

## **Teresa Gibbison**

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**From:** Terewai Awhitu <terewai.mama@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 9 July 2018 12:25 PM  
**To:** Christin Atchinson  
**Subject:** Te Tahuna o Aotea Marine Farm Ltd  
**Attachments:** Letter Intro.docx; Okapu Marae Kaumatua Support.pdf; Email Robin Britton.docx

Morena Christin,

Anei noa nga maioha mihi i runga i nga whakaaro o te wa, oti ra, ngo ngenei wa hoki, tae atu ki te wa neke atu

Kua tutuki enei korero mou, hei awhina i a matou o te Tahuna o Aotea Marine Farm Ltd o te kaupapa kei mua i a matou.

I have attached some documentation for your consideration in regards to our Resource Consent application.

Doc 1 - Letter Intro

Doc 2 - Discussion with elders of Okapu Marae

Email - Robin to Ross 15.06.18

Email - Ross's Answers 15.06.18

Oti ra

Terewai Awhitu

Okapu Marae Chairperson

Director Te Tahuna Aotea Marine Farm

Waikato Regional Council  
Attn: Christin Atchinson

Dear Christin

**Re: Resource Consent Application  
Te Tahuna O Aotea Moana Marine Farm Ltd**

We would like to share with you some historical views on the positioning of our proposed mussel spat farm in particular the channel area. (Tahore Channel). The area for the spat farm lies directly outside of Okapu Marae and has been accessed by our iwi for generations.

I have included also a brief discussion paper that was held at Okapu Marae AGM last weekend. With signatories of those who participated in the discussion.

Included are some of the stories that we have in regards to the following issues

- Historical dredging – dredged seabed at Tahuri point onwards and the destruction of mussel and scallops beds
- Iwi knowledge of the site – Tahore: is the official name of the channel where we plan to establish our mussel spat farm is an area renowned for its fishing, not considered an area for the gathering of shellfish
- The strong tidal currents from the harbour entry have a profound effect on sediment and sand shifts that does not allow for a reef structure to form. Local knowledge reveals that the Tahore channel has no reef structure because of the strong currents and shifting sands
- Pre- 1980 Ministry of Fisheries had a pilot mussel farm at Tahuna where we want to establish our spat farm. An archival search by MPI have failed to find any background information on this farm. Ngati Te Wehi kaumaatua and many local families including Ross Dockery owner of the existing mussel farm have confirmed that this mussel farm structure existed
- History has shown that there have been numerous attempts to restore shellfish beds along and in Tahore channel but because of the tidal currents all attempts have failed.

Lastly as an option – can a member of our iwi do a video of the area and then share this with scientist to review?

Appreciate your thoughts on this please.

Nga mihi

Terewai Awhitu



**Date:30.06.2018**

**Teena Taatou,**

A discussion was held with Okapu Marae Kaumaatua after the Okapu Marae Annual General Meeting on Saturday 30 June 2018. The discussion was facilitated by Okapu Marae Chairman Terewai Awhitu who is also the applicant for Te Tahuna o Aotea Marine Farm Ltd to the Waikato Regional Council for a Resource Consent application to establish a 5ha Mussel Spat Farm within 400 meters of an existing mussel spat farm in Aotea harbor.

Okapu Marae Kaumaatua and Rangatahi were asked to provide korero in terms of the positioning of the proposed mussel spat farm in the area noted as "TeTahuna", the cultural significance of the area and to share their experiences and knowledge of the tidal flow and benthic structures associated within the channel leading from Tahuri Point to "Te Tahuna" and westward towards Matakowhai Channel

**Kaumaatua and Rangatahi Attendance**

Name	Signature
Taki Apiti – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua	T Apiti
Mihiao Mahara – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua	M Mahara
Jimi Mahara - Okapu Marae Kaumaatua	Left hui without signing
Miki Apiti – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua (Trustee)	" " " "
TeNani Awhitu – Okapu Marae Kuia	T N Awhitu
John Mahara – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua (Trustee)	J Mahara
Karoraina Apiti – Okapu Marae Kuia	K Apiti
Phillip Mahara – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua (Trustee)	P Mahara
Marg Mahara – Okapu Marae Kuia (Trustee)	M Mahara
Liz Mahara – Okapu Marae Kuia	L Mahara
Terewai Awhitu – Okapu Marae Chairperson (Trustee)	T Awhitu

