

## **Statement of Association for Te Arai Te Uru River**

Ko Te Arai te awa

Ko Puketapu te maunga

Ko Rongowhakaata te Iwi

The traditions of Rongowhakaata confirm the cultural, historical and spiritual importance of the Te Arai (Te Uru) River to Rongowhakaata. These traditions represent the links between the world of the Atua and present generations; reinforce Rongowhakaata tribal identity; and are continually expressed in whakapapa, waiata, and korero and mahi toi.

The Te Arai (Te Uru) River is of great cultural and historical importance to Rongowhakaata. The mauri of Te Arai (Te Uru) River represents the essence that binds the physical and spiritual elements of all things together, generating and upholding all life. All elements of the natural environment possess a life force and all forms of life are related. Mauri is a critical element of the spiritual relationship of Rongowhakaata whanui to the Te Arai (Te Uru) River.

The values of mana, whakapapa, tapu and mauri define the relationship of Rongowhakaata with the Te Arai (Te Uru) River. Mana defines the custodian or kaitiekitanga responsibilities of Rongowhakaata, within which Rongowhakaata is charged with protecting the Mauri or life force of Te Arai (Te Uru) River. Whakapapa defines the genealogical relationship, while Tapu describes the sacredness of the relationship between Rongowhakaata and Te Arai (Te Uru) River. These values remain important to the people of Rongowhakaata today.

### **Origins**

The gifting of the name “Te Arai te Uru” relates back to the arrival of the Takitimu Waka from Hawaiki to Aotearoa. Te Arai Te Uru and Ruamano were the tipua (guardian spirits) or unseen escorts to calm and protect when the elements were unfavourable. They ensured the safe passage of the Takitimu, with its precious

taonga of Atua and Rangatira charged with the vessels of traditional knowledge for the new land.

When the Takitimu berthed in Turanganui a Kiwa, Tamatea, Tupai, Ruawharo and other Tohunga and Rangatira on board gave mana and mauri to the lands and waterways as various ceremonies were performed. At Wherowhero, the Takitimu waka followed the course of the river flowing into the lagoon; it was here that the sacred tipua Te Arai Te Uru was released to the waters and people of Rongowhakaata, where it remains to this day.

### **Kaitieki**

Rongowhakaata traditions herald a host of Taniwha who illustrate the mana of the Te Arai (Te Uru) River. From the times of Takitimu and Horouta, the mana and tapu of Te Arai (Te Uru) River has been respected by the people of Turanga and those visiting from afar. No one tried to cross the river on canoe or otherwise, outsiders would not, such was the mana of these Taniwha, Tipua, and Kaitieki. The only safe causeway in those times was where the two rivers, Te Arai (Te Uru) and Waipaoa almost met, this being where the contemporary Te Arai bridge is now.

Hinekorako, the taniwha who dwells under the Te Reinga waterfall, extends her spiritual influence over both the Te Arai (Te Uru) and Waipaoa Rivers. It is said her particular affinity and connection with water is renowned amongst the tribes of Turanga and Te Reinga. The histories of Rongowhakaata provide that when one of her uri is in difficulty in water, they should call out to their Kaitieki Hinekorako for assistance.

Pipitaiari is another respected taniwha whose domain extends from Te Arai (Te Uru) River to the Turanganui river, traversing the waterways of; Whatatuna, Waipaoa, Waikanae, Taruheru and Waimata whilst residing mainly in the Turanganui river.

### ***'Kake mai koe i runga o Pipitaiari parera to hua'***

Her powers were such that tohunga could not cross the waters where she was located as they would risk losing their powers. When desired, Pipitaiari will make

herself known to people by taking the form of a whirlpool, which is depicted in the Whare Whakaaro, Te Mana o Turanga, Whakato Marae.

Hinetataurangi is another taniwha of special significance, who in the past has maintained a powerful presence in the Te Arai (Te Uru) river. Overtime she has rendered powerful tohunga and warriors alike ineffectual and sadly taken the lives of the careless.

### **The Catchment**

The Te Arai (Te Uru) river catchment begins at the upper reaches of the Puninga and Waingake rivers, within the rohe of both Ngai Tamanuhiri and Rongowhakaata, from there continuing its flow within the lands of Rongowhakaata, to where it meets the Waipaoa river and becomes the Kopututea river thence to the Oneroa.

