

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED BY  
THE DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL**

**IN THE MATTER** of LUC-2020-293 20 Bay Road, Warrington

**BETWEEN** **NEW ZEALAND MOTOR CARAVAN**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
Applicant

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**CULTURAL EVIDENCE OF SUZI FLACK  
ON BEHALF OF  
KĀTI HUIRAPA RŪNAKA KI PUKETERAKI**

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## INTRODUCTION

Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Hikaroroa te mauka

Ko Waikouaiti te awa

Ko Araiteuru te waka

Ko Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Kai Tahu kā iwi

Ko Kai Te Ruahikihiki rāua ko Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki kā hapū

Ko Brinns Point taku whenua Tūpuna

Ko Puketeraki te marae

Ko Suzi Flack taku ikoa

Nō reira kia ora koutou katoa.

1. I am presenting this evidence on behalf of myself and Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki, on the New Zealand Motor Caravan Association's application to establish and operate a member only motor caravan park at 20 Bay Road in Warrington Dunedin.
2. We are concerned about the potential impacts this application could have on the Warrington wastewater treatment plant, the water quality of our moana and with it our kaimoana and the cultural values we hold in the area. This morning I am going to tell you about the values we hold in the area as a Rūnaka and my relationship with the Warrington and Blue-skin Bay area.
3. I am a Takata Tiaki for Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki. I am also a member of Komiti Kaupapa Taiao, Whiria Ka Aho weavers, Hauteruruku ki Puketeraki Waka Club and am a trustee of the Roiti Whānau Trust and Karitāne Foreshore Reserve.
4. I work as a medical laboratory scientist and reside at Puketeraki, Karitāne.
5. My connections to this area go a long way back. Since 1830 some of my ancestors have lived at Brinns Point, which is a headland between Karitane and Seacliff. Some are buried in the urupa on the headland. They lived there in a kaik called Te Awa Koeia, which means *The waters of the yellow foot paua*. Many creeks and streams run down the hillside to Brinns Point. My whānau's connections to this area are very important to me. We are

involved in habitat restoration in the area, reseeding paua, removing invasive seaweed and have rebuilt our whare tūpuna.

6. We are also very connected to the Blueskin Bay estuary. We camped at Blueskin Bay as a young family and we now take whanau to the estuary to get tuaki, and tuatua from Warrington Beach. If Puketeraki marae is hosting a hui, this is where we gather kai using our customary authorisations. This is the tradition of manaakitaka and mahika kai. If the landscape is desecrated and has no mana, it cannot support life, the people have no mana and cannot practice cultural tikaka.

## **Cultural Relationship of Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki with Warrington and Blueskin Bay**

7. Archaeological sites and findings that cover the Warrington and Blueskin Bay area paints a picture of how our tūpuna traversed and settled in the area. There are recorded findings of moa hunting grounds, umu sites, burial sites and pounamu workings in the area. There has also been an old waka hoe (waka paddle) found in the area.
8. In our pepeha, Kāti Huirapa ki Puketeraki mihi to the Āraiteuru waka and Te Tai o Āraiteuru, the ocean of Blueskin Bay. This coast connects our whānau to the whenua and the moana, ki Uta ki Tai.
9. Today we use this place for waka activities and gathering kaimoana (seafood). We also tend to the area by replanting native habitat and reseeding paua. All these kaupapa, help whānau connect to their ancestral landscape and are embodied in the pou and carvings that are in this area and along the coastline.
10. Currently, wastewater at the wastewater treatment plant in Warrington only undergoes primary treatment through an oxidation pond. It is then sprayed onto a designated part of the sand spit reserve between the estuary and the ocean. We know that the wastewater system is under pressure now, therefore, it is imperative that we take care of that adequately to protect the mauri of the estuary and the surrounding waters.
11. Mauri is the 'life force' or 'life principle' of a place or thing. Mana whenua believe that there is an active phenomenon within everything and thus, whether living or inanimate, all things possess mauri. The primary goal for Manawhenua, with respect to resource management,

is the protection of the mauri or life-giving essence of an ecosystem and thus, mauri is often used as a benchmark when measuring the health of the environment. Projects need to demonstrate that the mauri of all things within the proposed project area will not suffer significant damage in both the present and long-term future.

12. We believe that the Warrington Motor Caravan Park application will threaten the mauri of the waterways and in turn, the mauri of the area.

