

Healing through Whenua: Reconnecting Iwi to Ancestral Land for Collective Well-being

Master's Thesis
Master of Architecture (Professional)

Auckland University of Technology
Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies
Huri te Ao – School of Future Environments

Researcher: Larissa Huia Wood - 23199190
Supervisors: Jade Kake & Dr Rachel Shearer

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Architecture (Professional)

Abstract

This thesis explores how culturally informed architectural design may enable meaningful reconnection to ancestral whenua (land) and contribute to intergenerational healing and collective well-being. Focusing on the ancestral landscape of Rangiaowhia, situated approximately four kilometres east of Te Awamutu in the Waikato region of Aotearoa, New Zealand, the study examines how such reconnection may contribute to intergenerational healing and collective well-being. Following 160 years of displacement resulting from the Waikato invasion and subsequent raupatu (confiscation), the return of a small parcel of land through a gift from the Anglican Diocese represents a significant act of restorative justice and creates a rare opportunity to reestablish ahi kā (continuous occupation) and cultural presence.

Anchored in a kaupapa Māori (Māori approach) research framework and design-led methodology, the study draws on hui, kōrero (to speak) with knowledge holders, and site-based spatial exploration. It develops a staged marae-papakāinga (village) masterplan as a strategic vehicle for renewing whakapapa relationships, enabling everyday cultural practices, and restoring identity within the ancestral landscape.

The findings indicate that architectural design aligned with iwi (tribal) aspirations can materially support cultural reconnection by structuring spaces and patterns of occupation that reactivate tūrangawaewae (place where one has the right to stand) and strengthen whanaungatanga (relationship, kinship) across daily life. Reconnection to whenua emerges not only as a spatial or physical act, but as a cultural and relational process that can counter the intergenerational impacts of displacement, silence, and cultural fragmentation. The project also highlights the constraints faced during engagement, reflecting broader structural challenges iwi encounter in development processes.

This research contributes a culturally centred design proposition and methodological model for integrating Māori values into architectural practice. It affirms that papakāinga development, when guided by iwi aspirations and tikanga, can provide meaningful pathways toward healing, cultural revitalisation, and long-term well-being for Ngāti Apakura.

Table of Contents

Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
List of Figures	5
Attestation of Authorship	6
Acknowledgements	7
Ethics Approval	8
1 - Introduction	9
2 - He Hokinga Whakapapa - A Return through Whakapapa	11
3 - Kōrero Tuku Iho – Traditions	12
4 - Te Hītori O Te Whenua - The History of The Land	15
5 - Literature Review	23
Introduction	23
Cultural Significance of Whenua	23
Historical Context of Disconnection	24
Contemporary Challenges and Barriers	24
Papakāinga and Co-Housing Models	25
Reconnection as Healing	26
Landscape of Scholarship and Identified Research Needs	26
Conclusion	27
6 - Methodology	28
Research Philosophy	28
Insider/Outsider Research Position	28
Research Strategy	29
Research Methods	29
Data Collection	29
Data Analysis	30
Ethical Considerations	30
7 - Design Outcomes	31

8 - Overview of Thesis Project	37
Introduction	37
Aim, Scope, and Boundaries	37
Methodological Approach	39
Design Development Narrative	39
9 - Critical Review	41
Positioning	41
Kaupapa Māori Theory	41
Decolonisation Theory	41
Indigenous Architecture Theory	42
Whenua and Relational Ontologies	43
Collective Housing Models.....	44
10 - Conclusion	45
References.....	46
Glossary of Terms.....	50
Appendices	53

List of Figures

Figure 1 — Te Uenuku. Carved between 1200–1500. Submerged in Lake Ngā Roto following the Battle of Hingakākā. Unearthed in 1906. Currently housed at Te Awamutu Museum. AI enhanced photo. Original photo by author.

Figure 2 — (Left) Aotearoa New Zealand location map showing Waipā District. (Right) Waipā District map showing the location of Rangiaowhia.

Figure 3 — Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, painted by George Angas. Alexander Turnbull Library, PUBL-0014-44

Figure 4 — Gunboat on the Waikato River. by H. Baille (Alexander Turnbull Library, A-110-006)

Figure 5 — Rangiaowhia.[sic] [March, 1864]. A view oriented toward what is now the project site at 61 Rangiaowhia Road. St Paul's Anglican Church to the right. Following the attack, the site was occupied by Blewitt's Redoubt, in the centre, with military tents behind protective fencing. By Edward Arthur Williams. 1864. Alexander Turnbull Library, E-349-060.

Figure 6 — Image featured in *Ka Aowhia Te Rangi: A Rich History Poorly Known* by Corey Wilson, Robbie Neha, and Tom Roa, believed to be Rangiaowhia c. 1850s, used as inspiration for the design is in fact the Parihaka kāinga in Taranaki. Walker, W. (ca. 1886). *Parihaka kāinga, Taranaki* [Photograph]. National Library of New Zealand.

https://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE25086909

Figure 7 — Wharekai Perspective Sketch.

Figure 8 — Wharekai Elevations.

Figure 9 — Wharekai Floor Plan Incorporating Whare Whakairo and Te Whare Pora.

Figure 10 — Two-bedroom whare sketch.

Figure 11 — Two-bedroom whare elevations.

Figure 12 — Two-bedroom whare floor plan

Figure 13 — One-bedroom whare with mezzanine/loft

Figure 14 — One-bedroom whare floor plan

Figure 15 — One-bedroom whare section. Loft above lounge accessed via loft ladder.

Figure 16 — Preliminary Masterplan

Figure 17 — Rangiaowhia site location plan

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Larissa Huia Wood

Acknowledgements

I want to acknowledge and thank my amazing husband Randy, who has been my rock on this journey through the Master's programme, encouraging me all the way, never doubting my ability, not for a single day. In the words of Dolly Parton, "I wouldn't be here if you hadn't been there, holding my hand, showing you care. You made me dream more than I dared. And I wouldn't be here, if you hadn't been there."

Thank you to my two amazing children, Tasmin and Abel, who have supported me in their own ways through the last two years. Tasmin, providing emotional support and encouragement, and Abel, who has been my 24-hour on-call technical support person. I love you both more than you know and appreciate your encouraging words throughout this journey.

Thank you to my incredibly knowledgeable and patient supervisors, Jade Kake and Dr Rachel Shearer. Your guidance and encouragement have been invaluable. I could only dream of being as inspiring as you have both been to me.

I would like to specifically thank Tuhiwai Kingi, Dr Tom Roa, Joanne Teina, TeAroha Drummond and Hōri Griggs, the matatau (learned) who took time out of their days to share their abundance of knowledge and experiences with me, to help guide my path, and I acknowledge all the members of Ngāti Apakura who have shared their ideas and aspirations with me along the way.

Thank you to Sara Antanovich, my friend and colleague, who believed in me, motivating me to take this post-graduate journey and provided encouragement throughout. I appreciate your support.

I wish to acknowledge my dad in spirit. *No earthly ships will ever bring him home again*, but I know he would be proud of my achievements. If only I could kōrero with him again and reassure him that he is now safe to be proud of his Māori heritage.

Thank you to AUT and Huri te Ao – School of Future Environments for believing in me enough to admit me into the programme and for the scholarship I was deemed worthy of receiving. The school came highly recommended and has lived up to the reputation.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge and thank my tūpuna, especially my tūpuna wāhine, who have walked beside me throughout this journey - quietly guiding my path, steadying my spirit, and calling me back to my spiritual home. Knowing I descended from an incredible woman, like Keke Tumohe, who bravely confronted Crown soldiers as they attacked the Waikato in 1864, I am reminded of who I am and where I stand. This thesis is carried not by my efforts alone but by the determination, wisdom, and aroha of those who came before me.

Ethics Approval

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10/07/2025 AUTEK Reference number 25/225

1 - Introduction

KO PIRONGIA TE MAUNGA

KO WAIPĀ TE AWA ITI

KO TAINUI TE WAKA

KO NGĀTI APAKURA TE IWI

KO TURNER TOKU WHĀNAU

KO MERE TUPARA RĀUA TAMAR COWELL TŪPUNA WAHINE

KO LARISSA WOOD TOKU INGOA

Healing through Whenua: Reconnecting Iwi to Ancestral Land for Collective Well-being explores how culturally specific architectural design can support the restoration of relationships between Ngāti Apakura and our ancestral whenua. Central to this project is a modest parcel of land gifted to the iwi by the Anglican Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki, a gesture of reconciliation that opens a long-awaited opportunity to reestablish presence, identity, and intergenerational connection in a landscape profoundly shaped by raupatu and displacement. The significance of this reconnection can also be understood through King Tāwhiao's well-known whakatauhī: *"There is but one eye of a needle through which white, black and red cotton are threaded."* As Dr Tom Roa explained, when the threads pass through the needle, they emerge as a new entity, woven together, yet each retaining its own ethic, its own motif, its own integrity. He suggests that our tūpuna recognised this principle in the evolution of whare forms, where older and newer architectural expressions coexisted and generated something distinct but culturally appropriate (T. Roa, personal communication, 14 November 2025)

This worldview emphasises that cultural innovation does not require the loss of identity; instead, it arises through respectful interweaving of relationships, knowledge systems and technologies. In the context of this project, the needle's eye becomes a metaphor for the reconciliation of histories, the meeting of iwi aspirations and Crown-aligned institutions, and the creation of a development that honours tradition while embracing the realities and opportunities of contemporary practice.

Ngāti Apakura's displacement was not only the result of military invasion but was subsequently cemented through legislative instruments such as the Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863, the New Zealand Settlements Act 1864, and later the Native Land court, which systematically converted communal titles into individualised parcels, enabling extensive Crown acquisition and obstructing return to whenua for generations (Waitangi Tribunal, 1999; Gilling, 1994; Raupatu (Confiscation) and the Waikato River Settlement, n.d.). Within this context, the thesis investigates how architectural development, supported by communal, cultural, and therapeutic spaces, can become a vehicle for collective healing.

Two research questions have guided the inquiry:

- (1) *How can reconnection to ancestral Whenua (Land), through culturally appropriate design and development of papakāinga (communal Māori housing development) and associated support services, promote intergenerational healing and overall well-being for iwi and hapū members?*
- (2) *What design principles can be implemented in papakāinga to balance collective cultural values with the individual needs of iwi and hapū members, encouraging cultural, mental, emotional and physical well-being?*

These questions seek not only to address architectural form but to respond to the intergenerational grief, where the loss of land, language, and cultural participation was neither socially acknowledged nor collectively processed, leaving deep affective

inheritance within whānau and hapū (Moewaka Barnes & McCreanor, 2019). The questions frame the work as both an architectural and relational endeavour, centred on whakapapa, whanaungatanga, and everyday practices of living with and caring for the land.

The origins of this project lie in the long-standing aspirations of Ngāti Apakura to re-establish a physical, cultural, and spiritual presence within their ancestral landscape. Prior to 1864, Ngāti Apakura occupied extensive and prosperous lands across the Waipa Region, supporting productive kāinga, sophisticated agricultural systems, and long-established networks of kinship, trade and alliance. This stability was violently disrupted during the Crown invasion of the Waikato, in breach of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which led to the forced displacement of the entire iwi. Many fled under urgent and traumatic circumstances, seeking refuge among surrounding iwi. The subsequent raupatu severed Ngāti Apakura from ancestral whenua, undermining economic, cultural, and political foundations for generations. Policies that were part of wider assimilation strategies, such as the *Education Ordinance 1847* and *Native Schools Act 1867*, explicitly aimed to displace te reo Māori and tikanga from everyday life, further severing Apakura descendants from cultural knowledge systems tied to the land (Education Ordinance, 1847; Native Schools Act, 1867; Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2011).

Throughout the twentieth century, this dislocation was exacerbated by further land confiscations, legislative restrictions, urban migration pressures, and restricted access to traditional sites of significance. Planning frameworks, particularly the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953*, imposed zoning and infrastructure requirements that made building on Māori land exceptionally difficult, compounding earlier confiscations and effectively preventing many Apakura whānau from re-establishing kāinga on ancestral whenua (Arbury & Cram, 2023; Menzies et al., 2019). The cumulative effects of these forces fractured whānau networks, disrupted connection to whenua and interrupted the communication of cultural knowledge. For many descendants, the trauma of these events manifested as silence within whānau histories. Despite these ruptures, there were those who maintained enduring connections to their whakapapa, histories, and identity. In recent decades, iwi and hapū efforts to recover land, restore cultural practices, and rebuild collective capacity have intensified, reflecting broader efforts toward decolonisation, mana motuhake, and the reactivation of relationships with whenua.

Against this historical backdrop, the gift of whenua represents an important moment of reconnection. The gesture acknowledges both historical relationships and the Crown-aligned role of the church during the colonial period, serving as a present-day contribution to healing through restorative approaches. For Ngāti Apakura, the gesture creates a rare and meaningful opportunity to reclaim physical presence within the ancestral landscape and to reassert cultural, spiritual, and political relationships with the whenua. From a hauora perspective, reconnection to whenua is inseparable from restoring balance across taha tinana (physical well-being), hinengaro (psychological well-being), wairua (spiritual well-being) and whānau (social/familial well-being); colonisation disrupted these relational systems through suppression of tohunga and Māori healing practices, producing long-term impacts still visible in contemporary health inequities (Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021; Smith, 2019; Dow, 2001; Stephens, 2001)

2 - He Hokinga Whakapapa - A Return through Whakapapa

My whakapapa traces to the Waipā rohe on both sides of my father's family, connecting me to Ngāti Apakura through tūpuna born in Rangiaowhia, Te Rore and Pirongia. My father's maternal great-grandmother, Mere Tupara, was born in Rangiaowhia in 1824, while on his paternal side my great-grandfather, Hone Turner, was born in Te Rore in 1861. His father, Piri Turner, transported flour and goods by waka between Pirongia and Onehunga, reflecting long-standing connections between Waipā and Tāmaki Makaurau. These ancestral lines confirm my identity as uri of Ngāti Apakura and the wider Waikato.

My father was a Master Mariner, a navigator of the sea and the stars, echoing the ancestral navigational traditions of our tūpuna who crossed Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa in search of new horizons. Growing up on the North Shore of Tāmaki Makaurau, the moana became central to my Hauora, shaping an early appreciation of the natural world as a source of restoration and connection.

Despite this lineage, cultural continuity within our immediate whānau was fractured. The early loss of my grandparents, my father's long periods away at sea, and his reluctance to speak openly about our whakapapa contributed to a gradual disconnection from our Māori identity. Although moments of te reo and practices such as backyard hāngī affirmed our heritage, they existed alongside the internalised colonial narratives my father carried; messages that diminished the value of te reo, tikanga, and Māori identity. Accounts of language suppression at school and the confiscation of our whānau land in Waikato illuminated the intergenerational trauma shaping this silence.

As an adult living in Te Waipounamu, opportunities to reconnect with my iwi were limited. After my father's passing in 2001, the last tangible link to our whakapapa felt lost. Returning to Tāmaki Makaurau after 24 years opened a pathway back. A distant relative, Tuhiwai Kingi, whom I first connected with online, became a pivotal guide, helping reestablish my relationship with whenua, whanaunga, and my identity as a descendant of Ngāti Apakura.