There have been many changes to the passage of the Te Arai (Te Uru) River over the generations. In the time of Paoa and the Horouta Waka, the Te Arai (Te Uru) river flowed across the Manutuke flats southward to the Karaua stream, passing the Maunga Puketapu into the Wherowhero Lagoon thus to Oneroa.

Later during the flood of 1841/1842 the Te Arai (Te Uru) river flowed into the Kopututea River which ran to the Awapuni Lagoon then out to sea at Ohikarongo. Today Te Arai (Te Uru) river merges with the Waipaoa River on the north end of the Otaramokai and Auahi blocks, and becomes the Kopututea river, flowing into the sea at the Awapuni, Kopututea, Paokahu, Pakirikiri and Wherowhero lands.

### **Resources**

Te Arai (Te Uru) river has always been a rich source of resources for Rongowhakaata, as it meanders its way through and contributes to other ecosystems which have sustained Rongowhakaata Uri over the generations.

The Waingake, Kauwaewaka, Tikokanui, Ongaware, Ranginui and Waimata waterways and the wetland Whatatuna swamp all flow into the Te Arai (Te Uru) river and have all contributed to the bountiful 'kapata kai' which sustained the many whanau and hapu of Rongowhakaata.

Tuna, kanae, inanga, kuku, koura, tuna, pukeko, kereru, kokomako, kutae and continual supplies of fresh water were sourced from Te Arai (Te Uru). Numerous hapu eel weir sustained specific Pa and their respective Whanau, for many generations, until recent times. The river was also navigable from the open sea by waka via Waipaoa and Kopututea rivers, thus giving access to the other sources of kaimoana from the Awapuni Moana to kainga all along the river.

The great forest of Pipiwakao once covered the lands of Patutahi, Opou, Rakaukaka, Te Aohuna and Mirimiri, extending to the ranges of Papatu and verging on the Te Arai (Te Uru) river. Pipiwakao derives its name from the time when Paoa, of the Horouta waka, lost his dog at the river mouth. *Pi Pi* was how one would call their kuri in those days and *Whakao* means to speak in a guarded manner. Pipiwakao was the treasured kapata kai, food bowl for all the surrounding hapu and iwi of Turanga, with the kaitiekitanga residing with hapu of Rongowhakaata and Ruapani ki Rongowhakaata.

In February 1851 Donald McLean visited Turanga as the Lands Purchase Commissioner, on reaching Te Aria, via Wairoa on horseback, he noted; *“In descending from the interior ranges, I had” he reported to the Governor, “a splendid view of the country around Turanga Bay which formed a pleasant contrast with the barren hills I had passed over. The land is rich and fertile and is intersected by three rivers, which strike their serpentine courses through handsome clumps of kahikatea and puriri forests and beside numerous wheat cultivations and groves of peach and other varieties of English fruit trees.*

*“We reached the first settlement on the banks of the Arai River about sunset, when the natives were returning from reaping their fields, some leading horses and others driving cattle and pet pigs before them. They gave us the usual welcome and presented us with fruit and also with honey just taken from a hive.”*

*“The fat cattle, the large wheat stalks of last year’s growth, fine alluvial soil, and contented appearance of the natives made an impression that this was certainly anything but a land of destitution or want. Nor was this impression deranged by*

*what I subsequently saw of the beautiful Turanga Valley, which contains about 40,000 acres of splendid land covered with rich grasses and well supplied with wood and water”*

### **Occupation**

Te Arai (Te Uru) river and its banks have been occupied by the ancestors of Rongowhakaata Iwi from time immemorial. The river's erosion on the silt soil and its meandering characteristic's made sharp bends with high, near vertical, banks along its course. These places have provided ideal locations for the many fortified pa and cultivations that were built, and where surrounding kainga would seek protection when threatened. An extension of this concept is "Mirror Pa", the strategic placement of Pa on opposite sides of the awa, providing gateways of escape and defence, protection mechanisms for highly valued resources and control of hapu alliances.

One such settlement was Te Pahou Pa, associated with the hapu Ngati Kaipoho, located on the Tauowhiro lands at the upper reaches, Waiwhakaata of the Te Arai (Te Uru) River. In 1650, Te Pahou was the kainga of Te Whaiti, mokopuna of Kaipoho, son of Te Aweawe. Te Whaiti was a prolific carver, who was responsible for the building of many pa and waka. At his pa Te Pahou, large cultivations were grown to sustain the carvers, whilst the Te Arai River was a source of eel, morehana, inanga and direct access to the moana for the gathering of kaimoana and movement of waka.