13. Water sustains all life and estuaries are the lungs, the interface between the rivers and the ocean. If the mauri of the water is strong, then the kai is strong, and we are healthy. If the mauri is damaged and prevents mahika kai practices or taoka species flourishing, that impacts on us as mana whenua.

## **Kaitiakitaka**

14. Through whakapapa this place gives me rakatirataka to do the right thing, to strive to improve what we have and protect for the future.

15. I am a Takata Tiaki for Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki. The role of Takata Tiaki is about ensuring that what we have is protected and that we improve what we have for our future. We need to look generations ahead and think about what we need to leave for those who come after us. To do this we need to lead the way and not settle for quick and easy solutions.

16. If the proposed activity affects the availability of kaimoana and being able to gather kai, then we can't practice manaakitaka. We can't practice cultural gathering. There is no pleasure in taking whānau to collect if the food is not healthy and if the place is not attractive. As kaitiaki it is our duty to make sure that resources such as healthy water are available for our descendants.

17. Keeping our waterways clean is important culturally because it is vital for the health of our mahika kai/kaimoana. Our marae is regularly involved in hosting manuhiri (visitors). Being able to provide kai that is local to our area is very important to us.

18. Being kaitiaki is also about keeping the habitat well for the species and ecosystems which thrive in the area. The area around the proposed site is also a breeding ground for sea lions now. We know that a few of them have taken up residence there and that there are second generation sea lions giving birth to their babies there. We have also observed leopard seals on the estuary.
19. Our kids know they are kaitiaki in our area. We didn't realise how important the local environment was to our kids until our daughter returned home from boarding school and appreciated how great home is. She's quite protective of our place. She's connected to the whole landscape, the mountains and the waterways. She paints them all the time. It's hugely important to me that our tamariki have values and respect for the environment and that they know we are a part of it.
20. It would be tragic if poor water quality meant that we could no longer go out and collect our mahika kai. That's why everybody's trying so hard to look after it. That is why I stand before you today.
21. However, I am not just doing this on behalf of my Rūnaka and whānau. We have a really strong community. There are other groups in the Blueskin Bay area that we connect with and we have worked with them on native planting initiatives and paua reseeding. Therefore, I stand here for them also.

## **Wāhi Tūpuna**

22. The proposed site sits within three mapped wāhi tūpuna in the DCC Second Generation District Plan (2GP). They are ID 14: Pūrākaunui to Hikororoa to Huriawa, ID15: Okahau (Warrington) and ID 16: Blueskin Bay.
23. Each wāhi tūpuna have threats attributed to them. Relevant threats with regard to the proposal include earthworks, activities affecting water quality, including sediment discharge and new roads or additions and alterations to existing roads.
24. While we understand that there are measures to protect our archaeological sites from the earthworks, whenever structural changes are made to a landscape you never know for sure what you are altering and to us, the protection of our archaeological sites from any earthworks is what is most ideal.

25. However, our biggest concern is how they will deal with the waste. As explained above, as the wastewater treatment plant becomes overloaded and water quality of the estuary or the beach degraded, this negatively impacts our kaimoana and us as a result.
26. Separate to the listed threats, mapped wāhi tūpuna are significant to us by way of whakapapa to the different iwi that have passed through and settled in this area including, Rapuwai, Hāwea, Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu. That whakapapa is embedded in the landscape and carries the names of some of our tūpuna, notably our mauka named after people who were travelling the coast on the Āraiteuru canoe which sank at Matakaea. We speak that whakapapa in our pepeha - Blueskin Bay is Te Tai o Āraiteuru. Those areas have been mapped by us because they are significant, they will always be significant so preserving them for the future will always be of importance to kaitiaki, now and in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

27. I have described the traditional and contemporary relationships my people had/have with our ancestral landscape and why it is important to us that we continue to protect this landscape and its features.
28. My hope for the Warrington Beach, Blueskin Bay Estuary and wider surrounding waters is that they will be rehabilitated to a better state than they are in now.
29. My hope for my children is that the kai doesn't get further depleted or lost. I don't want my children to say "I remember when we used to eat that but we can't get it anymore because it's all gone".
30. We want to be able to continue to take our kids onto the water to gather kaimoana and have them on the waka and use the beach and the estuary recreationally.
31. It is our responsibility to continue the work of our tūpuna to ensure that the cultural connection that we hold for this landscape is 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**

**Suzi Flack**