Figure 1 - Te Uenuku. Carved between 1200-1500. Submerged in Lake Ngā Roto following the Battle of Hingakākā. Unearthed in 1906. Currently housed at Te Awamutu Museum. AI enhanced photo. Original photo by author.

3 - Kōrero Tuku Iho – Traditions

This section draws on the traditional Māori creation narrative as recounted in Antony Alpers' *Māori Myths & Tribal Legends* (1964), a text that holds personal significance as my earliest introduction to Māori cosmology. Encountering this narrative in childhood shaped my foundational understanding of the interconnectedness between humankind and Papatūānuku (Mother Earth), a concept that continues to inform the cultural and environmental principles foundational to my research.

Before there was any light there was only darkness, all was night. Before there was even darkness there was nothing. Of these things it is spoken in our Karakia, those chants given down from ancient time that name all the ancestors of the Māori people. It is said in the karakia, at the beginning of time there stood Te Kore, the Nothingness. Then was Te Po, the Night, which was immensely long and immensely dark:

Te Po nui

Te Po roa

Te Po uriuri

Te Po kerekere

Te Po tiwha

Te Po tangotango

Te Po te kitea

Meaning the Great Night, the Long Night, the Dark Night, the Intensely Dark Night, the Gloom-laden Night, the Night to be Felt, the Night Unseen. The first light that existed was no more than the glowing of a worm, and when sun and moon were made there were no eyes, there was none to see them, not even gods.

The beginning was made from nothing.
From the nothing the beginning,
From the nothing the increase,
from the nothing the abundance,
the power of increasing, the living breath:
it dwelt with the empty space,
It produced the sky which is above us.
That sky that floats above the earth,
Great Rangi nui, the spread-out space,
dwelt with the red glow of dawn
and the moon was made;
the great sky above us
dwelt with the shooting rays
and the sun sprang forth,
they were thrown up above us as the chief of heaven.
then the heavens became light,
the early dawn,

the early day,
The mid-day,
the blaze of day from the sky.

Then Rangi nui, the Sky, dwelt with Papa tu a nuku, the Earth, and was joined to her, and land was made. But the offspring of Rangi and Papa, who were very numerous, were not of the shape of men, and they lived in darkness, for their parents were not yet parted. The Sky still lay upon the Earth, no light had come between them. The heavens were ten in number, and the lowest layer, lying on the Earth, made her unfruitful. Her covering was creeping plants and rank low weed, and the sea was all dark water, dark as night. The time when these things were seemed without end, as it is stated in the tradition:

'From the first division of time unto the tenth, and to the hundredth, and to the thousandth, all as darkness. The black sky lay upon the earth and made her barren, and in vain did she seek her offspring in the likeness of the day, or of the night.'

At length, the offspring of Rangi and Papa, worn out with the continual darkness, met together to decide what should be done about their parents, that man might arise. 'Shall we kill our parents, shall we slay them, our father and our mother, or shall we separate them?' they asked. And long did they consider the darkness:

The night, the night,
the day, the day,
the seeking out, the adzing out
From the nothing.
Their seeking thought also for their mother,
that man might arise.
Behold, this is the word,
the largeness, the length,
the height of their thought.

At last Tu matauenga, the fiercest of all the offspring of Sky and Earth and the god of war, spoke out. Said Tu: 'It is well. Let us kill them.'

But Tane mahuta, god and father of the forests and all things that inhabit them, answered: 'No, not so. It is better to rend them apart, and to let the Sky stand far above us and the Earth lie below here. Let the Sky become a stranger to us, but let Earth remain close to us as our nursing mother'

The other sons, and Tu the war god among them, saw wisdom in this and agreed with Tane, all but one. This one, that now and forever disagreed with all the brothers, was the god and father of the winds and storms, Tawhiri, fearing that his kingdom would be overthrown, did not wish his parents to be torn apart. So, while five sons agreed, Tawhiri was silent and would not, he held his breath. And long did they consider further. At the end of a time no man can measure the five decided that Rangi and Papa must be forced apart, and they began by turns to attempt this deed. (Alpers, 1964)

The traditional Māori creation narrative articulates a worldview founded on a deep reverence for Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother, as the source of life, identity and spiritual sustenance. In the Māori perspective, the connection to whenua transcends notions of physical presence, possession or ownership. It is a relationship embedded in whakapapa, the genealogical thread that binds

individuals to their tūpuna (ancestors), the whenua (land) and to the ao tukupū (the universe). Through whakapapa, the whenua becomes a living archive of identity and belonging, making reconnection to ancestral land a continuation of a living legacy.

Within this narrative, the offspring of Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku deliberate on how to escape the perpetual darkness of Te Pō. Tūmatuenga, atua of war and conflict, advocates for a violent resolution – proposing the slaying of their parents to achieve liberation. In contrast, Tāne Mahuta, atua of the forests and all living beings within them, offers a compassionate resolution:

“Let the sky be a stranger to us but let the earth remain close to us as our nurturing mother.” (Alpers, A, 1964, p.17)

In choosing non-violence, Tāne affirms a relational ethic: Papatūānuku is not inert terrain, but a nurturing, living entity vital to human well-being. Tāne situates Papatūānuku as a life source, providing sustenance, shelter, and spiritual grounding. Her presence embodies whakapapa (genealogical connection), positioning humanity within an interdependent network of relationships that extend beyond human society to encompass the natural world. In this framing, whenua is not a commodity but a sacred, living entity imbued with mauri (life essence), demanding care and reciprocity (Kawharu, 2000). Such cosmological principles underpin Māori environmental ethics, expressed through kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and manaakitanga (care), which guide collective responsibilities toward land and community (Lipsham, 2023). Land is integral to Māori spiritual well-being, providing sustenance, resources and opportunities for development, while also preserving cultural traditions.

Moreover, land reinforces whānau and hapū cohesion, strengthening identity at both personal and tribal levels, ensuring the well-being of future generations (Durie, 1998). For many whānau, hapū and iwi who have experienced historical disconnection from ancestral whenua through colonisation and land confiscation, reconnection to Papatūānuku represents more than just a physical return, it is a restoration of identity, belonging and spiritual balance. Embedding these principles within papakāinga design cultivates spaces that honour whakapapa, strengthens cultural practices, and promotes collective well-being, thereby addressing the intergenerational trauma of land loss and cultural fragmentation (Richardson et al., 2025).

In te ao Māori, the practice of burying the whenua (placenta) on ancestral land embodies a profound spiritual connection to Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother. The term *whenua* itself carries dual meaning of both land and placenta, signifying their inseparable relationship within Māori ontology. Returning the placenta to the earth unites mother, child and Papatūānuku in a reciprocal cycle of nature and sustenance – just as the placenta nourishes the child in utero, so the land sustains us through life, and ultimately receives us in death (J. Teina, personal communication, December 10, 2025).

The act is more than symbolic; it creates a tangible link between the newborn and the land, reinforcing tūrangawaewae and grounding identity in whakapapa. Through this ritual, the whenua becomes a living archive of belonging, embedding the child within an intergenerational continuum where the past speaks through the soil and the future takes root (Simmonds, 2015; Rameka et al., 2023).

These traditions highlight the cultural significance of maintaining a reciprocal relationship with whenua. For Māori, land is not merely a physical resource but a living entity that embodies whakapapa, identity and spiritual well-being (Durie, 1998; Lipsham, 2023). Practices such as returning the placenta to the earth and reciting karakia affirm interconnectedness, reminding us of our obligations of care and guardianship expressed through kaitiakitanga (Lipsham, 2023). Such principles extend beyond environmental stewardship; they sustain cultural continuity, strengthen whānau and hapū cohesion and provide pathways to healing (Simmonds, 2015; Rameka et al., 2023). In this way, the enduring connection to whenua remains central to te ao Māori and to the restoration of collective well-being.

4 - Te Hītori O Te Whenua - The History of The Land

The name Rangī-ao-whia, according to our elders, comes from the rich lands of the district being fertilised in the waters not only of the nearby swamps and creeks, but particularly by the rain from the 'clouds that course (aowhia) across the sky (Rangī).' (Roa, Wilson, & Neha, 2020)

During the mid-nineteenth century, Rangiaowhia emerged as a flourishing centre of Māori economic and cultural life. Inhabited predominantly by members of iwi (extended kinship groups) Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū, Rangiaowhia was distinguished not only by its agricultural productivity and strategic location but also because it was central to the burgeoning Kīngitanga movement.

Rangiaowhia holds particular ancestral significance to my whānau, as it is the birthplace of my great-great-grandmother, Mere Tupara, who was born there in 1824. It is believed her father was Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, a paramount chief, would later become the first Māori King in 1858, a role that symbolised a collective Māori response to land alienation and marginalisation.

Prior to European presence in Aotearoa, Māori societal structures did not centre around a singular sovereign authority; rather, individual iwi and hapū functioned independently, each guided by their own Rangatira (elders) and tikanga (custom). However, following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), the influx of British settlers led to systemic exclusion of Māori from political influence, and growing pressure from the Crown for Governor Grey to acquire Māori land by any means necessary. It is evident that the decision to invade Waikato had been reached prior to 24 June 1863. On that date, Premier Alfred Domett prepared a memorandum outlining the agreed proposals, in which Governor Grey and his ministers finalised plans for military operations, the confiscation of land, and the removal of what they termed “hostile natives” from Auckland’s southern districts (O'Malley, 2013).



Figure 2 - (Left) Aotearoa New Zealand location map showing Waipā District. (Right) Waipā District map showing the location of Rangiaowhia.

In 1856, Iwikau Te Heuheu of Ngāti Tūwharetoa convened an assembly of representatives from iwi across the country at Pūkawa, on the western shore of Lake Taupō. This hui, known as 'Hīnana ki uta, Hīnana ki tai' ('Seach the land, search the sea'), was held to deliberate the establishment of a Māori Kingship. Te Heuheu nominated Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, a highly esteemed Rangatira (esteemed leader, chief) of Waikato, as the most suitable candidate for the role of King. Following extensive discussion on the formation of a unified Māori leadership and the selection of a representative figure, in 1858 Pōtatau Te Wherowhero was established as Kīngi. Following Te Wherowhero's appointment, Rangiaowhia became a target of British Colonial forces (Gorst, 1864)



Figure 3 - Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, painted by George Angas. Alexander Turnbull Library, PUBL-0014-44

According to Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Maniapoto kaumatua Dr Tom Roa, there were at least seven marae in the area, indicating that the population of Rangiaowhia was far larger than just a handful of residents. Māori and Pākehā lived side by side, working together in the local industries, worshipped together in the churches and often intermarried. Records from the Catholic mission, later taken to Notre Dame in France by Father Jean Pezant, a French Marist priest who led the mission in Rangiaowhia until 1864 (Archdiocese of Wellington, 2013), showed that in the three years prior to the massacre of 1864, there were approximately 5,000 baptisms in the parish. That figure represents only the Catholic baptisms in the district, suggesting Rangiaowhia was not a small settlement; it was a thriving township with a substantial population (T. Roa, personal communication, November 14, 2025). Rangiaowhia was a prosperous and thriving township, complete with stables and even a racecourse. The surrounding land was exceptionally fertile, with miles of cultivated fields producing a variety of crops, including about 450 acres of wheat fields that were processed into flour in the mills constructed to the north and east of the settlement between 1849 – 1855 (Cowen, 1922).

With the significant agricultural output, Rangiaowhia became a major supplier of goods and fresh produce. Canoes transported these products along waterways as far away as Auckland, supplying communities of European settlers. Between 1849–52, shipments of produce from Rangiaowhia were even dispatched overseas, reaching markets as distant as Melbourne, Australia and San Francisco in California (Roa, Wilson, & Neha, 2020).

Governor Grey faced mounting pressure to acquire additional lands for European settlement, with the fertile and strategically valuable Waikato region becoming a target for invasion. Although military preparations were necessary, Grey also sought to

fabricate a narrative of imminent risk against Europeans in the Auckland region by Māori, selectively presenting contrived evidence to the Colonial Office that emphasised the perceived threat, in an effort to justify the incursion under the guise of safety and defence. (O'Malley, 2013; GBPP, 1864 [3277]). O'Malley (2016) notes that Grey actively circulated rumours and letters implying Māori hostility, despite the absence of any credible evidence. To legitimise the invasion of Waikato, Governor Grey employed a strategy of fabricating serious allegations against Māori leaders to justify pre-emptive military action. An example was Grey's allegation that Te Ākitai chief Ihaka Takanini was plotting a large-scale massacre of Europeans. Acting on this claim, imperial and colonial troops raided Ihaka's village at Kirikiri on 16 July 1863, arresting him along with twelve other men, seven women and three children. As later acknowledged by Crown officials, subsequent ministerial admissions revealed that the absence of any legal foundation for these arrests (Sewell, 1864, as cited in O'Malley, 2016; O'Malley, 2016; GBPP, 1864 [3277]). The Attorney General 'twice advised that there was no evidence to establish any criminal charge against them'. (Sewell, 1864, as cited in O'Malley, 2016). Tragically, several detainees died during their unlawful imprisonment (O'Malley, 2016).

Episodes such as these illustrate how fabricated claims, like the supposed imminent attack by Rewi Maniapoto when in fact he was attending a tangi in Taupo, were used to portray Māori as an existential threat and justify pre-emptive military action (O'Malley, 2016). O'Malley explains that on 4 July 1863 Grey forwarded the British government a collection of letters intended to substantiate claims that Auckland faced imminent attack by Māori (O'Malley, 2013). According to O'Malley, Grey used these letters to construct "a narrative of looming danger" despite knowing that the decision to invade the Waikato had already been made (O'Malley, 2013; O'Malley, 2016). However, of the eighteen letters he cited, only three predated 24 June – the date at which the decision to invade Waikato had been determined. Crucially, none contained verifiable evidence of any coordinated plot; rather, they reiterated unsubstantiated rumours, which the authors themselves acknowledged were unsupported (O'Malley, 2013). O'Malley further notes that Grey's reliance on rumours reveals a deliberate strategy to legitimise military action through amplified, unfounded fears (O'Malley, 2016).

To Governor Grey, the Kingitanga movement represented a separatist threat that undermined British control, particularly because of the economic and political strength of Waikato Māori. Their prosperity, fertile lands, and self-sufficiency made the region a powerful centre of Māori autonomy (O'Malley, 2016; O'Malley, 2013; Cowan, 1922). The British agenda was to obstruct Māori sovereignty and facilitate the transfer of land into colonial ownership at any cost (O'Malley, 2016; Te Ara – Rangiaowhia).

Peaceful Māori communities living north of Waikato in Tāmāki Makaurau (Auckland) became the deliberate focus of Governor Grey's master plan for marginalisation, expulsion and land confiscation (O'Malley, 2016). It was never about the safety of European settlers. On the contrary, it was about land acquisition and control (O'Malley, 2013; GBPP, 1864 [3277]). By early July 1863, the invasion plans were all but finalised, and records show that the conspiracy between Grey and Lieutenant General Duncan Cameron was 'intended to clear the country north of the Waikato River of all disaffected natives, by surprising their settlements, making prisoners of the inhabitants, or driving them into the interior (Gamble, 1863, as cited in O'Malley, 2013)

On 9 July 1863, Māori communities in South Auckland were served with a stark ultimatum: Pledge their allegiance to the British Crown or face expulsion and the loss of their homes and land.

