

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**UNDER**

The Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of Proposed District Plan Chapter 39  
Wāhi Tūpuna

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**EVIDENCE OF DAVID THOMAS HIGGINS**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**TE RŪNANGA O MOERAKI**

**KĀTI HUIRAPA RŪNAKA KI PUKETERAKI**

**TE RŪNANGA O ŌTAKOU**

**HOKONUI RŪNANGA**

**TE RŪNANGA O WAIHŌPAI**

**TE RŪNANGA O AWARUA**

**TE RŪNANGA O ŌRAKA-APARIMA**

**(COLLECTIVELY MANA WHENUA)**

**Dated 27 May 2020**

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## **WHAKAPAPA**

### **Na Te Pō, ko Te Ao**

*From eternity came the Universe*

### **Na Te Ao, ko Te Ao Marama**

*From the Universe, the bright clear light*

### **Na Te Ao Marama, ko Te Ao Tūroa**

*From the bright clear light, the enduring light*

### **Na Te Ao Tūroa, ko Te Kore Te Whiwhia**

*From the enduring light, the void unattainable*

### **Na Te Kore Te Whiwhia, ko Te Kore Te Rawea**

*From the void unattainable, the void intangible*

### **Na Te Kore Te Rawea, ko Te Kore Te Taumaua**

*From the void intangible, the void unstable*

### **Na Te Kore Te Taumaua, ko Te Kore Matua**

*From the void unstable, the void endowed with paternity*

### **Na Te Kore Mātua, ko Te Mākū**

*From the void of paternity, came moisture*

### **Na Te Mākū, ka noho ia Mahoranui ātea**

*From moisture, came limitless thought*

### **Ka puta ki waho ko Raki**

*Then came the visible heavens*

### **Na Raki, ka noho ia Poko haru a te Pō**

*The visible heavens combined with the great abyss to produce the numberless sorceries and the ultimate calamity!!!*

### **Ko Aoraki me Rakamaomao, tana a Tawhirimatea**

*Thence to Aoraki and the winds and weather*

**Ko Tū Te Rakiwhānoa**

*To the creator of the land*

**Ui rā ki Te Maha-a-nui ā Maui**

*And the canoe of Maui*

**Ko Te Ao Takata!**

*And finally to people!*

**Tihei mauri ora!**

*I cough the breath of life!*

**Ko te kākahu ō te Mauka o Tititea me Pikirakatahi**

*To the cloak that covers the mountains of Mt Aspiring and Mt Earnslaw.*

**Me to nā whānau ō Ka Tiritiri o Te Moana**

*To the family of the Southern Alps*

**Nā te Mauka ō Ari me Haehaeata**

*Over to Mt Alfred and Leaning Rock*

**Nā te Awa Whakatipu**

*To the Dart River*

**Raua ko te Roto ō Whakatipu Wai Māori**

*And onto the lake Whakatipu Wai Māori*

**Na te mauka ki kamu ā Hākitekura**

*Then to the mountains of Cecil and Walter Peaks*

**Nā te kaika ō Tāhuna**

*To the settlement of Queenstown*

**Huri noa ki te Awa tapu o Kawarau me Mata-au**

*And down to the Kawarau and Clutha Rivers*

**Nā te Roto tapu ki Wānaka me Hāwea**

*And onto the sacred lakes of Wānaka and Hāwea*

**Huri ki te Kaika ō Takekarara, Manuhaea me Turihuka**

*And up to the settlements at the Lakes*

**Te Papa i waihotia mai e ka tīpuna e whakaeketia nei e te Iwi te tinana Papatūānuku**

*The land left to us by our ancestors ascended here by the people in the body of Papatūānuku*