Tapui Pa was sited on the west bank of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river, northwest of the Puketapu Maunga. Wharepaku o te Tahinga was the grandson of Rongomairatahi and his son Kaipoho built Tapui Pa naming after his ancestor Tapuiparaheka, the father in law of Rongomairatahi. On the death of Kaipoho, Tapui Pa passed into the hands of Te Aweawe, while his older brother Mokaiohungia rebuilt Orakaiapu. After many floods Te Arai (Te Uru) of old changed its course but the down stream part of the river stood strong. The large rua used to store kumara and taro is still visible today at Tapui Pa.

Te Whaiti, the noted builder and carver of Pa, within a short time had constructed three pa across the river from Tapuiparaheka-Tapui Pa, utilising the concept 'Mirror Pa'. Te Raeotekahawai and Te Raeotokorakau were built on the lands called Hahaenga, on the northern side of the Maunga Puketapu. These were followed by Tiwhaoteranga on the land known as Te Poho, on the northern side of the Maunga Puketapu. Following inter tribal fishing disputes it was Te Whaiti who went on to rebuild the pa Orakaiapu and Umukapua on the banks of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river.

Six generations after Kaipoho, Oweta, the house of Tamihana Ruatapu, stood adjacent to Whakato Marae by the old banks of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river. Oweta was frequently used by travellers moving between Muriwai, Wairoa and Turanga. The carvings for Oweta were ready for erection when the Pai Marie incident, at Waerengahika and the fateful utu at Matawhero occurred.

The Pa was disassembled and whakairo were buried and hidden, only to be revealed after a semblance of peace had calmed the area. With Te Kooti taking refuge in the King country, Ngati Maru, Tamihana Ruatapu and son Karepa unearthed the carvings from Oweta and had them included in Te Mana o Turanga (Te Mana o Turanganui a Kiwa I Tangohia e Ruawharo - the authority over Turanganui a Kiwa is seized by Ruawharo) at Whakato, the site of the old mission station given to Rev. William Williams in the 1840's. This had followed the abandonment of Kaupapa (the foundation) the first mission station opposite Whakato due to the serious flooding and erosion of Waipaoa River. Whakato Marae is a functioning Marae for the Ngati Maru and Ngati Kaipoho hapu of Rongowhakaata today.

Another Pa was Te Ao Maori, one of the houses of Te Waaka Perohuka (a contemporary of Raharuhi Rukupo) which stood close to Whakato on the Hurimona block by the banks of the old Te Arai (Te Uru) river. On the Hurimoana block also stood the circular whare that which housed the koiwi of certain tipuna from the region. The exterior was carved, with the interior holding some 30 compartments in each of which lay a waka huia – carved chest, between five and eight feet in length, with some tipuna buried standing.

Manutuke Marae was inspired by the Rangatira, Raharuhi Rukupo, and stands just further north from Whakato Marae, on the old banks of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river also. The first building on the land was erected under Rukupo's direction and William Williams insistence, was the third whare karakia, Te Toko Toru Tapu in 1888 to 1910 when it was burnt to the ground and replaced by the present Toko Toru Tapu in 1913. The same year Te Poho o Rukupo and Te Poho o Hinehou (which became Maori Battalion, the dining room) which were relocated from the Pa Pakirikiri, at the mouth of the Karaua stream, Te Wherowhero to the Manutuke Block. Te Poho Rukupo had been built in 1878, as a memorial to Rukupo led by his younger brother Pera Tawhiti, whilst Te Poho o Hinehou was a memorial to the mother of Rukupo and his brothers. Otene Pitau, whangai of Raharuhi Rukupo made the decision to move both whare to the present day Manutuke Marae as predicted by his papa whangai and great Rangatira of Rongowhakaata, Raharuhi Rukupo.

Te Poho o Epeha, the whare of Ngai Te Aweawe had stood on the Manutuke Block and then moved alongside Maori Battalion. This Pa represents the Hapu of Ngati Maru, Ngati Kaipoho and Ngai Te Aweawe and is a contemporary Marae of Rongowhakaata.