All persons of the native race living in the Manukau District and the Waikato frontier are hereby required immediately to take the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, and to give up their arms to an officer appointed by the Government for that purpose. Natives who comply will be protected. Natives refusing to do so are hereby warned forthwith to leave the district aforesaid and retire to Waikato beyond Mangatāwhiri. In case of their not complying with this order they will be ejected. (GBPP, 1864 [3277], p. 36)

Many of the Māori affected by this proclamation were originally from Waikato. Their deep ties to the land and loyalty to the people who remained there compelled them to return, determined to fight alongside their whānau or die with them. As O'Malley notes, the elders, filled with grief at leaving the place where they had previously lived in peace, chose to make the heartbreaking decision to go (O'Malley, 2016). O'Malley (2013) further records that many of these displaced Māori were long-standing protectors and providers for Auckland settlers, making their forced departure profoundly distressing and highlighting that their return south was driven by whakapapa commitment rather than hostility.

As a result, the first 'rebels' were born out of injustice. As was aptly noted by Henry Sewell in his journal entries,

This expatriation of the whole families and tribes was prematurely to drive them into open rebellion. ... Upon the whole, I am surprised at their moderation. What would have been said or done by a mob of Englishmen and their wives and families turned out of house and home without warning and set adrift with arms in their hands to starve. Such has been the course of dealing with the natives, and I am bound to say that beyond rumour and suspicion nothing has yet come to my knowledge to justify such severe measures (Sewell, 1864, as cited in O'Malley, 2016).

Grey continued to claim that the invasion of the Waikato was a necessity in response to violence, despite the absence of it. Grey claimed that Waikato chiefs had relatives living among the European Settlers who he labelled as 'turbulent', ironically blaming them for unrest. As O'Malley (2013) demonstrates, these accusations formed part of a wider strategy in which Grey selectively presented rumours and unverified reports to depict Māori as a threat (O'Malley, 2013). Kīngitanga representatives were eager to avoid war; O'Malley (2016) notes that prior to the invasion, Waikato leaders attempted re-open communication channels, however, Grey and his ministers had already made the decision to invade the Waikato and continued weaving together lies and deceit, a plan that led to inevitable tragedy (O'Malley, 2016).

Having pre-emptively requested the deployment of 12,000 troops, a fleet of gunboats and the recruitment of militia from Auckland, as well as the goldfields of Otago and Australia, British forces, under the command of Lieutenant General Duncan Cameron, crossed the Mangatāwhiri River, invading the Waikato on 12 July 1863. (Te Ara Wai, n.d.) O'Malley (2016) further confirms that Grey had already sought significant military reinforcements and naval support well before hostilities commenced, demonstrating that these plans were strategic rather than reactive. According to whānau oral history, my great-great-grandfather, Piri Turner, was an experienced canoe pilot who regularly transported produce from the Waipā region to Auckland, and that he was later coerced by Crown forces during the Waikato wars to pilot British gunboats under threat of never seeing his family again.

On 17 July 1863, Māori warriors mounted a determined defence of the Koheroa Ridge against the British advance. However, faced with sustained bayonet assault, they were eventually driven off the ridgeline. In the aftermath, the British forces then constructed redoubts, securing their position as they prepared to advance southward (Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

As many as 1,000 warriors had gathered in the formidable Meremere Pā, overlooking the Waikato River as the British Crown forces executed strategic manoeuvres, sailing past in the steam-powered gunboats 'Avon' and 'Pioneer', accompanied by four armoured barges (Cowan, 1922; Wai 898 K36(b)). Māori fired an antiquated cannon at the passing vessels, however, they were unable to inflict any significant damage (Wai 898 K36(b); Cowan, 1922; Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

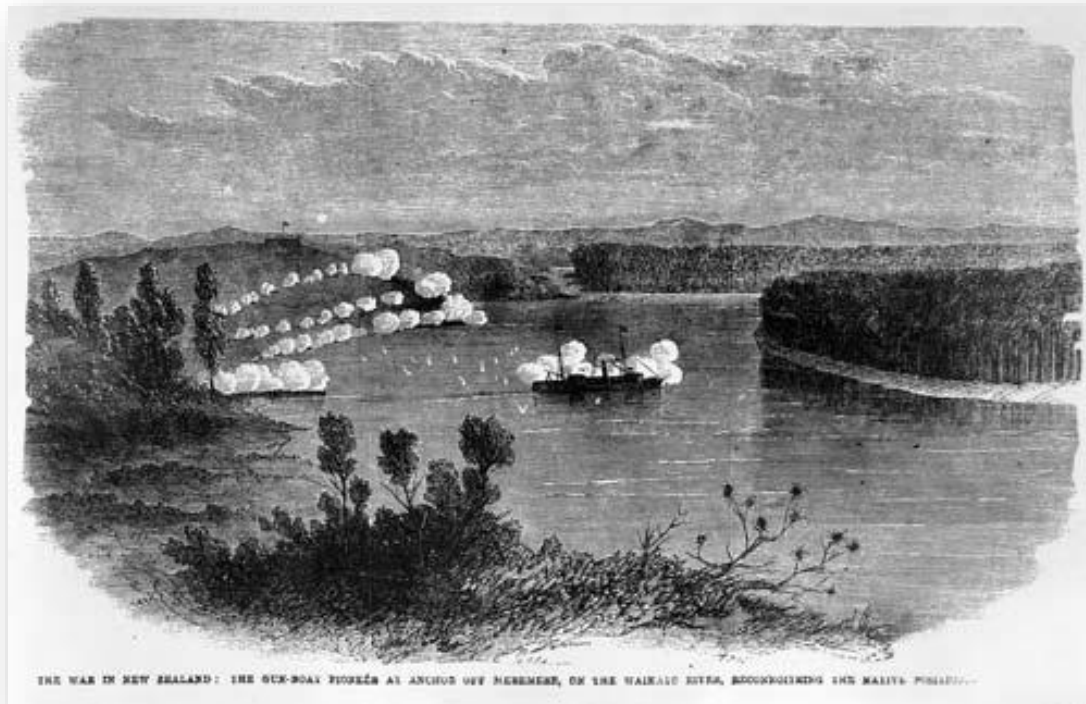


Figure 4 - Gunboat on the Waikato River. by H. Baille (Alexander Turnbull Library,A-110-006)

British Crown forces launched an attack on Rangiriri, a well-designed pā with steep banks, on 20 November 1863. The attack proved costly, with the British troops sustaining heavy casualties (Cowan, 1922; GBPP, 1864 [3277]). The following morning, Māori defenders raised a white flag, not in surrender but as a gesture to initiate a parley. On the agreement of the British, Māori emerged from the pā, however, British forces dishonourably violated the agreement and conventions of warfare, capturing more than 180 Māori warriors (Cowan, 1922; O'Malley, 2016). In the aftermath, Crown representatives wrote to the Kīngitanga leaders, criticising them for having non-combatants inhabiting the pā during battle, prompting the relocation of women, children and the elderly to the safety of Rangiaowhia (O'Malley, 2016; Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

According to contemporary and later accounts, Governor Grey indicated a willingness to enter negotiations on the provision that the British flag be raised at the headquarters of King Tāwhiao at Ngāruawāhia. Residents subsequently vacated the settlement, and on 8 December 1863 the British flag was raised at Tūrangawaewae (Cowan, 1922; Wai 898 K36(b)). Despite these indications of possible dialogue, Grey then authorised the continued southward advance of Crown forces (O'Malley, 2016; GBPP, 1864 [3277]).

After branching off from the Waikato River, the British Crown forces then steamed down the Waipā River, reaching Te Rore by January 1864. The troops remained in Te Rore for several weeks while awaiting sufficient supplies to be transported by river, before advancing the next stage of their campaign (Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

Māori established a remarkable defensive position at Pāterangi Pā, constructing a network of interconnected trenches weaving up to 10 kilometres in total length. Conscious of the losses at Rangiriri, Lieutenant-General Duncan Cameron recognised that a direct assault on Pāterangi Pā, with its extensive fortifications, would be futile. (Te Ara Wai, n.d.). Therefore, on the night of 20 February 1864, he resolved to bypass Pāterangi under the cover of darkness, leading his troops around the pā, in order to lure the Kīngitanga forces away from their fortified position. This manoeuvre was

intended to compel Māori warriors into a more exposed position, driven by the necessity of defending the inhabitants of Rangiaowhia (O'Malley, 2016).



Figure 5 - A view oriented toward what is now the project site at 61 Rangiaowhia Road. St Paul's Anglican Church to the right. Following the attack, the site was occupied by Blewitt's Redoubt, in the centre, with military tents behind protective fencing. By Edward Arthur Williams. 1864. Alexander Turnbull Library, E-349-060.

On the morning of Sunday 21 February 1864, the British Crown forces attacked the largely undefended village of Rangiaowhia, a settlement that Crown representatives had earlier identified as an appropriate place of refuge, where they had advised Kīngitanga chiefs to move non-combatants to for safety following the battle of Rangiriri (Te Ara Wai, n.d.; O'Malley, 2016). The settlement was an easy target and was chosen in part because of its rich agricultural resources, which were vital to sustaining the Kīngitanga forces. Disrupting this food supply was a strategic objective (Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

It is believed that many of the residents of Rangiaowhia had fled the settlement prior to the attack on 21 February, after the initial invasion of the Waikato, recognising that control of fertile lands and food supply were the real objective of the Crown operations (O'Malley, 2016; Wai 898 K36(b)). The troops that stormed Rangiaowhia on this day represented one of the most powerful, best-equipped, and highly trained forces of the period, pitted against unarmed women, children and the elderly (O'Malley, 2016; Te Ara Wai, n.d.). Disrupting Rangiaowhia's grain and produce networks was an explicit strategic objective (O'Malley, 2016; Cowan, 1922). As characterised by Ngāti Apakura kaumātua Dr Tom Roa, the attack is more accurately described as an "atrocious" (Roa, Wilson, & Neha, 2020; T. Roa, personal communication, 14 November 2025), a view consistent with historical accounts (O'Malley, 2016; Te Ara Wai, n.d.).

Some general-audience accounts describe British troops as arriving "unexpectedly" at Rangiaowhia; however, documentary and eyewitness evidence indicates planning. The Crown troops, under the command of Cameron, bypassed Pāterangi and advanced instead to Rangiaowhia (O'Malley, 2016), which Crown representatives had earlier identified as a refuge for non-combatants after

Rangiriri and on that understanding, women, children and the elderly relocated there (O'Malley, 2021; Te Ara Wai, n.d.). Claims that "Rangiaowhia's fighting men were still nearby at Pāterangi" (*The Fight at Rangiaowhia*, n.d.) can imply a defensive force was in the vicinity; however, contemporary evidence indicates that the main body of "fighting men", anticipating engagement at Pāterangi Pā, were positioned more than 16km away, leaving the settlement largely undefended.

Eyewitness material also challenges the view that fatal fires were accidental. Multiple accounts, summarised in O'Malley (2016) and in the Wai 898 record, describe more than one building burning and indicate deliberate ignition of structures with occupants inside. Notably, G. F. von Tempsky's narrative refers to flames spreading from one whare to another; his testimony is often considered credible because, as a Crown officer hostile to Māori, he had no inclination to favour them in his reporting (O'Malley, 2016; Wai 898).

Evidence is clear that the 21 February 1864 attack on Rangiaowhia was a deliberate move past Pāterangi toward a settlement identified as a refuge for non-combatants, many of whom were occupied with ordinary Sunday routines (O'Malley, 2016; Te Ara Wai, n.d.), rather than violence triggered by the death of a soldier.

Following the massacre at Rangiaowhia, Māori forces regrouped at Hairini Ridge, hastily constructing defensive works before being driven back by British artillery and cavalry. (Cowan, 1922; O'Malley, 2016). On 23 February 1864, Crown troops advanced on Kihikihi, burning *Hui Te Rangiora*, a carved meeting house central to tribal governance (O'Malley, 2016). In response, iwi from across Te Waka o Maui (South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand) unified to fortify Ōrākau Pā, though it remained incomplete when British forces surrounded it on 31 March (Te Ara Wai, n.d.; Cowan, 1922). Despite fierce resistance, the defenders, who were outnumbered and short on food and water (O'Malley, 2016; Wai 898 K36(b)), held out for three days until artillery and grenades breached the pā (Cowan, 1922). On 2 April, survivors attempted a breakout toward Pūniu River, only to be pursued and slaughtered (O'Malley, 2016; GBPP, 1864 [3277]). Those who escaped into what became known as Te Rohe Pōtae (the King Country) faced a future in exile that lasted for generations (Te Ara Wai, n.d.; O'Malley, 2016).

Once a place of profound significance to Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū, Rangiaowhia was devastated by the invasion, and 1.2 million acres of land was confiscated under the *Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863* and the *New Zealand Settlement Act 1864* (Waitangi Tribunal, 1999; O'Malley, 2016). The language of the *Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863*, claiming Māori 'committed murders...pillaged homesteads and burnt and destroyed property', appears far more reflective of the actions of the British Crown forces than of the defensive measures taken by Māori (O'Malley, 2016; GBPP, 1864 [3277]; Cowan, 1922; Belich, 2001).

Ngāti Apakura, once a prominent iwi, lost their lands and much of their mana following the invasion of Rangiaowhia (O'Malley, 2016; Belich, 2001; Waitangi Tribunal, 1999). Many sought refuge within Te Rohe Pōtae, living under the protection of Kingitanga and Ngāti Maniapoto's confederation (O'Malley, 2016; *Waitangi Tribunal*, 1999), while others dispersed to regions such as Tauranga and Tāmaki Makaurau, with a significant number relocating to Taupō (Cowan, 1922). Among them was the Rangatira Te Wano, who died during the arduous journey after pausing near the summit of Titiraupenga maunga to take a final look at his ancestral whenua and reflect on all that was lost. He was laid to rest there in a cave. His cousin Rangiamoa later composed the lament *E Pā Tō Hau* in remembrance of Te Wano and all that was lost in the massacre. The lament's haunting words convey the grief of exile and foreshadow the future reality for Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū: '*He iwi whenua kore, he tūrangawaewae kore*' – 'A people with no land, no place to stand' (Roa, Wilson, & Neha, 2020; O'Malley, 2016; Waitangi Tribunal, 1999).

For 160 years, the people of Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū were a people with no land, no place to stand, living in diaspora, scattered throughout the country and world, living among other iwi or assimilating into pākehā society and losing the connections to whānau, te ao Māori, te reo Māori and whenua - their heritage.

In 2021, a 10-acre parcel of land adjacent to St Pauls Church, situated at the historic site of the former Rangiaowhia settlement, was placed on the market. Despite concerted efforts, the bid submitted by Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū was unsuccessful. However, Archbishop Philip Richardson subsequently initiated discussions with the successful purchaser, and through private negotiations was able to secure the acquisition of the property by the Anglican Diocese.

On 21 February 2024, 160 years after the events that irrevocably altered the lives of so many, a commemorative ceremony was held at 61 Rangiaowhia Road to acknowledge a significant gift of land made to Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū, by the Anglican Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki. This gesture, framed as an act of restorative justice, sought to address the historical failure of the Anglican Bishop, George Augustus Selwyn to guarantee the protection of the non-combatants at Rangiaowhia. For the first time in over a century and a half, the people of Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetū have regained tūrangawaewae (a place to stand) and a whenua with which to reconnect after generations of disconnection. As poignantly expressed by kaumātua Tom Roa, “We will shed tears of joyful reconnection not painful separation.”