**Tihei mauri ora!**

## **MIHIMIHI - INTRODUCTION**

**Ko Te Rapuwai, Ko Waitaha, Ko Kāti Mamoe me Kāti Tahu tāku iwi**

*These are my tribal affiliations*

**Ko Kāti Huirapa,**

**Ko Te Aotaumarewa,**

**Ko Kāti Wairaki,**

**Ko Kāti Kuri,**

**Ko Kāti Tuhaitara,**

**Ko Kāti Hāteatea,**

**Ko Kāti Te Rakitāmau,**

**Ko Kāti Te Rakiamoa,**

**me Kāti Tahumata tāku hapū**

*These are some of my sub tribal affiliations*

**Ko Moeraki me Awarua rāua ko Manuhaea taku tūrakakawaewae**

*These are my most important places*

**Ko taku mokopuna ki te Tōhuka Rakatira kō Te Mamaru rāua ko**

**Te Rehe i tēnei rohe**

*I descend from these important chiefs*

**Ko Rawiri Higgins ahau**

*David Higgins is my name*

**Tēnei te mihi mahana ki a koutou**

*Warm greetings to you all*

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

1. I will now present my evidence, on behalf of myself and mana whenua, on the proposed Chapter 39 Wāhi Tūpuna of the Queenstown Lakes District Plan.
2. This morning I am going to explain to you the relationship that my whānau has with the Queenstown Lakes District. But first let me tell you a little bit about myself and my Tīpuna (ancestors).
3. The whakapapa and creation stories that I have recited are the words of my great-great grandfather, Rawiri Te Mamaru of Moeraki, who was the Rakatira (chief) there in the mid-1800s following the death of the famous Kāi Tahu leader Matiaha Tiramorehu. My Tīpuna are of Te Rapuwai, Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu descent with hapū affiliations that extend across all of Te Waipounamu (the South Island).
4. I grew up on the Pā at Moeraki on the North Otago coast. My involvement with the Whakatipu area began as a child whilst accompanying my Pōua (grandfather) and Tāua (grandmother) on holiday to the family crib at Tāhuna (Queenstown) in the 1950s and 1960s. One of the reasons why we had a crib was because Whakātipu-wai-Māori (the lake) was a place where people traditionally went for solace and peace. Kāi Tahu whānui still go to Whakātipu-wai-Māori for these reasons today.
5. I am a past board member of the former Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board and gave evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal as part of the Kāi Tahu Claim (Wai 27) in the 1980s.

6. I am the Ūpoko (Appointed Traditional Leader) of Moeraki and my marae is situated on the Moeraki Peninsula. I inherited this position in the 1980s upon the death of my Pōua Rawiri Mamaru Renata and I have maintained this position ever since. Traditionally, the Ūpoko were the Rakatira (chiefs) and Tohuka (high priests) of our people and the role of Ūpoko is generally a lifetime position.
7. I was for a short time also the Moeraki representative on the Ngāi Tahu tribal council - Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
8. I am now going to explain the relationship that my whānau has with the Queenstown Lakes District. Whenever I spend time here, I am reflective of those that walked these paths before us.

## **SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

9. My evidence will cover the following matters:
  - a) Whakapapa associations of Kāi Tahu Whānui with the District
  - b) An overview of Kāi Tahu migration, settlement, and resource use in the District
  - c) Contemporary mana whenua associations with the District and the mapped Wāhi Tūpuna
10. Much of the information that I present today has been passed on to us by some of the most respected and influential Kāi Tahu Rakatira and Tohuka of the nineteenth century, including Hipa Te Maiharoa, Rawiri Te Maire, Te Huruhuru, Te Warekorari, Matiaha Tiramorehu, Rawiri Te Mamaru, Te Rehe and Hori Kerei Taiaroa.
11. In the nineteenth century, their information was recorded onto written material such as maps, manuscripts, and submissions, which have survived throughout the generations. Many of the words that I share with you today are their words.

## **WHAKAPAPA ASSOCIATIONS OF KĀI TAHU WHĀNUI WITH THE DISTRICT**

12. According to Kāi Tahu tradition, the very first people to arrive in the South Island were the Waitaha. They arrived in the South Island on a great canoe called Uruao, captained

by Rākaihautu, the son-in-law of the chief Matiti. At every island that he made land fall he discovered inhabitants until he reached the Marlborough area of the South Island.

13. Tradition tells us that Rākaihautu dug the lakes of Te Waipounamu (South Island) with his kō (digging stick called Tuwhakarōria). The proverb associated with Rākaihautū is “Ko Rākaihautū te takata nāna i timata te ahi ki tenei motu.” (It was Rākaihautū who lit the first fires on this island.) After digging the lakes of Hāwea, Wānaka and Whakātipu-wai-Māori, he travelled through the Greenstone and Hollyford valleys before digging Whakatipu Waitai (Lake McKerrow).
14. The Waitaha people were probably the people that archaeologists called the Moahunters. They mostly lived at the mouths of rivers and would travel inland to catch moa and then transport the butchered meat downstream on reed rafts. The Waitaha were real people and not mythical even though their deeds often live in the realm of mythology. The genealogies of the Waitaha people can be traced from Rākaihautu through to the living descendants who are the modern day Kāi Tahu.
15. In early times Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea were a Waitaha stronghold. The transition of the lakes from Waitaha to Kāi Tahu takiwā was instigated by an attack on Pōtiki-tautahi’s settlement, Paekai. During the 1700s, Pōtiki-tautahi was the chief of Paekai who guarded the area fiercely. However, when news came that his cousin, Weka, was leading a Kāi Tahu war party from Kaiapoi against Pōtiki-tautahi, he prepared for the worst. Upon contact with this war party, Paekai was ransacked, Pōtiki-tautahi killed, and the remainder of the Waitaha people taken prisoner. This was the end of the Waitaha presence in Lake Wānaka, and possibly the entirety of central Otago<sup>1</sup>.
16. The name “Wānaka” is a South Island variant<sup>2</sup> of the word “wānanga” which refers to ancient schools of learning. In these schools Kāi Tahu tohuka (men of learning) would be taught whakapapa (genealogies) which stretched back to over a hundred generations and karakia (incantations) for innumerable situations. They were required to commit all of this learning to memory.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Beattie, 1945