Raymond Mahara – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua (Trustee)	R. Mahara.
Peggy Nelson – Okapu Marae Kuia	P. Nelson
Jack Mahara – Okapu Marae Kaumaatua (Trustee)	J. Mahara
Pote Mahara – Okapu Marae Kuia	P. Mahara
Gina Mahara – Okapu Marae Kuia (Trustee)	G. Mahara
Braidon Awhitu – Rangatahi	B. Awhitu
Matu Taylor – Rangatahi	M. Taylor
Whero Awhitu – Rangatahi (Trustee)	W. Awhitu
Delphia Awhitu - Rangatahi	D. Awhitu
Haka Hemara - Rangatahi	H. Hemara
Carol Awhitu - Rangatahi	C. Awhitu
Doug Mahara - Rangatahi	D. Mahara
Pioi Te Mara - Rangatahi	P. Te Mara

### Corroboration of stories shared

All Kaumaatua recall "Te Tahuna" as a significant site of cultural importance to Ngat Te Wehi. The area is renowned for its fishing mainly from boats or for the less fortunate with handlines and surfcasting. Many kaumaatua sharing stories of the fishes caught and of course the ones that got away (snapper, trevally, kahawai and stingrays predominantly).

Kaumaatua shared stories of specific areas which were good for diving and the collecting of shellfish namely scallops and mussels. The areas identified especially for scallops and mussel was at Tahuri point which is straight outside the homestead of local farmer and Aotea resident Dave Morrison.

Kaumaatua shared stories of the demise of those delicacies with the settlement beginning of Aotea village and the influx of holiday makers to the region.

Elder Kuia Nancy Awhitu a stalwart and historian of Aotea Harbor verifies that there cannot be a reef structure in the channel leading to "Te Tahuna" towards Matakowhai channel due to the strength of the current and water flow up and down the channel due to the movement and tidal flow which fluctuates on a 6-hour cycle and carries shifting sands that willingly covers the sea floor. She also points out that if there was a reef or a shellfish bed in the vicinity we would see again the influx of predators of the two legged versions.

Karoraina Apiti Okapu Marae Kuia shared stories of how in the early 60's through to mid-1980's Okapu Marae Kaumatua and Rangatahi as she was then, frequently had to go and help with the gathering of shellfish from Tahuri Point namely Scallops and mussels and to gather shellfish at the entrance to Aotea harbor for the local marae Poukai at Okapu Marae. The entrance to Aotea Harbor has a reef structure

and unfortunately today scallops are no longer to be found in these area's but mussel at times can be found

John Mahara kaumaatua recalls the abundance of shellfish throughout the harbor as a child noting pipi beds, pupu and kokota the flat version of the pipi or cockle were easily gathered throughout the harbor, but cannot recall any reefs or shellfish structures in the channels from Tahuri point to Matakowhai channel. He recalls that as a child his kaumaatua referred Aotea harbor as a smorgasbord of kai, with a saying "that when the tide is out, the table is set". That was how plentiful kaimoana was back in the days. Today he is saddened by the fact that the kaimoana of old is very scarce. A big triumph for Aotea harbor was the setting up of the Mataitai Reserve that stopped commercial fisherman from exploiting and entering Aotea harbor to fish. One of only a few harbors throughout NZ to do so.

