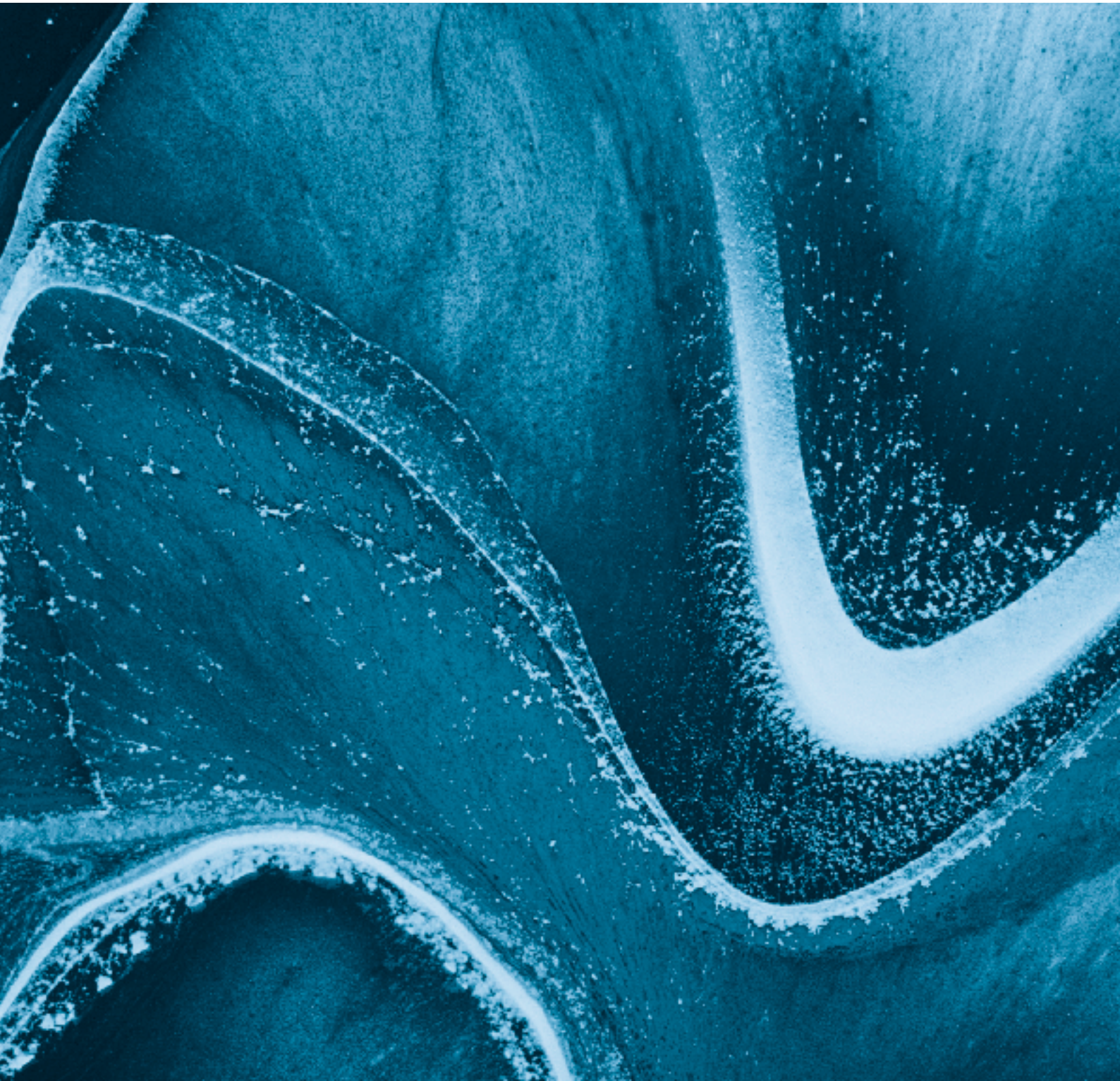


Support Submission of Te Kawerau a Maki



Te Kawerau a Maki Chairman's Letter



Minister of Defence
 NZ Defence Forces
 Defence House
 Molesworth St
 Wellington

Tena koe e te rangatira.

I write to you in respect of the Whenuapai Airbase.

Firstly, Te Kawerau a Maki are the mana whenua of Waitakere City and surrounding areas. Te Kawerau a Maki Tribal Trust is the mandated legal entity that represents Te Kawerau a Maki iwi. We are the northern most iwi of Tainui and have lived in this area for over a thousand years, descending from our ancestor Maki. Our mana whenua status and interests in this area are well documented through the records of the Maori Land Court and in claims before the Waitangi Tribunal. We have historical interests in Whenuapai and are undeniably the iwi group with interests most closely associated with the land.

It should be made clear that Te Kawerau a Maki has a strong working relationship with Waitakere City Council.

In many quarters – including the Ministry of Maori Affairs – the relationship is hailed as a model of how local government and iwi can work constructively together. Waitakere's Eco City philosophy of sustainable economic, social and environmental development sits comfortably within a Maori dimension.

The retention of Whenuapai Airbase and its infrastructure is another project that Te Kawerau A Maki looks forward to working with the Council and its commercial partner, Infratil, on.

Te Kawerau A Maki, therefore, strongly supports the proposal as presented by Waitakere City Council and Infratil and we are pleased to append our submission to theirs.

Employment and Economic Development:

Employment opportunities for all people in the City – and most particularly the 13% of Maori residing in Waitakere – is crucial if the region is to develop further. An airport, supported by surrounding business will advance a range of economic and social challenges that face Waitakere City.

A commercial airport and the economic activity that will spring from it is the only sustainable option open to Crown decision makers.

It fits with a number of central and local government strategies, including the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy, NZ Sustainable Development Strategy, AREDS (Auckland Regional Economic Development Strategy) and Waitakere City's own Long Term Council Community Plan.

Te Kawerau A Maki is, also, well positioned to capitalise on possible tourism opportunities (NZ Tourism Strategy) that may arise.

We note that should Whenuapai be retained as an airport, considerable infrastructure work will be carried out. Te Kawerau A Maki has a proven track record in working with regulatory authorities, particularly Waitakere City Council, on resource consent applications for major projects.

The iwi has also been closely involved in physical construction and architectural design; projects include the \$14 million West Wave Aquatic Centre development recently opened by the Prime Minister and the \$25 million Waitakere Stadium, due to be completed in June 2004.

Other Options:

Other future use options for Whenuapai presented by New Zealand Defence Forces give rise to some concern for iwi. The base borders the upper reaches of the Waitemata Harbour, a traditional food "basket" for iwi. In recent years stormwater run – off and other pollutants have seriously degraded the water quality in the Harbour. We view the option of intense urbanisation (or housing) with associated stormwater and sewage issues with particular concern in this regard.

On the other hand, the investment in infrastructure planned by Infratil could indeed improve the current environmental situation.

Further, by raising the possibility (and therefore public expectation) of housing, shopping malls, entertainment precincts etc, the Crown (NZDF) has clearly overlooked its obligations to iwi in terms of the offer back process under the Public Works Act, 1993.

Consultation Process:

In closing, Te Kawerau A Maki is pleased to have the opportunity to present this submission in support of the Airport option.

However we ask it to be placed on record that we are concerned that there has been no formal contact between Crown officials and iwi on this matter.

We sincerely hope – indeed expect – that during Stage 2 of its consultation on Whenuapai, the Crown will engage more openly with Te Kawerau A Maki on this important matter.

Yours truly,

Te Warena Taua
 Chairman