5 - Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review positions the study of reconnection to ancestral whenua within existing scholarship, exploring intersections between cultural identity, architectural planning, and policy to inform Māori aspiration for housing and holistic well-being.

In te ao Māori, whenua is understood as both physical land and a vital source of life, sustaining relationships between people, whakapapa, and guardianship of the environment (Durie, 1998; Kawharu, 2000; Royal, n.d.). Hapū and iwi maintain unbreakable genealogical relationships to ancestral whenua, (Te Rito, 2007; Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021), though these connections have been profoundly disrupted by colonisation (Durie, 1998). Reconnection to whenua can be achieved through contemporary pathways, including social, cultural, and design-led approaches aimed at renewing and strengthening these relationships (Brown, 2009; Awatere et al., 2017). This connection is vital to Māori well-being, as it strengthens identity, cultivates whanaungatanga, upholds kaitiakitanga, and promotes intergenerational healing, (Durie, 1998; Kawharu, 2000; Lipsham, 2023; Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021), influencing both present life and future development.

This review is structured by theme, starting with an analysis of papakāinga principles and comparable co-housing frameworks that translate collective living and manaakitanga into contemporary practice. Second, it examines planning, legal, and financing settings that enable or constrain development on Māori land. Third, it considers scholarship on reconnection as a restorative practice, including intergenerational well-being and justice-oriented approaches.

The review identifies critical gaps, especially in the integration of kaupapa Māori principles within architectural and planning approaches and proposes a foundation for strategies that enable enduring reconnection to ancestral land.

Cultural Significance of Whenua

As outlined in previous section *Kōrero Tuku Iho – Traditions*, Māori conceive whenua as a living ancestor (Papatūānuku), grounding identity, obligation and intergenerational relationship. This cosmological framing positions reconnection as a practice that renews mauri and tūrangawaewae.

This relationship is articulated through key Māori concepts. Whakapapa frames genealogical relationships among people, land, and non-human entities; mauri embodies the life force inherent in all things, and kaitiakitanga signals intergenerational duties of care. Rather than a simplified form of 'guardianship', kaitiakitanga operates as an intergenerational socio-environmental ethic that sustains mauri and ecological integrity. (Kawharu, 2000; Nolan, 2022).

Contemporary interpretations show kaitiakitanga applied broadly, spanning ecological care and heritage protection, reflecting its comprehensive scope as a Māori ethic of responsibility (Nolan, 2022). At the same time, its institutional and school-based normalisation has prompted some iwi to argue that kaitiakitanga remains the rightful domain of Māori. Complementing this, tūhonotanga (attachment) captures reconnection as a continuous practice of restoration – binding individuals and communities to culture, whenua, and cosmos for holistic well-being (Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021).

Many Māori scholars highlight that well-being (Hauora) is inseparable from whenua. Durie's work on Māori development and self-determination positions cultural affirmation and environmental participation as critical determinants of health and flourishing, reinforcing that sustained relationships with whenua reinforce identity, collective strength, and future autonomy (Durie, 1998). In the built environment, Brown's history of Māori architecture demonstrates how structures and special practices materialise cosmology – embedding indigenous principles into space so that ritual, and care (manaaki, kaitiakitanga) are woven into

everyday life (Brown, 2009). These perspectives converge on a simple proposition: reconnection to ancestral whenua revitalises mauri, strengthens whanaungatanga, and enables intergenerational healing, providing a culture and ethical foundation for contemporary housing and papakāinga development (Brown, 2009; Durie, 1998; Kawharu, 2000).

Historical Context of Disconnection

The alienation of Māori from whenua was a deliberate outcome of colonisation, enacted through legislation and institutional mechanisms that dismantled communal ownership and eroded cultural continuity (O'Malley, 2016; Gilling, 1994; Walker, 1990). Early confiscations under the *Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863* and the *New Zealand Settlements Act 1864* targeted iwi deemed “rebellious”, resulting in the loss of millions of acres of fertile land (Waitangi Tribunal, 1999; O'Malley, 2016; Belich, 2001). These acts not only dispossessed Māori economically but also severed whakapapa-based relationships with whenua, which were central to identity and collective well-being (Durie, 1998; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011).

The establishment of the Native Land Court in 1865 intensified this process by individualising land titles, replacing communal ownership with fragmented individually owned parcels (O'Malley, 2016). This shift aligned Māori land tenure with European property norms, facilitating large-scale acquisition by settlers and the Crown. Belich (2001) argues that these policies facilitated the transition of Māori from collective landholders to a rural underclass, undermining indigenous governance structures and resource management practices.

The socio-economic consequences were profound. Dispossession restricted access to economic opportunities, entrenched poverty, and accelerated significant urban migration throughout the 20th century (Walker, 1990). Cultural impacts are equally significant: the loss of ancestral land disrupted practices of kaitiakitanga and whanaungatanga, weakening intergenerational transmission of tikanga and mātauranga Māori (Durie, 1998). As the Waitangi Tribunal (2011) notes, these processes fractured the spiritual and genealogical bonds that are central to Māori identity and cultural continuity, leaving enduring legacies of trauma and inequality.

Scholars emphasise that land alienation was not merely a material loss but a systemic assault on Māori cosmology and social organisation. O'Malley (2016) frames this as “cultural dislocation”, where whenua, conceived as a living entity, was commodified, severing its role as a source of mauri and collective resilience. This historical context is critical for understanding contemporary efforts to reconnect with ancestral whenua, as it situates current housing and development challenges within a legacy of structural dispossession.

Contemporary Challenges and Barriers

Despite growing interest in papakāinga and Māori-led housing initiatives, significant structural and regulatory barriers continue to constrain development on ancestral land. Legal and planning frameworks remain a primary obstacle. Historically, the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953* entrenched zoning practices that restricted building on Māori land, often imposing minimum lot sizes and coverage rules that were incompatible with collectively owned titles (Lysnar et. al., 2016). These constraints persist in contemporary district plans, where papakāinga provisions vary widely and frequently require resource consents, adding cost and barriers to the consent process (Te Puni Kōiri, 2024). Whenua with complex ownership structures compounds these challenges, as fragmented titles necessitate unanimous agreement among shareholders, slowing decision-making and limiting access to finance (Office of the Auditor General, 2011).

Housing inequities further exacerbate these issues. Colonisation and subsequent urban migration disrupted traditional settlement patterns, concentrating Māori in low-income urban areas with limited housing security (Walker, 1990). Today, Māori remain

disproportionately represented in overcrowded and substandard housing, with homeownership rates significantly below the national average (Lysnar et al., 2016). These disparities reflect systemic barriers to capital accumulation and access to mortgage finance, stemming from historical dispossession and ongoing systemic discrimination.

Financial and infrastructural constraints are among the most pressing impediments to papakāinga development. Conventional lending institutions often view communally owned Māori land as high-risk due to its inalienable status under *Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993*, restricting collateral options (Office of the Auditor General, 2011). While initiatives such as Kāinga Whenua loans aim to bridge this gap, uptake remains limited due to strict eligibility requirements and complex governance structures (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024). Infrastructure provision, particularly water, wastewater, and roading, adds further obstacles, as many ancestral blocks are in rural areas where councils often mandate expensive upgrades before granting building consents (Lysnar et al., 2016). Compounding these challenges, up to one-third of Māori whenua is landlocked – lacking practical access without neighbour consent or costly legal processes – severely hindering development potential (Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa, 2025; RNZ, 2026).

These barriers illustrate how planning systems and financial structures continue to privilege individualised land ownership and urban-centric development models, marginalising Māori aspirations for collective living. Addressing these constraints requires not only technical solutions but also a paradigm shift in policy and practice, embedding kaupapa Māori principles within planning frameworks and creating equitable pathways for financing and infrastructure delivery. Without such systemic change, efforts to reconnect whānau with ancestral whenua through papakāinga will remain constrained by legacies of colonisation and systemic inequity.

Papakāinga and Co-Housing Models

Traditional papakāinga are hapū-based settlement forms grounded in whakapapa, ahi kā (continuous occupation), and collective stewardship of whenua, where intergenerational living supported shared resource use, customary governance, and mutual care (Kake, 2019; Kawharu, 2010). Historically dynamic rather than static, papakāinga adapted to seasonal food systems and tribal alliances, embedding tikanga into spatial arrangements (marae, kāinga clusters, cultivations) that sustained whanaungatanga and manaakitanga (Awatere et al., 2017; Tapsell, 2002). Colonisation disrupted these ecologies – through alienation, tenure fragmentation, and planning controls – limiting the capacity for communal occupation of ancestral land, though these principles persisted as a guiding framework for cultural continuity and well-being (Kake, 2019; Williams, 2015).

Contemporary practice reframes papakāinga as kaupapa-led, collectively governed housing that integrates cultural, social, and ecological outcomes. Projects commonly combine multi-generational dwellings, shared amenities (wharenuī, māra kai), and co-governance structures aligned to tikanga and land trusts, while employing sustainable and regenerative design: passive design, water and wastewater autonomy, māra and rongoā landscapes, and materials/land care that enhance mauri and kaitiakitanga (Awatere et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2023). Framing well-being holistically, these models align with *Te Whare Tapa Whā*, reinforcing taha wairua (spiritual well-being), whānau, hinengaro (consciousness), and tinana (physical well-being) through place-based living and cultural practice (Durie, 1998; Kake, 2019).

International co-housing provides a useful comparison to papakāinga. Typically, resident-led and medium-density, co-housing clusters private dwellings around substantial shared facilities (common house, laundries, guest rooms, gardens), with participatory decision-making and design that encourages everyday social contact (McCamant & Durrett, 2011; Sanguinetti, 2014). Evidence shows co-housing can reduce social isolation, support ageing in place, and lower per-capita resource use through shared infrastructure and cooperative norms (Jarvis, 2011; Sanguinetti, 2014). European precedents (e.g., Danish co-

housing, German *Baugruppen*) demonstrate how enabling policy, cooperative finance, and flexible planning provisions can facilitate large-scale collective development (Fromm, 2012; BBSR, 2015).

Shared features include collaborative governance, communal amenities, and sustainability aspirations; however, papakāinga are distinguished by their connection to ancestral land, whakapapa-based eligibility, and tikanga-led processes, elements that define ownership structures, occupation arrangements, and stewardship responsibilities (Kawharu, 2010; Kake, 2019). In contrast, co-housing is typically open-membership and market-adjacent, relying on cooperative or strata legal forms and finance (Fromm, 2012; McCamant & Durrett, 2011). These distinctions are critical for policy adaptation: supporting papakāinga often requires recognition of customary governance, tailored infrastructure for rural contexts, and planning tools designed for collective tenure, whereas co-housing typically operates within mainstream urban frameworks (Awatere et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2023).

For cultural reconnection and well-being, papakāinga can restore daily relationships with whenua, marae, and hapū life, strengthening identity, language, and intergenerational care, key determinants of mauri ora (Durie, 1998; Kake, 2019). Co-housing offers complementary benefits such as social support, affordability through shared facilities, and a lower environmental footprint; however, lack inherent cultural sovereignty afforded by returning to ancestral whenua (Jarvis, 2011; Sanguinetti, 2014). Together, these models illustrate how collective living, when governance, tenure, and design are aligned, can deliver strong, socially rich, and regenerative communities.

Reconnection as Healing

The literature on intergenerational trauma highlights the enduring effects of colonisation on Māori well-being. Dispossession of land and cultural suppression shattered whakapapa-based relationships, creating legacies of socio-economic marginalisation and psychological harm that persist across generations (Haami et al., 2024; Russell, 2015). These effects go beyond material deprivation, reaching into wairua, identity, and collective resilience. Scholars argue that reconnection to whenua offers a restorative pathway – one that addresses structural inequities while enabling cultural renewal (Durie, 1998; Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021).

Returning to ancestral whenua nurtures identity and belonging through the revitalisation of whakapapa links and tikanga-based practices such as manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga. Kaupapa Māori research frames this process as integral to mauri ora, the holistic state of well-being encompassing physical, spiritual, and relational dimensions (Durie, 1998). Engagement with whenua through papakāinga development or cultural projects strengthens whanaungatanga, providing spaces for intergenerational knowledge exchange and collective decision-making (Kake, 2019). These practices counteract the isolating effects of urbanisation and individualised ownership systems, restoring communal modes of living that align with Māori values.

Restorative justice literature further situates land reconnection as a mechanism for healing historical trauma. Lamusse (2025) argues that justice processes must extend beyond compensation to include structural and cultural restoration, with whenua central to repairing harm. Similarly, *He Kokonga Whare* research emphasises that trauma recovery for Māori is inseparable from re-establishing relationships with land, ngare (kin), and culture (Haami et al., 2024). The literature points to a shared conclusion: reconnection is fundamentally transformative, allowing Māori to reassert self-determination, regenerate mauri, and strengthen resilience for generations to come.

Landscape of Scholarship and Identified Research Needs

Despite a growing body of work on Māori housing and papakāinga, current scholarship often isolates planning, governance, and cultural considerations, rarely connecting these to architectural design and special strategies. There is a lack of research

illustrating how Māori cultural values can inform architectural decision-making across all stages, from concept and special planning through detailed design and occupancy, to deliver housing that balances cultural integrity with contemporary needs (Awatere & Rolleston, 2016; Kake, 2019). Likewise, co-housing literature offers insights into governance and sustainability, yet it seldom addresses indigenous contexts where whakapapa and tikanga shape eligibility, tenure, and collective decision-making (Berghan, 2021). While policy studies outline planning constraints and opportunities, they rarely address design-led solutions that translate these provisions into practical outcomes on Māori land (Lysnar et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024).

Recent Māori-led scholarship has expanded understanding of papakāinga development, with each contribution highlighting different aspects of the field. Fleur Palmer's doctoral research highlights how discriminatory planning systems, colonial legislation, and institutional practices continue to restrict Māori control over whenua and constrain papakāinga development, emphasising the structural barriers that shape contemporary housing outcomes (Palmer, 2016). Jade Kake's master's research on Pehiāweri Marae presents a community-centred model of papakāinga regeneration informed by marae processes, tikanga, and hapū aspirations, demonstrating how cultural and social frameworks guide development at the local scale (Kake, 2015). *Ki Te Hau Kāinga – New Perspectives on Māori Housing Solutions* further broadens the field by analysing design principles and policy-aligned guidance for Māori housing, outlining strategic approaches that integrate Māori values with practical housing typologies and planning considerations (Hoskins, Te Nana, Rhodes, Guy, & Sage, 2002). These works provide vital insights into policy, community processes and systemic barriers.

This research applies a design-led inquiry alongside kaupapa Māori methodology to situate architectural strategies within cultural, historical, and planning policy contexts. It proposes and explores marae/papakāinga design models oriented toward reconnection with ancestral whenua, collective well-being, and practical navigation of regulatory settings, with the aim of contributing insights that may inform future work on Māori housing futures with a foundation in identity and place (Awatere & Rolleston, 2016; Kake, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024).