The many stories shared by kaumaatua and the Rangatahi today are stories that corroborates each other. Rangatahi also shared stories supporting kaumatua, as many have dived and swum along the channel and have not seen any reef structure or beds of shellfish anywhere along the channel identified

#### Summary

The kaumaatua stories shared today and there were many, suggests that there has never been a reef structure within the channel where Te Tahuna o Aotea Moana Ltd wishes to locate a mussel spat farm and who is better to know these stories than those who have held mana whenua, mana moana here for centuries

We are disheartened as tangata whenua of Aotea harbor to have to continually justify and to prove our status of holding mana whenua, mana moana, and mana tangata of our sacred harbor, taken that our custodial rights entered with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840 are continually being desecrated. We feel that we are always being treated as people not of this area and that our views are not important

We would also like to state that during this process of applying for a resource consent, that we as the local Iwi have never been consulted by Waikato Regional Council to have in this instance a Landscape Report commissioned by entities such as Boffa Miskil and then to be told that this report is legal binding in matters pertaining to Aotea Harbor. "This is our harbor"

We the Iwi, Hapu of Ngati Te Wehi, Okapu Marae sign this form in support of Te Tahuna o Aotea Moana Ltd with its application for resource consent.

Heoi,  
Terewai Awhitu



Okapu Marae Chairperson  
Ngati Te Wehi Iwi Liaison Officer  
Director Te Tahuna o Aotea Marine Farm Ltd

Email Robin Britton – Ross Dockery

Date: 15.06.2018

Hi Ross

we are not out of the woods as yet for information being requested - and have another round of queries sent to us - so there are a couple of issues I would like help on please:

1. are you able to provide your boat to get a video survey done of the seabed? i.e. I am checking out who can do this and what the cost is first but I thought I would be cheeky and ask if that was OK from you to use your boat?
2. marine mammals - I have attached Steve's supplementary report - and in respect to marine mammals species he has identified - can you comment at all on your local knowledge as to whether you have ever seen any of these up the channel where the proposed farm is to be located? and have you ever had any species get tangled up in your structures? (and remind me please how long you have been operating there?)
3. In your opinion is the farm location likely to impede any mammals going up the channel? i.e. is it going to obstruct species? is it going to obstruct any vessels? i.e. I thought there was room + the fact that the ropes are only out for short times??

I would really appreciate being able to include any answers you give me into a formal reply to Council as well - is that OK with you as well??

many thanks  
Robin

**Robin Britton**  
**Resource Management/ Planning Consultant**  
**027 281 2969**  
**PO Box 7016 Hamilton 3247**  
**[rbritton.coast@gmail.com](mailto:rbritton.coast@gmail.com)**  
*A member of*

Email Ross Dockery – Answer to Questions asked by Robin

Date 15.06.2018

Hi Robin.

They are certainly putting Lance Thru the ringer on this one .  
Here are answers to your issues.

Yes he is able to use one of our boats just let us know when.

Marine mammals: We get the odd seal on the beach and around the farm every winter when there has been a long period of rough weather they are usually pretty sick and most die we have buried probably 6 over the 20 odd years we have been spat catching. I think most of them have TB. There is a large population on gannet island directly offshore from Aotea and at Albatross Point south of Kawhia .

I have never seen dolphins or orcas near the proposed site . Dolphins never come into the harbours and orcas only seem to come into Kawhia but they do so every year.

An orca was stranded at the entrance to Aotea Harbour about 10 years ago and was refloated at high tide so i guess it is possible the could come in but the seem to prefer Kawhia.  
We have never had any sea mammals caught in our farm only the odd swan around duck shooting season.

As far as impeding mammals go ,seals wouldnt have any problems getting thru the farm, if an orca was to make it into the harbour the would have plenty of room to go around or under the stuctures they are pretty bright and know how to move

around moorings etc i have watched them many times going thru the moorings in Kawhia Harbour out side our workshop

and have never seen one get into trouble even when they are chasing stingrays.

As far as vessels go the farm is situated in the channel with plenty of room even at low tide for boats to go around the out side

and will be lit at night with beacon lights.

The biggest problem is boaties think harbours are always safe and dont consider the weather to much. Over the 20 yrs we have

been working in Aotea we have rescued countless sunk boats, stranded kite surfers , one microlite plane, pulled out dozens of stranded

cars, and rescued swimmers in trouble, I know at least 3 of these people would have drowned had we not been there ,to say we would

be a danger with farms in the channel is fair comment, but i have found people can get into trouble all by themselves without our help

and they are lucky we are around to save them, i know the death count would be higher if we were not there.

Feel free to use my comments

Regards Ross.