<sup>2</sup> In the south, the ‘ng’ in Māori words is substituted for a ‘k’

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

17. Many place names from the Whakātipu-wai-Māori area are from the story of Hākitekura, who was the first woman to swim across Whakātipu-wai-Māori (Lake Wakatipu). In those days, there were often swimming competitions that took place at Whakātipu-wai-Māori amongst the young people of the villages, however, no one was ever able to swim right across the Lake.
18. Hākitekura would watch the activities from atop the mountain known today as Ben Lomond and was determined that she would be the one to achieve this incredible feat. With her bundle of kaueti (rubbing stick) and dry raupo leaves wrapped tightly in flax and tied to her back, she set off on her journey in the darkness before the coming of dawn.
19. In remembrance of her accomplishments, the point on the other side of the Lake where she first emerged and lit a fire was named Te-Ahi-a-Hākitekura (The Fire of Hākitekura). Ben Lomond as it is known today, was named Te Taumata o Hākitekura (The Hill Top of Hākitekura). The Kawarau Peninsula (Kelvin Heights) was called Te Nuku o Hākitekura (The Place of Hākitekura) and the Cecil and Walter Peaks which guided her in her journey were named Ka Kamo o Hākitekura (The Winking Eyes of Hākitekura).
20. Hākitekura was the daughter of Tuwiriroa, one of the leading Kāti Māmoe chiefs during the 17<sup>th</sup> century whose pā was located at Tāhuna, the area where modern-day Queenstown now stands.
21. For many generations, Te Koroka was the primary greenstone source for Māori living on the east coast of the South Island. It is located on the slopes of Mount Cosmos off the upper reaches of the Dart River and it requires some effort to arrive at. Greenstone, or pounamu, is the hardest non-gemstone known to man, and was ideal for cutting and carving tools. Therefore, it was invaluable as a trading item but also as a daily tool for creating wooden utensils or carving up fish.
22. Knowledge of the actual location of Te Koroka was lost from memory for many generations even though the stories and legends persisted. It was explained by oral historians that a great taniwha (monster) could be seen with greenstone spewing from its mouth. The actual geography of Mount Cosmos, viewed from certain angles, does appear to be a hunched over figure and it is understandable how the legend emerged.



Since its rediscovery the site, and its specific location, has been protected from the general public. It is currently under the guardianship of Kāi Tahu and the Department of Conservation and is subject to a covenant confirmed in the Ngāi Tahu Deed of Settlement and passed into legislation.

23. Kāi Tahu taoka (treasures) such as ancestral mountains, large flowing rivers, the tūpuna lakes (great inland lakes), pounamu and traditional travel routes make the Queenstown Lakes District a place of immense significance to our iwi.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF KĀI TAHU MIGRATION, SETTLEMENT, AND RESOURCE USE**

24. The general area around Whakātipu-wai-Māori was famous for pounamu and was known as Te Wāhi Pounamu. Inaka pounamu was gathered from the Dart and Routeburn valleys. Today Te Waipounamu is widely used as one of the Māori names for the South Island, and its derivation can be traced back to the traditional name of Te Wāhi Pounamu. Numerous pounamu artefacts and the remains of several kāika nohoaka (Māori encampments) have been discovered at the head of Whakātipu-wai-Māori near Te Awa Whakatipu (Dart River).
25. In those days, before European settlement, the people of Te Wāhi Pounamu carried out their lives according to particular seasons that were dictated by the star pointers such as matariki. There was a season for everything, and one seasonal practice followed another. There was a season to plant, a season to fight and a season to rest.
26. Whakatipu Wai Māori and its associated valleys held significance as places to recuperate and gather future thoughts in between seasons and especially after a fierce battle. Such was the importance of the pā at Frankton and the raketira who hosted our whanau there.
27. Many families travelled through the area while recuperating. They would travel around the Dart, Glenorchy and around Kingston, spreading out and utilizing the resources of those areas. In those times, mahika kai was particularly important, especially in the areas where few people resided.
28. Mahika kai is described as the gathering of foods and other resources, the places where they are gathered, and the practices used in doing so.