Conclusion

Across the literature, a clear pattern emerges showing that reconnecting to ancestral whenua is fundamental to Māori well-being, cultural continuity, and long-term collective aspirations. Research highlights how colonisation fractured whakapapa-grounded ties to land, embedded structural constraints within planning and housing regimes, and produced ongoing socio-economic and intergenerational consequences. Research on papakāinga, co-housing, and restorative approaches highlights the transformative capacity of whenua-based living to rebuild identity, renew mauri, and strengthen collective resilience. Although gaps remain in aligning kaupapa Māori with design practice, the literature makes clear that reconnecting whānau is both a cultural priority and a practical foundation for equitable, self-determined Māori housing futures.

The research I have undertaken here builds on that foundation by examining design-led approaches that support meaningful reconnection to whenua and collective well-being.

6 - Methodology

Research Philosophy

This research is grounded in a kaupapa Māori framework, with tikanga (customs) and Mātauranga (knowledge) Māori central, honouring the enduring knowledge and wisdom of our tūpuna. It is through intergenerational knowledge shared in Kōrero (narrative) with hapū members that I seek to gather insights to shape and inform both the research and the design outcomes. Within this framework, research is grounded in cultural context and must privilege Māori ways of knowing, being and relating (Mead, 2016; Smith, 2012). Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues that research has historically been entangled with imperialism and that decolonising methodologies are necessary to validate Indigenous knowledge systems and return control over knowledge production to Indigenous communities (Smith, 2012). In this sense, kaupapa Māori positions research as a vehicle for tino rangatiratanga, benefit to Māori, and the re-centring of Māori epistemologies (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006).

Accordingly, my research approach has a kaupapa Māori foundation, centred on Māori principles, values, and customary practices; prioritising Māori perspectives and emphasising the importance of Māori knowledge, traditions and lived experiences. Kaupapa Māori provides a framework that ensures engagement with hapū and creates opportunities for members' voices not merely to be heard but to be essential to the process, the goals and the outcomes. This foundation aligns with my research objectives and reflects a personal commitment to honouring my hapū and contributing to our collective well-being.

Guided by kaupapa Māori principles, the study operates within an emancipatory paradigm dedicated to social transformation, exposing Eurocentric biases in housing and architectural development and affirming Indigenous values, knowledge, and aspirations (Smith, 2012; Walker et al., 2006). Foundational literature defines kaupapa Māori research as research by, with and for Māori, grounded in principles such as self-determination, collective benefit, and culturally anchored methodologies (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006). Tikanga concepts, such as whakapapa, mana, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga, provide ethical and relational guidance across all phases of study (Mead, 2016; Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010). These commitments also respond to calls to decolonise Māori authority in research design and use (Bishop, 1998; Smith, 2012).

The theoretical framing aligns with a constructivist paradigm, informed by a relativist ontological position that recognises multiple realities shaped by cultural, social and personal contexts, and an interpretivist epistemological stance that emphasises the co-creation of knowledge through participatory and reflective methodologies.

By integrating concepts of kaitiakitanga, whakapapa and papakāinga, the research seeks sustainable, culturally affirming pathways toward reconnection and healing, focusing on development models that prioritise decolonising housing options for hapū and align with Māori aspirations for self-determination.

Insider/Outsider Research Position

I write as an insider-outsider: connected through whakapapa to Ngāti Apakura and holding tūrangawaewae, yet shaped by generational disconnection from whenua, tikanga, and reo. This “space between” position (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) required ongoing reflexivity as I engaged with participants, interpreted kōrero, and navigated a design process that was both academic and a personal journey of reconnection. While this position offers cultural attunement and access, it also carries risks of assumptions and blind spots, addressed through consistent reflective practice, kōrero with kaumātua and whanau, and alignment with tikanga such as whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga. These mechanisms ensure relational accountability and culturally attuned decision-making. Ethical governance follows Te Ara Tika; detailed procedures are outlined in Ethical Considerations.

Research Strategy

A multi-phase, qualitative, participatory and design-led strategy connects lived experience with spatial propositions for papakāinga development. Early engagement establishes hapū-defined priorities and ensures the research proceeds in ways that reflect kaupapa Māori expectations of relevance, benefit, and collective agency (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006). Subsequent phases deepen insight into cultural practices, intergenerational dynamics and design aspirations, building a rich foundation for later collaborative design work.

Design proposals function as reflective prompts that encourage kōrero, bringing forward implicit insights, and enable group reflection on spatial configurations. This research-through-design (RtD) approach treats design artefacts – such as concept diagrams, scenarios, or massing studies – as functional analytical tools with their meaning contextualised and critically discussed with participants (Zimmerman et al., 2010). Such an approach aligns with kaupapa Māori commitments to shared authority, manaakitanga, and collective well-being, and is well suited to addressing “wicked” built-environment challenges that require negotiation, iteration, and community-driven solutions (Zimmerman et al., 2010).

Research Methods

To achieve a balanced representation, purposive sampling has included participants from varied age groups, whānau clusters, and roles within the community. Referrals from initial participants will help broaden the sample to include members who may not otherwise be actively involved. Participation is voluntary with informed consent and an opt-out at any point. Informed by cultural guidance from Ko Tane Pupuke research lab supervisors and additional other cultural advisors, recruitment materials will be reviewed to ensure tikanga-appropriate language and processes, including the incorporation of whakawhanaungatanga at initial contact (Mead, 2016; Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010). These practices reflect kaupapa Māori expectations that research be initiated, governed and beneficial to Māori communities (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006).

Participation was supported through established hapū communication channels and practices, ensuring alignment with local tikanga and cultural protocols. An explicit goal is to encourage meaningful engagement that priorities inclusive participation and cultural responsiveness.

Data Collection

In addition to primary data, the study will reference prior case studies and research on papakāinga and other Indigenous co-housing principles to inform and contextualise design exploration.

Data collection comprises of:

- Questionnaires (10-15 minutes) were distributed digitally and in paper form at mare-based hui, examine participants' connection to the Waipā rohe, experiences of whakapapa, whenua and tikanga, and the impact of colonisation on cultural identity and well-being. The questionnaire further captures detailed preferences for papakāinga design, including intergenerational living, cultural spaces, household layouts, and environmental priorities reflecting kaitiakitanga and care for mauri (Mead, 2016; Pihama et al., 2002).
- Interviews (45-75 minutes) were semi-structured (and where appropriate, informal), guided by prompts on histories of whenua, experiences of housing, tikanga in the home, intergenerational aspirations, and design values (e.g., balancing communal and individual needs). With permission, interviews are audio recorded for reference, with fieldnotes to capture non-verbal cues and settings (Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2006).
- Wānanga/workshops of 2-3 hours were originally planned as key participatory components of the research, intended to centre on visual prompts and place-based mapping exercises to develop and refine design ideas. Designed as safe,

collective spaces, these wānanga were intended to enable iwi members to share experiences and aspirations and to discuss pathways toward reconnection and healing. Design artefacts would have been produced by the researcher and revisited across multiple wānanga as inquiry-based prompts for kōrero and collective reflection. However, due to delays in communication, leadership transitions within the iwi trust, the geographically dispersed locations of potential participants, and severe weather leading to a state-of-emergency declaration, opportunities for in-person engagement were limited, therefore, these wānanga unfortunately did not occur. Their intended structure aligns with co-design frameworks that emphasise collective sense-making, open dialogue, and clarity of design reasoning (Sanders & Stappers, 2008), and they remain recommended for future phases of iwi-led development.

Data Analysis

Data from interviews, surveys and wānanga artefacts was analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (RTA), following Braun and Clarke's six iterative phases of familiarisation, coding, theme development and review, definition and naming themes, and final reporting (Braun & Clarke, 2006). RTA is well suited to kaupapa Māori research as it supports co-constructed, contextually grounded meaning-making. Themes will be interpreted through key kaupapa Māori concepts (e.g., whakapapa, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga) and linked to design implications, then revisited with participants through iterative feedback to support credibility and shared interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Mead, 2016; Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006). Insights will be developed into design propositions grounded in Māori ways of knowing and oriented toward collective outcomes.

Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by Te Ara Tika's four pou – whakapapa (relationships), tika (research design), manaakitanga (cultural and social responsibility) and mana (justice and equity) – which translate tikanga into ethical decision-making across planning, recruitment, consent, data care and reporting (Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010). Ethical documentation clarified the role of iwi-appointed advisors and how mana and collective benefits are upheld (Mead, 2016; Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010).

Kaupapa Māori "community-up" ethical principles will guide everyday practice, including culturally appropriate engagement, transparent processes, Koha, shared authority and respect for local contexts (Cram, in Katoa Ltd; Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010). Māori Data Sovereignty principles will underpin data governance, with Aotearoa-based storage, controlled access and collective decision-making for data use and dissemination, consistent with the CARE Principles (Te Mana Raraunga, 2018; Carroll et al., 2020).

Participants will be provided with clear information about data use, with explicit consent sought where identification may occur. Composite accounts will be used where appropriate and culturally maintained through alignment with local kawa (ceremony), karakia (chant) and whānau support (Mead, 2016; Pūtaiora Writing Group et al., 2010).

Design outputs will be returned to the hapu in accessible formats, with authorship, acknowledgements and external dissemination subject to hapu review, reinforcing reciprocity and collective benefit (Pihama et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2006).

7 - Design Outcomes



Figure 6 – *Parihaka kāinga*, Taranaki, ca. 1886

The historical image (above), previously understood to depict the prosperous settlement of Rangiaowhia prior to the 1864 attack, and which informed the development of my concept designs, has since been identified as a photograph of the Parihaka kāinga in Taranaki. Nevertheless, the visual record it provides, including evidence of a substantial population supported by agricultural productivity, along with its built form, spatial layout, and architectural character, offered a valuable reference point for interpreting scale, function and spatial arrangements that once sustained a thriving community. The built environment represented in this image, including the dispersed clustering of raupō dwellings and the varied geometries of the roof forms, provided a foundation and inspiration for the key design decisions.

Drawing on these visual insights, the concept designs intentionally incorporate roof structures of differing heights and pitches to reflect the scattered, irregular rhythm of the raupō rooftops visible in this historical scene. To achieve this, I have adopted a series of pitched roofs in the gable-style tradition of whare construction, varying the roof angles and elevations to create a layered roofscape. This approach does not aim to reproduce historical buildings, but to reinterpret the spatial qualities in a contemporary design context, acknowledging the historical environment of Rangiaowhia while supporting the aspirations of the iwi.



Figure 7 - Wharekai Initial Perspective Sketch.



Figure 8 - Wharekai Elevations.

The wharekai is a fundamental component in the reestablishment of Ngāti Apakura and the reconnection of whānau with ancestral whenua after generations of diaspora and dislocation. As a communal space, with a foundation in tikanga Māori, the wharekai plays a vital role in restoring collective identity and supporting social, cultural and spiritual regeneration of the iwi. Providing a dedicated place where iwi members and visitors can gather, share kai, and engage in kōrero directly fulfils the principle of manaakitanga, reinforcing relationships, reciprocity, and the expression of care and respect within the community.

Beyond its ceremonial and hospitable functions, the wharekai building also responds to the iwi's aspirations for cultural revitalisation. It offers a space where traditional knowledge systems, particularly those associated with carving, weaving and other forms of traditional art, can be practised and taught to younger generations. In this way, the wharekai is not only a building but an intergenerational learning environment, supporting the continuity of Ngāti Apakura cultural expression and continuing to the broader goal of restoring mātauranga, identity and connection to place.

The staggered configuration of the floor plan was a deliberate design strategy. Aligning with the wishes of the iwi, the wharekai is oriented along the north-south axis, which allows each adjoining section of the building to step incrementally westward, maximising solar access throughout the day and solar gains in the colder months. The subtle westward shift ensures that natural light reaches a greater proportion of the interior spaces, improving thermal performance and reducing reliance on artificial lighting, in keeping with the environmentally and financially sustainable goals of the iwi. Shade sails can be installed to the western side of the building seasonally to moderate sunlight levels.

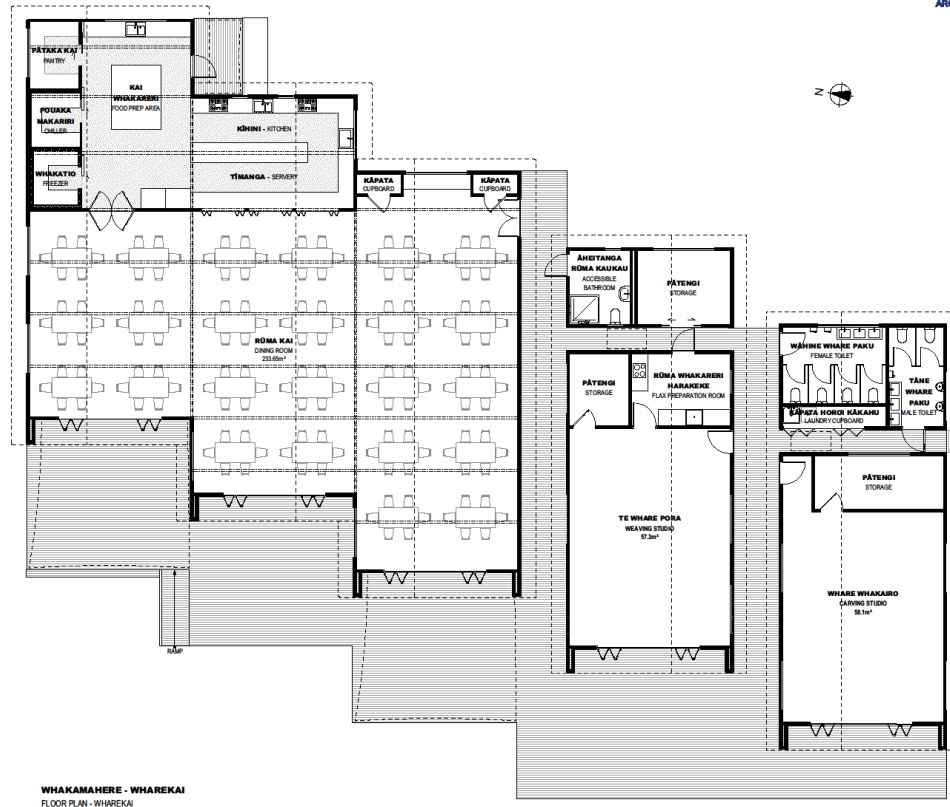


Figure 9 - Wharekai Complex Floor Plan Incorporating Whare Whakairo and Te Whare Pora.

A key principle of kaupapa Māori design is the clear separation of tapu and noa functions. Reflecting on this principle prompted a reconsideration of the relationship between the whare whakairo, whare pora, and the broader wharekai complex. Although the original design used walls to partition these spaces, further reflection suggested that a greater degree of physical separation would more appropriately uphold tikanga Māori values. The revised layout therefore separates the dining facilities, carving and weaving studios, and the ablution areas into distinct structures. To retain the visual aspect of the complex, covered open-air connections were incorporated between the buildings, creating transitional spaces that provide both accessibility and cultural separation.

Tapu and noa functions are particularly important between sleeping spaces and areas associated with food. This has been reflected in the whare design layout, where bedroom spaces are in a separate wing from the living, dining and kitchen spaces. The design also accommodates the need for temporary sleeping arrangements by incorporating partitions and doors that allow part of the living wing to be sectioned off for extended whānau when required, while still maintaining appropriate separation from communal spaces.