Where the old Te Arai (Te Uru) river meets the present Te Arai, the adjoining lands are Umukapua, Ngai Te Aweawe had cultivations here and at Kohanga Karearea, Te Kohu, and Manukaimatangi, on the northern side of Te Arai (Te Uru) river, another Mirror Pa. Several inter hapu disputes took place resulting in Ngati Maru leaving the district and the pa Umukapua being burnt to the ground. Umukapua was rebuilt by Ngai Te Aweawe who took up abode and divided the lands lying south of Te Arai (Te Uru) and south west of the Kopututea River. The whare Hamokorau was relocated here from the Hangaroa Matawai lands, for a period of time, before being moved further along the Te Arai (Te Uru) river to Orakaiapu.

Ruapani and the hapu Ngai Tawhiri and Ngai Te Kete hold the mana whenua of the pa Te Ohako on the northern side the Te Arai (Te Uru) river, within the bounty of Pipiwahako. This area is notable as a resting place for the whanau of Ruapani and a favoured stop over for travellers between Waikaremoana and Turanga. The whare

tupuna is Te Kiko o te Rangi, the old house and wharekai is Te Ohako. The name Te Ohako has been referred to the bed of fresh water mussel found in Te Arai (Te Uru) river just below the marae, while another variation suggests it is derived from the word koha.

The Pa Ruataniwha was situated on the bank of Te Arai, across from Orakaiapu, between the lands called Te Aohuna and Opou and was the historical home of Rongowhakaata chiefs Rangihiria, Taringa and Manawa o te Rangi.

Tapatahi Pa was once the principal pa for all Rongowhakaata hapu on the north side of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river. Rongoteuruora resettled here with his Ngai Tawhiri relations, followed later by Rangihiria, Manawa o te Rangi and Te Maanga. There the great cultivations around the Tapatahi Pa sustained the hapu and thriving carving wanaanga of Te Arai valley. Many canoes and waka were built here, by Tohunga who were known to name, select and nurture the trees long before they were ready to be cut down for purpose. Paratene Turangi, Tarake and Pakirehe were some of the chiefs of the Tapatahi Pa who fought the attack of Ngati Konohi, but many were killed. Tradition notes another major battle between Nga Puhi, Whakatohea and Tuhoe, where many people were killed at Tapatahi pa. In the aftermath of this battle at a wanaanga atop of Papatu and Whakapunake, it was decided to return to Tapatahi pa and collect the koiwi - bones of the ancestors that were left on the lands. When the whanau arrived back to Tapatahi Pa on the Te Arai (Te Uru) river, another wanaanga was held and specific tikanga were initiated by the hapu to facilitate this tapu mahi (sacred processes). Special kete were woven by the women to gather and hold the koiwi, as these koiwi were gathered and washed, special drains which diverted water from Te Arai (Te Uru) river off to the side so that a small pool was formed. These ceremonial pools were for the purpose of cleansing the koiwi of ancestors, only on completion the principal of noa would have been applied. The whanau who facilitated this process from this time on became known as the hapu Ngai Te Kete.

Tuarakenga is another urupa close to Tapatahi Pa, where Petera Te Honotapu, Noa Whakatere and Eparaima Te Kura, were all buried. Tapatahi was the principal pa of Ngai Tawhiri and Ngai Te Kete.

The Orakaiapu Pa was almost 3 acres in area and situated on the bank of the Kopututea River, just below the junction of the Waipaoa and Te Arai rivers. Having rebuilt the Pa Orakaiapu, Mokaiohungia left his wife Hineparakiwai and on advice from Mokaiiwike he sought the attentions of Heketirangi, charming her with his flute playing they eloped to Te Arai and lived in the Orakaiapu Pa. Ngati Kaipoho were to suffer heavily at the Upokokino (Ugly Head) invasion by Tapuwae and his Uncle Whaakahu from Wairoa. Tapui Pa was attacked killing Te Aweawe and Ngarue, whilst Orakaiapu was overwhelmed and many were slain including Mokaiohungia.

Mokaiohungia's son Te Hukaipu rebuilt Orakaiapu Pa, and was instrumental in bringing about friendly relations between Ngati Kaipoho with their southern neighbours Ngai Tawhiri. Unfortunately peace was short lived as bitter disputes grew regarding fishing rights.