29. Annual hunting trips were made in June and July for weka, and Kāi Tahu also captured and ate other native birds such as kaka, kākārīki (parakeet) and pūtakitaki (paradise ducks) which were abundant on the Dart River, Lake Wānaka and Lake Hāwea. Eels (tuna) were also hunted throughout the area. They gathered the leaves and roots of tī kōuka (cabbage tree) which were used for making paraerae (sandals) and from which they also extracted glucose. The leaves of tikumu (mountain daisy) were used for kākahu (cloaks) and fragrant oil was produced from taramea (wild spaniard).
30. Well known mahika kai species traditionally gathered in the area included aruhe (fernroot), papai (an edible plant), weka, kiore (Polynesian rat) and tuna (eels). Most of the above are considered to be taoka species.
31. Hāwea and Wānaka were significant mahika kai sites used for hunting birds. Bird life was abundant in this area because of open space compared to Whakātipu-wai-Māori. The township location of Hāwea and Wānaka were major mahika kai (food) processing sites. Once kai or resources were processed, they were transferred down the rivers by mōkihi (raft) and waka were then used to transfer the kai onto pā along the coast. Lake Wānaka and Lake Hāwea were of special significance and when the Europeans arrived in the area, our people were camped at Te Manuhaea (the Neck) between the two lakes gathering mahika kai. There are still Māori-owned reserves there
32. Kāi Tahu Whānui also utilized the ancient and complex series of trails (ara tawhito) throughout Te Waipounamu that connected settlements with one another, and settlements to resource gathering areas. Trails followed food resources so foods could be gathered and consumed to sustain people on their journeys. These trails became the arteries of economic and social relationships for Kāi Tahu Whānui and are now followed by most of today's main transportation routes.
33. The Mata-au was a significant ara tawhito. The mouth of Mata-au was heavily populated with many permanent and temporary kāika (settlements) located throughout the lower stretches of the river. Murikauhaka, a kāika near the mouth of the Mata-au, was at one stage home to an estimated two hundred people. The river itself was an important trail, providing direct access home from lakes Wānaka, Hāwea and Whakātipu-wai-Māori (Lake Wakatipu) to coastal Otago.

34. Travelling to Te tai o Poutini through the Shotover River is another example of such a trail that was as rough as it was well known to my people.
35. On these journeys, Kāi Tahu tīpuna (ancestors) used seasonal campsites (nohoaka) where they stayed for periods of time. They would replenish their food supplies from the surrounding area before continuing their journey, so all nohoaka were also food gathering sites. There are four well-known traditional nohoaka between Lake Hāwea and the confluence of the Lindis (Ōmakō) and Mata-au (Clutha).
36. Travel inland in pursuit of pounamu (greenstone), and other resources was made possible by the abundance of mahika kai in rivers and streams. This is why ara tawhito followed rivers – they provided food for the journey. The resources gathered inland could also be transported easily along rivers in mōkihi (boats made mostly from raupō, bulrushes or flax). People never travelled inland and back to the coast by the same route. They would always travel back a different way so that there would be enough food and resources to sustain them on the journey home. This would also ensure that there were enough kai and resources for the next ropu who would travel along similar trails.

#### **CONTEMPORARY MANA WHENUA ASSOCIATIONS WITH DISTRICT AND WĀHI TŪPUNA**

37. This place holds a different level of spiritual importance to us who have familial ties to the area and have spent time here all our lives. Today, many of our whānau travel here to experience what life might have been like for our tupuna. Many have come here on specifically arranged hīkoi (tours) to talk about what it might have been like for our tūpuna and what it can be like for our tamariki and our mokopuna.
38. Some of our Kāi Tahu families today have even gone through a pilgrimage of sorts and endured the journey to Te Tai o Poutini through the Red Hills behind Queenstown to get to Haast.
39. The knowledge of the nohoaka sites, the ara tawhito and the wāhi mahika kai are all values that we still hold dear today and which we hope to pass on to our tamariki and mokopuna. It is imperative that these values are identified so to ensure that they know

and understand the importance of those places and the role they all played in enabling our people to traverse across the wide expanse of this whenua.

