- 4.8 This is inconsistent with our tikanga and directly conflicts with our obligations as kaitiaki to protect and maintain the mauri of the environment. For us, tikanga reflects the correct way of interacting with the moana and its resources — a way that ensures balance is maintained, that the mauri is protected, and that the environment can

continue to flourish for future generations. This includes taking only what is needed, allowing time and space for regeneration, and actively safeguarding the systems that sustain taonga species.

- 4.9 Allowing the proposed seabed mining is not consistent with this approach. The scale and nature of the disturbance to the seabed undermines the natural processes that support life within Te Ākau and risks long-term degradation of the environment. Rather than protecting and enhancing the mauri, it diminishes it.
- 4.10 For these reasons, it directly conflicts with our obligations as kaitiaki, which require us to act in a way that sustains and restores the health of the moana, not in a way that compromises it.
- 4.11 The proposal also has the potential to undermine our MACA application and the interests we are seeking to protect through that process.

5. CONDITIONS

- 5.1 The conditions proposed by the applicant do not address, and cannot remedy, the cultural impacts identified.
- 5.2 Measures such as pre-start hui and cultural protocols do not change the fundamental nature of the activity or its effects.
- 5.3 From our perspective, tikanga does not support sand extraction from this area. Engagement processes relating to how the activity is undertaken do not resolve the underlying issue.
- 5.4 Tikanga requires the protection of the mauri of Te Ākau, which in this case means that the activity should not proceed.
- 5.5 The proposed conditions amount to consultation on the implementation of an activity that is inherently inconsistent with our tikanga and our responsibilities as kaitiaki. They do not prevent the removal of a non-renewable resource, the disturbance of the seabed, or the harm to taonga species and ongoing regeneration efforts.
- 5.6 For these reasons, the conditions are not sufficient to address the cultural effects of the proposal.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 For the reasons outlined in this statement, I strongly oppose the proposed sand extraction at Te Ākau.
- 6.2 In my view, the activity will result in significant and irreversible adverse effects on the moana, the seabed, and the taonga species that our hapū depends on.
- 6.3 It will undermine ongoing regeneration efforts, conflict with our tikanga, and prevent us from properly exercising our responsibilities as kaitiaki.

- 6.4 The proposal also fails to recognise and provide for our mana moana and risks undermining the interests we are actively seeking to protect through our MACA application.
- 6.5 The proposed conditions are not sufficient to address these impacts.
- 6.6 For these reasons, I consider that the application should be declined.

Signed:

Riki James Solomon