Tarake, of Ngati Maru, when becoming chief, built a Pa named Te Raeotekapu, adjoining the Orakaiapu Pa, which was occupied by Ngati Kaipoho. Trouble developed over the fishing grounds when Ngati Maru encroached on Ngati Kaipoho territories. In an argument between the chiefs Tarake and Te Hukaipu, the latter was slain on the grounds below Tauranga Pa. As a result Ngati Maru was evicted from Te Raeotekapu by Te Ikawhaingata, son of Te Hukaipu, with the support of Konohi from Ngai Tawiri, Whangara. Ngati Maru gathered at Umukapua Pa awaiting the support of Whaita, son of Hunaara, from Te Araroa. Orakaiapu was attacked and Ngati Kaipoho was driven away, Whaita persuaded Ngati Maru to come with him as there would be reprisals from Ngati Kaipoho. After setting fire to Umukapua, Orakaiapu and Te Raeotekapu, Ngati Maru set to Reporua by waka with Whaita. Ngati Maru were to return later after much loss and degradation, through the negotiations of the Rangatira Konohi of Whangara with Te Ikawhaingata, Ngati Kaipoho. Konohi advised Ngati Maru not to expect full equality with the "Ahi Kaa" those who had kept the home fires burning.

## **“Ko te kihi ki nga ahikaroa, ko te tumaru ki a Koutou”**

Te Whaiti and his son of Te Aweawe II put out the fires on Umukapua and Orakaiapu, messengers were sent to Te Ikawhaingata to return home. Ngati Kaipoho reassembled and rebuilt Umukapua and Orakaiapu. Te Ikawhaingata also built a new pa next to Orakaiapu called Taurangakoau, and named the house in it Kotukumanawarua.

Cook referred to Orakaiapu when he noted “...*the large amount of smoke coming from their fires, a great concentration of people in the vicinity...*” Orakaiapu remained one of the principal Pa of Rongowhakaata through to the 1840's, and was a place for Runanga Hui and special gatherings. Hamokorau was relocated here and between 1842 and 1863, this large meeting house was offered to Williams for services till a church was eventually built. Te Hau ki Turanga was constructed here by Raharuhi Rukupo as a tribute to his older brother Tamati Waaka Mangere in October 1842, to be completed in March 1843. Notably for Rongowhakaata Rukupo relocated Ngati Kaipoho from Orakaiapu to Pakirikiri Pa in 1866, as a result of the unsettling political environment. By March 1867, at the hands of Crown Agent R.E Bigg's and Native Affairs Minister J.C Richmond and acting director of the Colonial Museum, Te Hau ki Turanga is taken by force.

## **Economy**

Te Arai (Te Uru) river provided Rongowhakaata with an opportunity to engage in trading and the sharing of resources, inter hapu and Iwi before the first European trading stations were established at Wherowhero and Turanganui. Sailing vessels were able to navigate from the seaward mouth of Waipaoa River to the wharf situated at Orakaiapu. Hapu participated well in this new economy, demand for Totara and Puriri, was supplied and transported down the Te Arai (Te Uru) River. Rongowhakaata Iwi evolved as Hapu investment in several trading ships; saw those transporting crops of harvested flax, wheat, corn, meats and also settler's goods. Raharuhi Rukupo and others had shared interests in 'the Mira', the hapu mill

situated at Orakaiapu to berth and transporting goods. Te Arai (Te Uru) river was an integral part of the trade highway of Rongowhakaata Hapu and Turanga Iwi.

### **Whakairo**

It is said in the book Horouta “Strangely, the craft of carving in the Turanga district was confined to the descendants of the ancestor Rongowhakaata in the Te Arai Valley. The obvious explanation is that Rongowhakaata was a grandson of Te Awariki, to Te Awariki rather than Hingangaroa is attributed the knowledge of carving possessed by the Ngati Kaipoho School of Te Arai Valley, otherwise the knowledge would have been far more widespread.”(Horouta,pg90). Rongowhakaata as a mokopuna of Hingangaroa and Te Awariki imbued generations of Rongowhakaata with prolific and gifted carvers. Rukupo himself was a graduate of the Hamokorau wanaanga when standing at Waerenga a Kuri. The carving within the valleys and lands of Te Arai over many generations are evidence of this. It was Te Awariki, who was regarded with veneration as the last custodian of the famous adzes Huitrangiora, Atuhaemata and Rakuraku a Tawaki that came on the Horouta.

Rongowhakaata tipuna had considerable knowledge of wahi tapu, the places for gathering kai, the places for gathering rongoa, the places for gathering taonga, and ways in which to use the resources of the Te Arai (Te Uru) river, the relationship of people with the area and their dependence on it, and Tikanga for the proper use and sustainable utilisation of resources. Water plays a unique role in the traditional economy and culture of Rongowhakaata and all of these values remain important to the people of Rongowhakaata today.