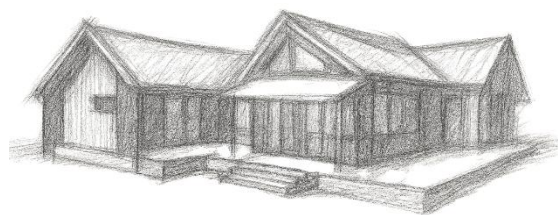


Figure 10 - Two-bedroom whare sketch.



Figure 11 - Two-bedroom whare elevations.

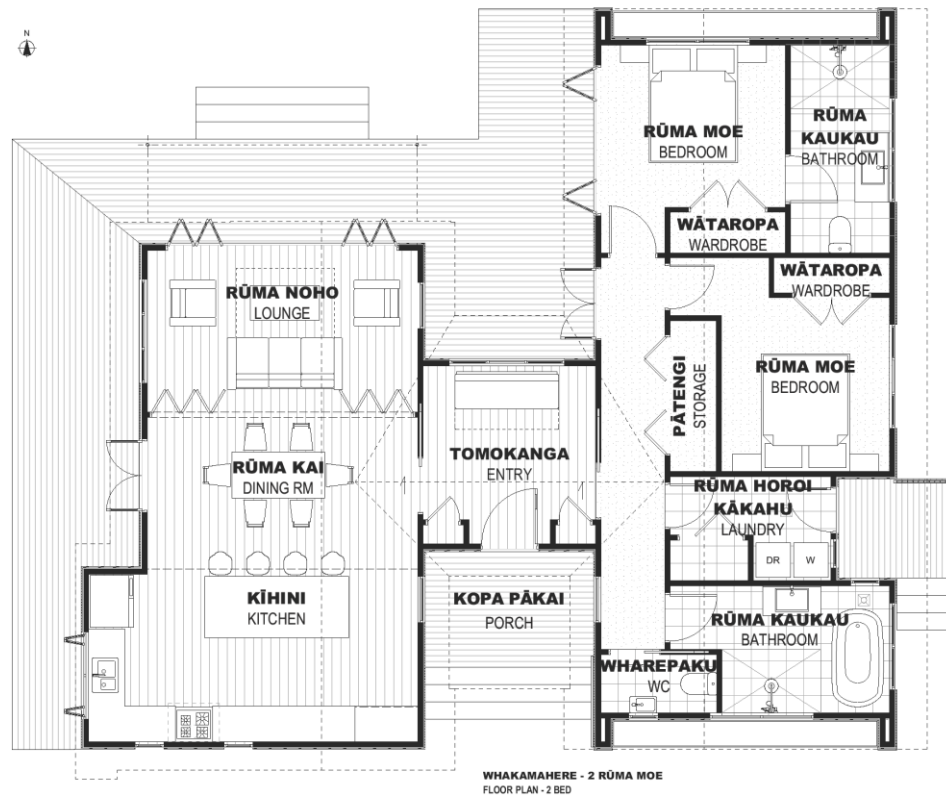


Figure 12 - Two-bedroom whare floor plan



Figure 13 – One-bedroom whare with mezzanine/loft

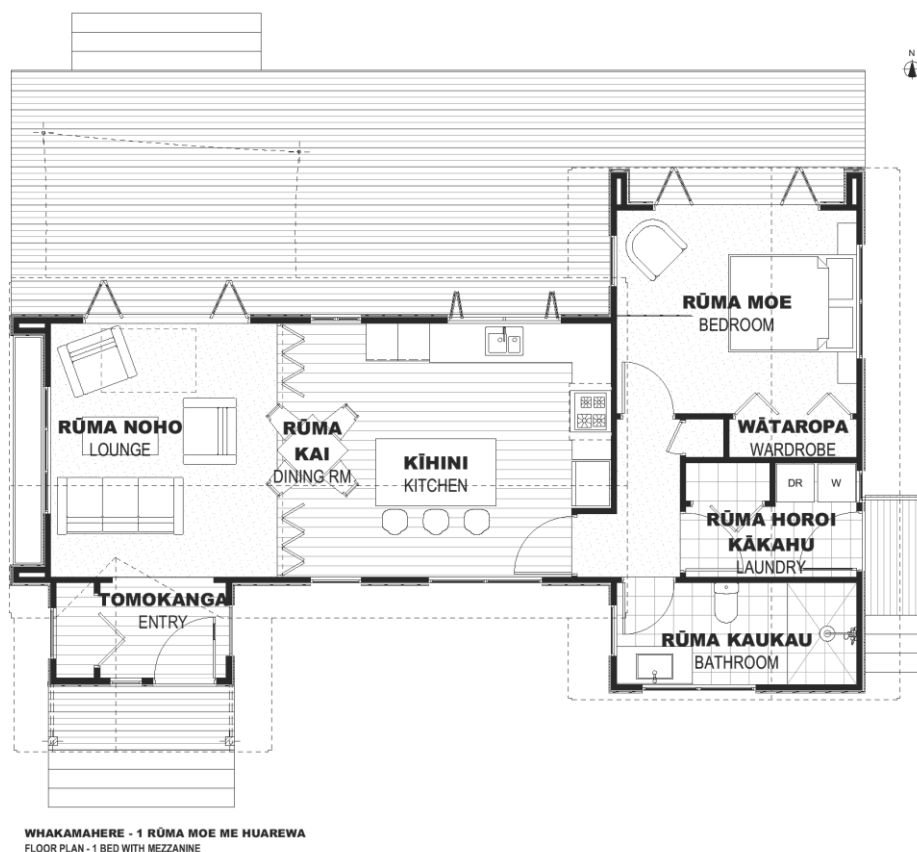


Figure 14 – One-bedroom whare floor plan

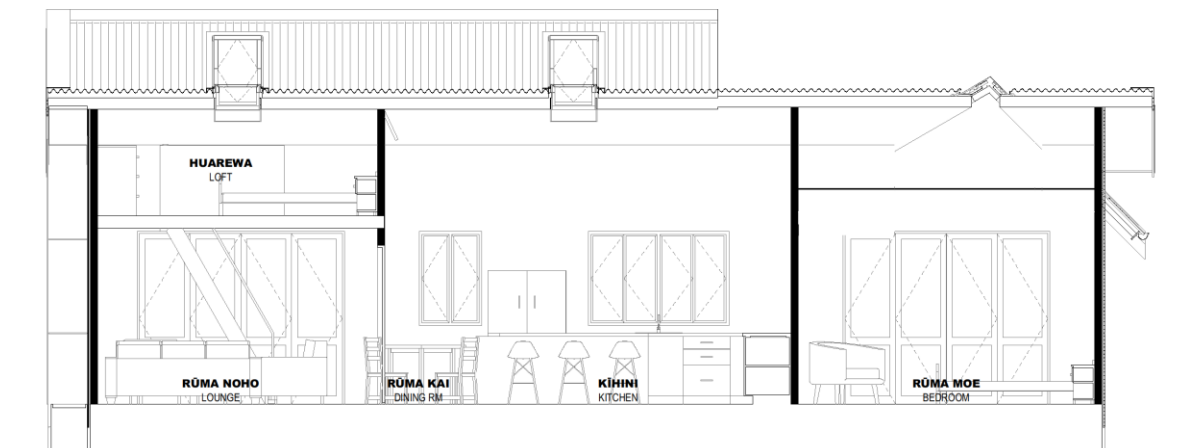


Figure 15 – One-bedroom house section. Loft above lounge accessed via loft ladder.

8 - Overview of Thesis Project

Introduction

This overview outlines the intent, context and process that shaped the artefact; a staged marae-papakāinga masterplan for Ngāti Apakura. It summarises the aims, site-specific considerations and the design development steps, linking each to iwi kōrero and kaupapa Māori criteria that guided decisions.

Aim, Scope, and Boundaries

The overarching aim of this project is to support intergenerational healing through reconnection to whenua, facilitated by a staged development of a culturally informed masterplan for Ngāti Apakura. The design seeks to restore presence, identity and well-being through the regeneration of ancestral land, enabling spaces for meeting, learning, ceremony, healing and cultural revitalisation. The project also aims to imagine future possibilities for iwi-led development that uphold mātauranga Māori, collective values and sustained resilience.

The masterplan encompasses an integrated collection of structures, landscaping features, and spatial strategies intended to advance the cultural, social, spiritual and economic well-being of Ngāti Apakura. The scope is influenced by priorities agreed to by the trust, informed by aspirations expressed by iwi members during various hui. Additional components are proposed to address identified needs and emerging opportunities that support a holistic and future-focused development pathway.



Figure 16 - Preliminary Masterplan

Proposed design elements included in the masterplan:

- Adaptive reuse of existing whare for trust offices, enabling early activation of the site.
- Completion and refurbishment of the curved barn to establish a space for wānanga or hui.
- A new wharenuī proposed on the prominent knoll as the cultural heart of the site, positioned to maximise the views to maunga.
- A wharekai complex incorporating a commercial kitchen, dining area, external access wharepaku, and small apartment-style dwellings for individuals and whānau preferring not to sleep communally in the wharenuī.
- Dedicated weaving and carving studios, spatially separated to respect tikanga around gendered learning environments.
- A healing retreat facility comprising of a modest number of accommodation rooms, a shared open-plan living/kitchen/dining space, and detached therapy rooms directly accessible from the whare.
- A landscaping strategy incorporating māra kai, rongoā plantings, fruit trees and herb and tea gardens establishes productive and restorative ecologies, complemented by native plantings to enhance biodiversity and provide resources for cultural practices such as weaving.
- A cultural repository and visitor centre fronting the western/road boundary, providing space for the protection and display of taonga, and for educating visitors about the history, tikanga, and narratives of Ngāti Apakura.
- A gift shop showcasing iwi-made arts, carvings, weaving and sculpture, contributing to cultural and economic sustainability.
- A native garden art walk, incorporating living sculptures.
- An outdoor amphitheatre, formed by terracing the natural slope for performance, gathering and mana whenua events.
- Car parking facilities, including space for tourist and charter buses.
- A birthing unit capable of accommodating up to two birthing parents, supporting revitalisation of mana wāhine, whakapapa continuity, and the return of birth to ancestral whenua.
- A small cluster of 1–3-bedroom whare, designed with flexible capacity to host visiting whānau such as mokopuna and extended relatives.
- A communal pergola offering an outdoor space for residents to gather, share kai, and strengthen social connection within the papakāinga.
- Powered sites for motorhomes and caravans, serving those attending hui, tangihanga, wānanga, or community events, and supporting members seeking semi-permanent tiny-home living options.

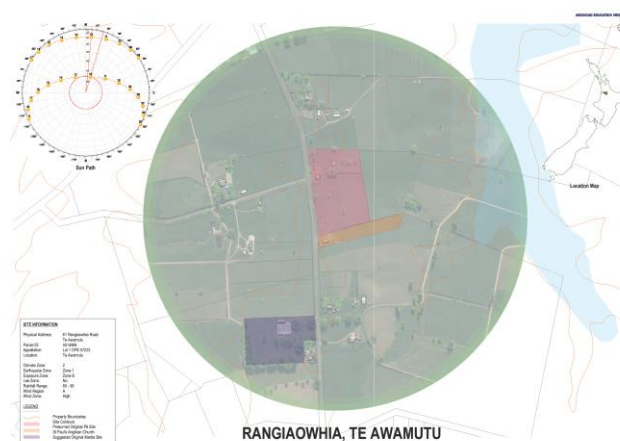


Figure 17- Rangjiaowhia site location plan.

The development is anticipated to progress in a series of staged phases, dependent on funding availability, iwi capacity, and the outcomes of land acquisition processes underway through conciliation with the Crown. The initial priority is the upgrade of existing structures, such as the whare and the curved barn, to enable immediate use for administrative and educational purposes. Subsequent stages will be sequenced to reflect financial constraint, infrastructure, consent processes and the potential acquisition of other land parcels in the area. Multiple sites will enable activities to be distributed across wider whenua, reducing spatial pressure on any single area and enabling a more adaptable long-term development pattern.

The project is informed by several practical, cultural and regulatory boundaries:

- Budgetary uncertainties, including reliance on grant funding, philanthropic support, and potential revenue-generating pathways.
- Iwi capacity, both in terms of governance workload and the availability of skilled whānau to contribute to planning, construction, and long-term management.
- Planning and regulatory frameworks, including district plan rules, building code requirements, environmental and heritage considerations and resource/building consent processes.
- Infrastructure limitations, particularly around water supply, wastewater, stormwater, roading, parking and energy systems.
- Site access and topographical challenges, including managing landscapes, protecting ecological features, and maintaining cultural sensitivities related to the landscape.
- Engagement boundaries, acknowledging that some components included in this proposal represent the researcher's design response and may not ultimately align with trust priorities or funding feasibility.

Methodological Approach

Kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga and whanaungatanga are implemented through specific design moves rather than restated as principles. Material and infrastructure choices prioritise low-impact, adaptable systems (e.g. timber subfloor construction, on-site water and wastewater strategies, and extensive native/rongoā planting) to minimise harm and enable future modification. Spatial organisation supports hosting and care through tikanga-aligned adjacencies, including external wharepaku access at the wharekai. Housing clusters and shared outdoor space encourage intergenerational proximity and everyday encounter, with circulation paths and gardens supporting reciprocity between people and whenua. Together, these decisions ensure cultural values are evidenced through functional, scalable spatial outcomes that can evolve as iwi capacity and co-governance deepen.

Design Development Narrative

A core driver of shaping the site layout was imperative to honour the spatial logic of historic Rangiaowhia, even though surviving documentation of its precise settlement patterns are limited. The few existing photographs and oral accounts indicate clusters of whare located to the south of the project site, suggesting a village form organised around multiple communal precincts rather than a single linear arrangement. Dr Roa's observation that up to seven marae once operated across the wider Rangiaowhia area highlighted the significance of marae-based organisation and reinforced the need to re-establish a central wharenuī as an anchor of reconnection, identity and cultural continuity. This became a pivotal design insight: the masterplan should not simply place buildings on land but reconstitute a spatial and relational structure that reflects the historic rhythms of community life.

Equally influential was Rangiaowhia's legacy as a major hub of food production and horticultural innovation. Incorporating extensive māra kai became non-negotiable, both as a cultural obligation and a practical expression of manaakitanga, self-sufficiency, and sustainability. This included allocating areas for kumara and potato pits, raised gardens, and shared productive

spaces capable of providing kai for whānau gatherings and future events. The settlement's famed 19th-century orchards, once producing abundant fruit, inspired the integration of fruit trees throughout the site as an explicit reconnection to that history. Rongoā planting, tea gardens, and herb gardens were further woven into spaces around the site, enabling everyday engagement with healing practices and ensuring that the landscape itself becomes an active participant in well-being. These dimensions of historical reference and cultural intention collectively informed the spatial structure of the masterplan and centred on Apakura identity.