40. Pounamu is still found today on Te Koroka (Slip Stream) and is held under strict protection given its location within a national park and equally its cultural significance to Kāi Tahu.
41. From looking at history through the ages and talking to our young people about why our people settled around here for given periods of time, we have seen the great loss that mana whenua endured when runholders moved into the valleys and banned mana whenua from carrying out their activities. The connectivity we had with our whenua disappeared for three, four, five generations. We are only just recovering some of the knowledge and connection that we lost.
42. I recall the Dark Sky Project in Takapō. The whole basis of its development are the traditions and history of my people that have been lost to us for five generations. At the time, we sat with the designers of the complex looking up and admiring the mountains, but we could not actually see the connection between the heavenly realm of the stars, and the Waitaha, Māmoe, Kāi Tahu narrative.
43. I looked out the window, looking for the one thing that would turn the key, then I saw it. I said look at that mountain range, every one of those mountains are named after a star. Every mountain in the Two Thumb Range carries the name of an atua in the sky. That is how we have tried to express the importance behind the Wāhi Tūpuna mapping. It is about recognising, protecting, and preserving the importance of those traditions.
44. We continue to try and get as many of our young ones up here as possible. My own children are very experienced in different valleys of Wānaka, Hāwea and Whakatipu Wai Māori. They know where to go and the history and stories that emulate from the traditions of our ancestors.
45. Many of our young people will sit atop Queenstown Hill or Kelvin Heights and admire the beautiful views of the lake and the surrounding mauka. However, it is so important to us that that they understand the stories behind those mesmerizing waterways, hilltops, and mountains, and what they mean to us.

46. My daughter got married on top of the ledge up above the Lake. When we were up there for the wedding, I told the story of our tīpuna who swam across the lake and the importance of the Lake and the mountains. Everyone was entranced as they had never heard of these stories before. We want to ensure that our young ones understand our traditions and what they are about.
47. The locations of ancient settlements deemed significant in Kāi Tahu traditions and stories are still utilized, and the place names and whakapapa that are entrenched in the landscape endure to this day. Many of the European landowners in these areas know the stories of our tīpuna but while they refer to them as nursery rhymes and myths, those places and the importance of those traditions are how we link back and connect to that land. As the descendants of the first people of Te Waipounamu, Kāi Tahu seek to preserve these historical and spiritual sites, and areas of mahika kai mō tatou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei (for us and our children after us).
48. As mana whenua (people with the mana of the land) Kāi Tahu whānui are kaitiaki in the whole Queenstown Lakes District area. Kaitiakitaka is fundamental to our relationship with the environment. As kaitiaki, Kāi Tahu whānui have an obligation handed down from our tīpuna to ensure that these values and the healthy resources that support them are passed on to future generations.
49. Teaching these stories and place names, keeping the traditions alive and passing them to our children is important to maintaining our sense of identity as Kāi Tahu whānau, and instilling in our children who they are and where they come from – and what it means to be Kāi Tahu.
50. Development in the area has made it difficult for us to fully express our traditional stories in deep and meaningful ways. As an example, we visit Moke Lake every now and then with our whānau or with a few manuhiri. We try explaining the story of the Lake and the importance of the valley but when we look back to Whakatipu Wai Māori, the many holiday homes that have popped up on the hillside end up detracting from the experience and overshadowing the traditions that once covered the landscape.
51. We understand that landowners who do not understand the concept of wāhi tūpuna may think that we are trying to ensure they can't do anything on their properties. However, we choose to see it as a partnership approach to managing wāhi tūpuna with

landowners as custodians of those areas. Many landowners that I know have over the years grown more comfortable with the concept of wāhi tūpuna and love hearing about the history and traditions of the places in which they live. It is all a matter of understanding the meaning and purpose behind wāhi tūpuna, which I believe I have provided in this evidence.

## **CONCLUSION**

52. I am sure that you now have a greater understanding of the strong cultural relationship that my people hold for the landscape of this District. I have described some of the locations of our mahika kai and ancient occupation sites, our traditional resources and our ancient pathways. I have also shown that generations of Kāi Tahu Whānui have continually used these places and waterways and have fought to preserve, restore and enhance our cultural relationship with them.
  
53. It is the responsibility of this generation to continue the work of our Tīpuna to ensure that the cultural and historical association that Kāi Tahu Whānui holds for these places are protected and preserved for our future generations – mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei (for us and our children after us).

**Tēnā koutou**

**David Higgins.**