A number of considerations arose during the design process, especially around how to support communal life while still allowing for personal privacy. This was a key factor in proposing small apartments, offering short-term accommodation options for those who prefer more individualised living over traditional shared sleeping arrangements. Across the wider site, the housing cluster was organised to encourage community cohesion, while strategic plantings will create soft visual buffers, preserving openness and whanaungatanga. Cultural protocols around kai preparation and ablutions also required careful resolution. For example, access to wharepaku at the wharekai was designed to be fully external to ensure clear separation from kitchen and dining activities, while still being easily accessible. Within the house typologies, modular planning helped maintain these relationships: living, eating and dining areas are physically separate from bathroom spaces, respecting tikanga while supporting everyday functionality.

As the design evolved, it became evident that the proposed wharekai and the associated accommodation required further consideration. The spatial, cultural, and operational implications of integrating apartments within or adjacent to the wharekai raised questions that could not be resolved through architectural judgement alone. Given the centrality of the wharekai to community life, decisions about its form, functions, and relationships to other building elements must be shaped through in-depth kōrero with iwi leaders and Apakura trustees, ensuring that the final configuration reflects culturally appropriate practice.

9 - Critical Review

Positioning

This project draws on kaupapa Māori theory, decolonising frameworks, indigenous architectural principles, relational understandings of whenua and holistic iwi development models that support cultural practice and social cohesion. Collectively, these frameworks provide both a critical lens for analysing the planning and property systems that facilitated Māori dispossession, and a constructive, design-led pathway for reconnection, cultural restoration and collective well-being. Through this lens, the project positions papakāinga not merely as a housing solution, but as an embodied expression of identity, mana, whakapapa and intergenerational responsibility (Durie, 1998; O'Malley, 2016; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011).

Kaupapa Māori Theory

Kaupapa Māori theory is not merely a cultural frame but a transformative, decolonising orientation that re-centres Māori worldviews, tikanga and relational ethics as organising logic for inquiry and action, positioning architecture as a vehicle for mana Motuhake and cultural resurgence (Durie, 1998; Walker, 1990). Within this project, kaupapa Māori provides a principled response to historical dislocation: the alienation and individualisation of whenua through 19th – 20th century legislation fractured whakapapa-based relationships and undermined Māori governance, producing enduring socio-economic and intergenerational harms that design must explicitly address (O'Malley, 2016; Waitangi Tribunal, 1999, 2011; Russell, 2015). Accordingly, reconnection to ancestral land is framed as inseparable from identity, mauri ora and collective autonomy, aligning design intent with tūhonotanga (attachment) as a practice of healing and restoration (Durie, 1998; Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021; Haami et al., 2024).

In spatial terms, this theoretical stance rejects the neutrality of space and requires that buildings, landscapes and governance systems materialise Māori cosmology, drawing on the cultural principles already defined in the Methodology.

Implementing this theory in design practice necessitates tikanga-led processes and spatial hierarchies that emphasise marae-based logics, communal-private gradients, and programme elements that sustain whanaungatanga, such as wharehau, māra kai, rongoā landscapes and spaces for wānanga, so that cultural practice, knowledge exchange and intergenerational care are structurally enabled rather than incidental (Brown, 2009; Kake, 2019; Durie, 1998).

For systemic constraints to tikanga-led design (planning/finance), see Contemporary Challenges and Collective Housing Models.

By holding cultural integrity and intergenerational obligation as first principles, kaupapa Māori theory supports design decisions that prioritise mauri enhancement, ecological reciprocity and the social infrastructures of care, reinforcing relationships between people and whenua as the basis for long-term well-being and collective resilience (Durie, 1998; Awatere et al., 2017; Bennett, Jones, & Reid, 2023).

Decolonisation Theory

Decolonisation provides the critical lens for understanding how colonisation fundamentally reshaped Māori relationships with whenua, identity, and governance. Scholarship shows that raupatu, individualisation of landholding structures and planning statutes were not isolated events but interconnected mechanisms that fragmented communal land tenure, undermined tikanga-based authority, and disrupted whakapapa relationships to place (O'Malley, 2016; Walker, 1990; Waitangi Tribunal, 1999, 2011). These processes converted whenua from a living ancestral entity into a commodity, aligning Māori landholding with European property norms and enabling large-scale alienation (O'Malley, 2016). Decolonisation theory therefore positions contemporary

design not as an aesthetic exercise but a cultural, spatial and structural restoration, reasserting the ontological and relational values that were systematically displaced.

In the context of Rangiaowhia, where multiple marae and tikanga once formed a vital network of cultural, political and economic activity, the re-establishment of a wharenuī and associated cultural infrastructure is a deliberate countermeasure to historic erasure and a reassertion of presence, narrative authority and governance (Waitangi Tribunal, 1999, 2011). The Waitangi Tribunal (1999, 2011) notes that the violent displacement of communities in this region resulted not only in land loss but in the severance of whakapapa continuity, governance systems and cultural practice. Reinstating communal structures on ancestral whenua therefore becomes an act of reasserting presence, narrative authority and mana Motuhake; re-establishing the physical and relational infrastructure through which iwi identity, governance and collective responsibilities are upheld.

Decolonisation theory also affirms the necessity of incorporating ceremonial, educational, healing and public-facing spaces within design responses. Brown (2009) demonstrates that Māori architectural forms materialise cosmology and embed cultural practice into everyday life, while Haami et al. (2024) and Lamusse (2025) emphasise that cultural spaces are essential to healing intergenerational trauma and achieving forms of justice that extend beyond material compensation. In this sense, built form becomes an instrument for cultural repair, enabling whānau, hapu and iwi to reconnect with whakapapa, re-establish ahi-kā and regenerate mauri through collective activity with a foundation in tikanga.

However, the application of decolonisation principles within contemporary development is frequently constrained by statutory planning systems and financing structures that continue to prioritise generic, market-oriented development outcomes over iwi-led cultural restoration. The literature highlights how district plans often maintain zoning rules, servicing requirements and consenting pathways that are poorly aligned with communal land ownership and papakāinga typologies (Lysnar et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024). Similarly, government funding and lending mechanisms frequently evaluate projects through conventional risk frameworks that do not account for the cultural, social and intergenerational value generated through restoring ancestral places (Office of the Auditor General, 2011). These constraints raise critical questions about whether existing planning and financial instruments can recognise iwi aspirations without framing them as exceptions or departures from standard practice. Decolonisation theory makes clear that enabling Māori-led development requires not only physical design interventions but structural reform, reconfiguring planning, policy and funding systems so that Māori cultural objectives are treated as central rather than peripheral.

Both decolonisation and kaupapa Māori theory reveal the tension between Māori aspirations and the structures of contemporary planning and funding regimes.

Indigenous Architecture Theory

Indigenous architecture theory positions the built environment as a living expression of cosmology, relationships, and social order, rather than a neutral container for activity. Many Māori architectural theorists show that spatial organisation actively materialised whakapapa, ritual practice, and environmental ethics, integrating cultural values into everyday life (Brown, 2009). Within this paradigm, design is an enactment of ontological relationships. Buildings orient to maunga and landmarks with historical significance to preserve ancestral lines of sight; special hierarchies acknowledge genealogical ties to whenua; circulation patterns follow customary pathways that encode ritual movement and the transmission of Mātauranga. These relational arrangements reconnect occupants to their wider ecological and cosmological contexts, affirming tūrangawaewae and sustaining mauri within the built environment (Brown, 2009; Kawharu, 2010).

Culturally informed development requires spaces that enable ongoing cultural production and collective practice. Some Māori architectural literature highlights that shared facilities, such as wharenuī, wharekai, weaving studios, carving workshops, māra kai

and spaces for wānanga, operate as essential infrastructure for sustaining tikanga and revitalising intergenerational knowledge systems (Brown, 2009; Kake, 2019; Bennett et al., 2023). These are not supplementary amenities but core architectural programmes that maintain the social, spiritual, and economic life of the community. Their presence shapes settlement patterns and spatial relationships, ensuring that manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and learning are woven into the everyday rhythm of the pā or papakāinga.

A key feature within contemporary Indigenous architecture is adaptive reuse as a culturally aligned design methodology. Māori-led projects frequently repurpose existing buildings, such as converting rural halls into temporary wharekai, modifying storage sheds into weaving or carving spaces, or restoring disused structures into spaces for wānanga, as a means of maintaining cultural continuity (Awatere et al., 2017; Bennett et al., 2023). Rather than being viewed as compromise, such adaptations reflect kaupapa-driven pragmatism that honours resourcefulness, sustainability, and kaitiakitanga. This approach aligns with broader Indigenous architectural principles in which the built environment evolves through cycles of modifications, occupation, and renewal in response to ecological conditions and community needs (Awatere et al., 2017; Brown, 2009).

Central to Māori architectural design is the alignment of orientation, thresholds, and spatial relationships with tikanga, narratives, and knowledge systems through which cultural knowledge is conveyed. Thresholds become sites of encounter and ethical responsibility; interior-exterior gradients signify layers of tap and noa; and spatial adjacencies regulate the flow of people, activities and ritual processes (Brown, 2009). These design strategies affirm the relational perspectives of te ao Māori, reinforcing collective identity and supporting occupants within a whakapapa-based worldview.

However, Indigenous architectural practice often comes into conflict with mainstream planning and design systems. Conventional architectural norms privilege standardised aesthetics, functionally separated building types, and performance-driven briefs, which tend to exclude ritual, cultural learning, and space-specific narratives (Lysnar et al., 2016; Bennett et al., 2023). Efficiency logics, coupled with budget and timeframe constraints, undervalue the labour of cultural practice, such as hosting, ceremonial preparation, intergenerational teaching and governance processes, which are central to Māori life but invisible within typical architectural scopes. The tensions reflect deeper structural issues: planning systems are primarily calibrated for individualised land ownership and urban norms, while Māori design is embedded in collective ownership, whakapapa obligation, and reciprocal relationships with whenua (Lysnar et al., 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024).

Consequently, Indigenous architectural theory argues for design approaches that restore cultural sovereignty by prioritising whakapapa-based spatial logics, kaupapa-led programmes, and mana-enhancing relationships with the environment. This involves reasserting Indigenous modes of living and building as legitimate architectural frameworks, challenging the dominance of Western architectural standards, and affirming that culturally centred design is not peripheral but essential to Māori well-being and self-determination (Durie, 1998; Bennett et al., 2023).

Whenua and Relational Ontologies

Relational ontologies in te ao Māori regard whenua as tūpuna, a living ancestor whose vitality shapes and sustains the well-being of people, provides a source of life, ecologies, and more-than-human kin (Royal, n.d.; Kawharu, 2000). This worldview positions humans within an animate, interdependent cosmos rather than as external managers of land, establishing ethical obligations of reciprocity, care, and restoration (Royal, n.d.; Kawharu, 2000). In this context, whenua is not a passive substrate for development but a relational being with mauri, history, and identity. Engaging with whenua therefore requires design practices to uphold whakapapa relationships and enact kaitiakitanga as a lived, intergenerational responsibility.

Situating the project within these ontologies reframes how 'success' is defined. Rather than focusing on quantitative outputs, success is defined through strengthened whanaungatanga, revitalised mauri, and the creation of capacities for intergenerational flourishing. These capacities emerge through everyday engagements with place by way of rongoā and weaving plantings that restore ecological health, māra kai that support food sovereignty and the perpetuation of knowledge, water-care practices that uphold mauri, and spaces for gathering, learning and collective decision-making that reinforce social cohesion (Durie, 1998; Riki Tuakiritetangata & Ibarra-Lemay, 2021; Awatere et al., 2017). Such practices contribute to tūhonotanga, attachment to land, culture, and kin, as an essential dimension of healing and well-being.

Regenerative landscape approaches articulate these values spatially and operationally. They emphasise relationship-based design logic, cyclical care, and kaitiaki-led governance, prioritising ecological and cultural renewal over object-centred outputs or purely technical efficiencies (Bennett et al., 2023; Awatere et al., 2017). These approaches align with Indigenous regenerative housing models that foreground reciprocal exchanges between people and the environment, restoring relationships disrupted by colonisation and enabling communities to enact sovereignty through place (Bennett et al., 2023).

However, this orientation conflicts with dominant planning and valuation systems, which are structured around quantifiable returns, auditability, and risk-based assessment. Mainstream frameworks favour financial metrics, cost-benefit analyses, and compliance checklists, often rendering cultural, ecological, and relational values "invisible" because they cannot be easily monetised or measured within existing evaluative tools (Lysnar et al., 2016; Office of the Auditor General, 2011; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2024). These systems reproduce colonial assumptions about land as a commodity and development as production, marginalising Māori aspirations that centre on identity, whakapapa, communal stewardship, and long-term mauri enhancement.

For this project, adopting a relational ontology therefore requires more than cultural responsiveness; it requires challenging the dominance of object-driven development logics and re-establishing whenua as a conceptual and ethical centre of design. The reorientation positions the papakāinga as a living system shaped by intergenerational relationships, where built form, landscape, governance, and daily practice collectively contribute to cultural revitalisation and ecological regeneration.

Collective Housing Models

A fuller comparison of papakāinga and international co-housing models is provided in the Literature Review. In summary, while both approaches promote collective living, shared amenities and participatory governance, papakāinga differ fundamentally in their whakapapa-based relationships to whenua and the tikanga, ahi kā and kaitiakitanga obligations that guide decision-making. These cultural and genealogical foundations render papakāinga inalienable and orient development toward intergenerational stewardship rather than market dynamics. International co-housing precedents offer useful insights into spatial organisation and social cohesion, yet operate within transferable, individually alienable tenure forms. Consequently, papakāinga must navigate planning and financial systems that remain poorly aligned with collective Māori land ownership, reinforcing the need for structural reform.

10 - Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore how culturally aligned architectural design can contribute to reconnection, healing, and future aspirations for Ngāti Apakura. Rather than presenting a definitive masterplan, the project offers a values-based design response shaped by kōrero shared during the research process. The master plan developed through this research is a provisional proposition that reflects what is currently known while remaining open to future refinement through deeper iwi-led processes.

A key achievement of this project is the demonstration that architectural design can begin to restore physical and symbolic presence in a landscape profoundly shaped by historical trauma. The master plan offers an early framework for re-establishing Apakura identity, reaffirming whakapapa connections, and reactivating intergenerational knowledge pathways.

The project also illustrates the complexities inherent in undertaking culturally embedded design within constrained timeframes, limited engagement opportunities, and shifting governance structures. These constraints highlight both the limitations of the research as a single-author thesis and the importance of long-term relational commitment for future development. The design outcomes must therefore be understood as provisional: they reflect the researcher's best efforts to respond ethically to the information available, while acknowledging that many key decisions, particularly related to the wharenuī, wharekai, accommodation typologies and programme adjacencies, require sustained iwi deliberation and collective decision-making beyond the scope of this thesis.

Future research is needed to extend and deepen the work within this thesis. Further co-design with iwi members is essential to refine key programme elements, resolve cultural protocols, and evolve the masterplan into a fully realised development strategy. Comparative research into other Indigenous papakāinga models could also strengthen understanding of sustainable funding models, land management approaches and intergenerational strategies.

Ultimately, the return and activation of whenua is understood here as a process of remembering, healing, and imagining futures with a foundation in whakapapa. These results are provisional and require iwi-led refinement of wharenuī/wharekai programming and adjacencies. Future work should extend co-design wānanga, resolve tikanga-critical interfaces, and test procurement and finance pathways aligned with collective ownership. Ultimately, the value of this project is a practical platform for Ngāti Apakura to continue reactivating ahi kā and intergenerational well-being on ancestral whenua.

References

- Alpers, A. (1964). *Maori myths & tribal legends* (Reprinted 1981). Longman Paul Limited.
- Arbury, E., & Cram, F. (2023). *Housing on Māori land, c.1870–2021* (Wai 2750, #A12). Waitangi Tribunal.
<https://www.buildingbetter.nz/annotatedbibliography/housing-on-Master's-land-c-1870-2021/index.html>
- Archdiocese of Wellington. (2013, August 5). *Catholic pioneers Fr Jean Etienne Pezant SM* | Archdiocese of Wellington. Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand. https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/adw_welcom/catholic-pioneers-fr-jean-etienne-pezant-sm/
- Awatere, S., & Rolleston, S. (2016). Ngā hua papakāinga: Habitation design principles. *MAI Journal*.
- Awatere, S., Rolleston, S., & Pauling, C. (2017). *Kaitiakitanga, place and planning*. Landcare Research.
- BBSR (Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development). (2015). *CoHousing and building groups in Germany*.
- Belich, J. (2001). *Making peoples: A history of the New Zealanders*. Penguin.
- Bennett, P., Jones, R., & Reid, J. (2023). Regenerative Indigenous housing: Restoring relationships with land. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 40(5), 589–607.
- Berghan, J. (2021). *Kaupapakāinga: The potential for Māori cohousing*. Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Brown, D. (2009). *Māori architecture: From fale to wharenui and beyond*. Raupo.
- Cowen, J. (1922). *The New Zealand wars: A history of the Māori campaigns and the pioneering period*. Government Printer.
- Cram, F., Te Huia, T., Te Huia, B., Williams, M., & Williams, N. (2019). *Oranga and Māori health inequities, 1769–1992*. Ministry of Health.
- Dow, D. A. (2001). 'Pruned of its dangers': The Tohunga Suppression Act 1907. *Health and History*, 3(1), 41–64.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40111392>
- Durie, M. (1998). *Te mana, te kāwanatanga: The politics of Māori self-determination*. Oxford University Press.
- Durie, M. (1998). *Whaiora: Māori health development* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider–outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 54–63.
- Education Ordinance 1847. (n.d.). *Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.
<https://teara.govt.nz/en/zoomify/34874/education-ordinance-1847>
- Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development. See BBSR.

- Fromm, D.** (2012). Seeding community: Collaborative housing as a strategy for social and neighborhood repair. *Built Environment*, 38(3), 364–394.
- GBPP.** (1864). *Correspondence and papers relating to the war in New Zealand* [3277]. Great Britain Parliamentary Papers.
- GIDA.** (2019/2020). *CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance*.
- Gilling, B. D.** (1994). Engine of destruction? An introduction to the history of the Māori Land Court. *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review*, 24(2), 115–140.
- Gorst, J. E.** (1864). *The Māori King*. Macmillan.
- Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons.** (1864). *Correspondence and papers relating to the war in New Zealand* (Parliamentary Paper No. 3277).
- Haami, D., et al.** (2024). From Hinengaro to Hineora: Tracing the origins of intergenerational trauma. *Journal of Indigenous Wellbeing*.
- Hoskins, R., Te Nana, R., Rhodes, P., Guy, P., & Sage, C.** (2002). *Ki te Hau Kainga: New perspectives on Māori housing solutions* (Design guide prepared for Housing New Zealand Corporation). Housing New Zealand Corporation.
- Jarvis, H.** (2011). Saving space, sharing time: Integrated infrastructures of daily life in cohousing. *Environment and Planning A*, 43(3), 560–577.
- Ka'ai-Mahuta, R.** (2011). The revitalisation of the Māori language. *Te Kaharoa*, 4(1), 1–14.
- Take, J.** (2019). *Rebuilding the kāinga: Lessons from papakāinga*. Bridget Williams Books.
- Kawharu, M.** (2000). Kaitiakitanga: A Māori anthropological perspective of the Māori socio-environmental ethic of resource management. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 109(4), 349–370.
- Kawharu, M.** (2010). Environment as a marae locale. *MAI Review*, 3, 1–14.
- Lamusse, T.** (2025). Reconceptualising restorative justice. *British Journal of Community Justice*.
- Lipsham, M.** (2023). Taiao and mauri ora: Māori understandings of the environment and its connection to wellbeing. *MAI Journal*, 12(2), 181–192. <https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2023.12.2.7>
- Lysnar, P., Stokes, A., & Owen, K.** (2016). *Barriers to papakāinga development*. Auckland Council Research Report.
- Lysnar, P., Tuatagaloa, P., & Joynt, J.** (2016). *Māori and housing in Tāmaki Makaurau: A stocktake of issues, experiences and initiatives* (Technical Report 2016/026). Auckland Council.
- McCamant, K., & Durrett, C.** (2011). *Creating cohousing: Building sustainable communities*. New Society.
- Mead, H. M.** (2016). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori values* (Rev. ed.). Huia.
- Menzies, D., Whitehead, J., Walker, G., Reid, J., & Macfarlane, A.** (2018). *Economics and financing of housing for Māori: Literature review*. Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge.
- Moewaka Barnes, H., & McCreanor, T.** (2019). Colonisation, hauora and whenua in Aotearoa. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2019.1668439>

Native Schools Act 1867 (31 Victoriae 1867 No 41). (1867, October 10). *New Zealand Acts as Enacted*.

https://www.nzlii.org/nz/legis/hist_act/nsa186731v1867n41290/

New Zealand Government. (1863). *Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863*.

New Zealand Government. (1864). *New Zealand Settlements Act 1864*.

Nolan, S. R. (2022). Kaitiakitanga: Utilising Māori holistic conservation in heritage institutions. *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.5334/jcms.215>

O'Malley, V. (2013). *Beyond the imperial frontier: The contest for colonial New Zealand*. Bridget Williams Books.

O'Malley, V. (2016). *The great war for New Zealand: Waikato 1800–2000*. Bridget Williams Books.

O'Malley, V. (2021, November 27). *A survivor's account of the torching of Rangiaowhia | E-Tangata*. E-Tangata. <https://e-tangata.co.nz/history/a-survivors-account-of-the-torching-of-rangiaowhia/>

Office of the Auditor-General. (2011). *Government planning and support for housing on Māori land* (Performance Audit Report). Office of the Auditor-General.

Palmer, F. (2016). *Building sustainable papakāinga to support Māori aspirations for self-determination* (Doctoral thesis, Auckland University of Technology). Auckland University of Technology.

Pihama, L., Cram, F., & Walker, S. (2002). Creating methodological space: A literature review of Kaupapa Māori research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 26(1), 30–43.

Rameka, L. R., Berryman, M., & Cruse, D. (2023). Whenua ki te whenua: Indigenous naming of land and its people by reconnecting the past to the present and future. *MAI Journal*, 12(2), 13–27. <https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2023.12.2.13>

Rameka duplicated entry removed.

Richardson, T., Smith, R., & Te Rangi, M. (2025). Papakāinga as restorative infrastructure: Rebuilding hapū resilience through land-based housing models. *Journal of Māori Architecture and Design*, 12(1), 67–82.

Riki Tuakiritetangata, D., & Ibarra-Lemay, A. (2021). Tūhonotanga—A Māori perspective of healing and well-being through ongoing and regained connection to self, culture, kin, land and sky. *Genealogy*, 5(2), 55. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy5020055>

Roa, T., Wilson, C., & Neha, R. (2020). *Ka Aowhia te Rangi: A rich history poorly known*. Taarewaanga Marae Trustees.

Royal, T. A. C. (n.d.). Whenua – how the land was shaped. In *Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/whenua-how-the-land-was-shaped/print>

Russell, H. F. (2015). Land loss, historic trauma and intergenerational transmission of wellbeing. *MAI Journal*, 4(1), 16–32.

Sanders, E. B.-N., & Stappers, P. J. (2008). Co-creation and the new landscapes of design. *CoDesign*, 4(1), 5–18.

Sanguinetti, A. (2014). The design of intentional communities: A model for sustainable living. *Behavior and Social Issues*, 23, 5–34.

Sewell, H. (1864). Journal entries, as cited in O'Malley (2016).

- Simmonds, N.** (2015). Honouring our ancestors: Reclaiming the power of Māori maternities. In J. Hutchings & J. Lee-Morgan (Eds.), *Decolonisation in Aotearoa: Education, research and practice* (pp. 229–242). NZCER Press.
- Smith, L. T.** (2022). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (3rd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Stephens, M.** (2001). A return to the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907. *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review*, 32(2), 437–462.
- Tapsell, P.** (2002). Marae and tribal identity in urban Aotearoa. *Pacific Studies*, 25(1/2), 141–171.
- Te Ara Tika.** (2010). *Guidelines for Māori research ethics*. Health Research Council / Pūtaiora Writing Group.
- Te Mana Raraunga.** (2018). *Principles of Māori data sovereignty*.
- Te Puni Kōkiri.** (2024). *Analysis of District Plan Papakāinga Rules*. Te Puni Kōkiri.
- Te Rito, J. S.** (2007). Whakapapa: A framework for understanding identity. *MAI Review*, 2(3), 1–10.
- Te Ara Wai.** (n.d.). *Explore Rangiaowhia and Ōrākau*. <https://tearawai.nz/explore-rangiaowhiaorakau>
- Tempsky, G. F. von.** (1864). *Memoranda of the New Zealand campaign in 1863 and 1864* (typescript). Alexander Turnbull Library, qMS-2007-2009.
- The fight at Rangiaowhia.** (n.d.). *New Zealand History*. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/fight-rangiaowhia-mchales-body>
- Waitangi Tribunal.** (1999). *The Taranaki Report: Kaupapa Tuatahi*. GP Publications.
- Waitangi Tribunal.** (1999). *The Waikato Raupatu Claims Report* (WAI 30).
- Waitangi Tribunal.** (2011). *Ko Aotearoa tēnei: A report into claims concerning New Zealand law and policy affecting Māori culture and identity*.
- Walker, R.** (1990). *Ka whawhai tonu mātou: Struggle without end*. Penguin.
- Walker, S., Eketone, A., & Gibbs, A.** (2006). An exploration of Kaupapa Māori research, its principles, processes and applications. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9(4), 331–344.
- Williams, J.** (2015). Ngāi Tahu and the retention of land. In D. Keenan (Ed.), *Huiā histories of Māori*. Huiā.

Glossary of Terms

Ahi kā (**noun**) burning fires of occupation, continuous occupation - title to land through occupation by a group, generally over a long period of time. The group is able, through the use of *whakapapa*, to trace back to primary ancestors who lived on the land.

Aotearoa (**location**) North Island - now used as the Māori name for New Zealand.

Awa (**noun**) river, stream, creek, canal, gully, gorge, groove, furrow.

Hāngī (**noun**) earth oven

Harakeke (**noun**) New Zealand flax, *Phormium tenax* - an important native plant with long, stiff, upright leaves and dull red flowers. Used in traditional weaving.

Hauora (**noun**) health, vigour.

Hapū (**noun**) kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe

Hui (**noun**) gathering, meeting, assembly, seminar, conference.

Iwi (**noun**) extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

Kāinga (**noun**) home, address, residence, village, settlement, habitation, habitat, dwelling.

Kaitiaki (**noun**) trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, caregiver, keeper, steward.

Kaitiakitanga (**noun**) guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee.

Kaumātua (**modifier**) elderly, old, aged.

Kaupapa (**noun**) topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative.

Kaupapakāinga is a term for a hybrid housing model that blends the principles of papakāinga (traditional Māori communal housing on ancestral land) with co-housing (a Western model of collaborative, shared-space living)

Kīngitanga (**loan**) (**noun**) kingdom, reign (of a king), dominion, majesty, nation, country.

Māori (**noun**) Māori, indigenous New Zealander, indigenous person of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Māra kai (**noun**) food garden.

Māra rongoā (**noun**) medicine garden

Marae (**noun**) fenced-in complex of buildings and grounds that belongs to a particular iwi (tribe), hapū (sub tribe) or whānau (family).

Marae ātea (**noun**) courtyard - open area in front of the *wharehui* where formal welcomes to visitors takes place

Mātauranga (**noun**) knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill - sometimes used in the plural.

Mauri (**noun**) life principle, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located.

Noa (**stative**) be free from the extensions of tapu, ordinary, unrestricted, void.

Pā (**noun**) fortified village, fort, stockade, screen, blockade, city (especially a fortified one).

Pākehā (**noun**) New Zealander of European descent

Papakāinga (**noun**) original home, home base, village, communal Māori land

Papatūānuku (**personal name**) Earth, Earth mother and wife of Rangi-nui - all living things originate from them.

Rangatahi (**noun**) younger generation, youth.

Rangatiratanga (**noun**) chieftainship, right to exercise authority, chiefly autonomy, chiefly authority, ownership, leadership of a social group, domain of the *rangatira*, noble birth, attributes of a chief.

Rāua (**pronoun**) they, them (two people)

Raupatu (**noun**) conquest, confiscation.

Raupō (**noun**) bulrush

Rohe (**noun**) boundary, district, region, territory, area, border (of land).

Tāmaki Makaurau (**location**) Auckland Isthmus, Auckland.

Taonga (**noun**) treasure, anything prized - applied to anything considered to be of value including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomenon, ideas and techniques.

Tapu (**stative**) be sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under *atua* protection

Te Ao Māori (**noun**) the Māori world

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (**noun**) the original Māori language version of an agreement made between Māori and the British Crown in 1840.

Tika (**stative**) be correct, true, upright, right, just, fair, accurate, appropriate, lawful, proper.

Tikanga (**noun**) correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol - the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context .

Tino rangatiratanga (**noun**) self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, self-government, domination, rule, control, power.

Tohunga (**noun**) skilled person, chosen expert, priest, healer

Tomokanga/waharoa (**noun**) entrance, opening, entry foyer, gateway, entry, portal.

Tūhonotanga (**noun**) attachment, joining, link

Tūpuna (**noun**) ancestors, grandparents

Tūrangawaewae (**noun**) domicile, standing, place where one has the right to stand - place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and *whakapapa*.

Wahine (**noun**) woman. Wāhine (**modifier**) female, women, feminine,

Waiata (**noun**) song, chant, psalm.

Wānanga (**verb**) (-hia,-tia) to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider. (**noun**) tribal knowledge, lore, learning - important traditional cultural, religious, historical, genealogical and philosophical knowledge.

Whakaaro (**noun**) thought, opinion, plan, understanding, idea, intention, gift, conscience.

Whakapapa (**noun**) genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent

Whānau (**noun**) extended family, family group

Whanaungatanga (**noun**) relationship, kinship, sense of family connection

Whare (**noun**) house, building, residence, dwelling, shed, hut, habitation.

Whare whakairo (**noun**) carved house, meeting house.

Wharenuī (**noun**) meeting house, large house - main building of a marae where guests are accommodated.

Wharepaku (**noun**) toilet, lavatory, ablutions. Wharekai (**noun**) dining hall.

Whenua (**noun**) land - often used in the plural.

Appendices

Appendix A – Ethics Approval

Appendix B – Tools

Appendix C – Architectural Drawings