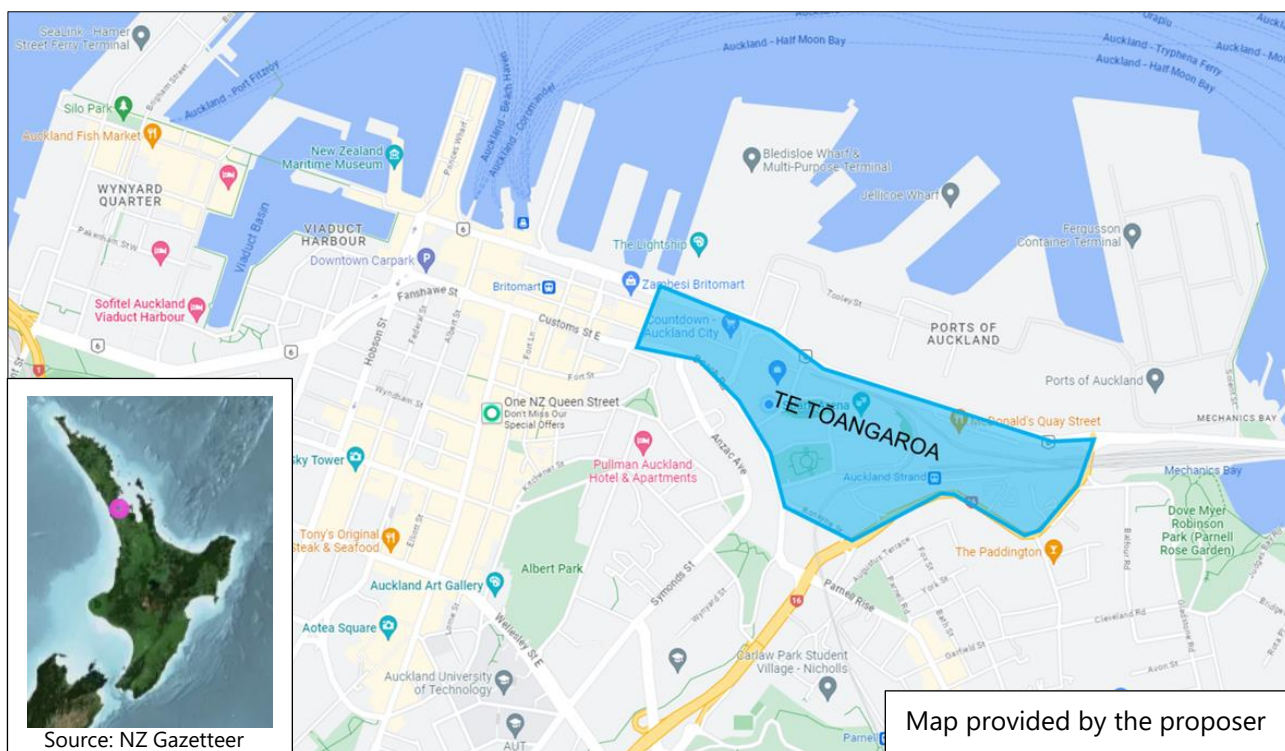


Proposal report considered by the Board on 30 April 2024 for Te Tōangaroa with the Board's decision

[restoring the traditional Māori name for an unnamed inner city area that isn't a suburb or locality]



Summary

The proposal from Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei is to restore the traditional Māori name Te Tōangaroa and assign it as the official place name of an area on the waterfront of Auckland's CBD, which is informally referred to as Quay Park. The development of Te Tōangaroa is included in Auckland Council's *City Centre Masterplan*. Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei have a commercial interest in this development.

The proposers advise that Te Tōangaroa (the long dragging of waka) is the original Māori name for the area and carries profound cultural significance for them.

The area, which partially covers the suburbs of Auckland Central, Parnell and Mechanics Bay (the latter two being unofficial recorded names), includes Spark Arena and a number of commercial businesses and apartment blocks. It is not a suburb.

Auckland Council's Waitematā Local Board and two of the overlapping iwi groups, Ngāti Tamaoho and Ngāti Whātua, support the proposal. Te Ākitai Waiohū have no issue with the name, but don't support the kōrero.

Board's decision

At its 30 April 2024 hui the Board made this decision on the proposal:

Accept the proposal to **assign Te Tōangaroa** as the official name of an area (not a suburb) on the waterfront of Auckland's CBD bounded by Britomart Place, Beach Road, Ronayne Street, The Strand and Quay Street, based on:

- the Board's functions to investigate and determine the priority of the discovery of a geographic feature, and to collect and encourage the use of original Māori names on official charts and maps,
- Auckland Council's Waitemata Local Board supporting the proposal, and
- Ngāti Tamaoho and Ngāti Whātua, who have overlapping interests, supporting the proposal,

and

Notify as a proposal to assign for one month.

Secretariat assessment

The proposal Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei are seeking to restore the original Māori name Te Tōangaroa and assign it as the official name of an area on the waterfront of Auckland's CBD, which is informally referred to as Quay Park. They advise that Te Tōangaroa is the original name for the area and one which they deem important to restore.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei advise that they have maintained ahi kaa 'fires of occupation' over Auckland's CBD waterfront continually since 1740. They own approximately 20 hectares of land, being the former Auckland Railways site, at what is traditionally known as Te Tōangaroa (the long dragging of waka) between Quay St East and Beach Road. Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei 're-acquired' the site from the Crown in 1996 through a commercial purchase following their assertions of customary ownership of the reclaimed seabed.

The proposers advise that formally restoring Te Tōangaroa would be a meaningful step towards acknowledging and preserving their history and heritage. Te Tōangaroa carries profound cultural significance for them, reflecting the area's historical roots and stories, and connects them to the land and the ancestors who have walked upon it for generations. By embracing the name, the proposers have the opportunity to engage their community in conversations about the rich tapestry of history that forms the foundation of the city.

The proposers advise that the proposal also aligns with the broader movement across Aotearoa New Zealand to recognise and honour Māori names and culture in public spaces. This not only symbolises respect for tangata whenua but also showcases the proposers' commitment to unity and cultural diversity, fostering a sense of belonging among all residents regardless of their cultural background. Ultimately, the proposers also want Te Tōangaroa to be named on Google Maps™ so that people can easily find where it is.

Waitemata Local Board supports the proposal, advising that while they and Auckland Council currently use the dual name Te Tōangaroa / Quay Park for the

area, formalising Te Tōangaroa would better uphold the mana of the name and of Ngāti Whātua Orākei.

Names shown on plans and maps

The area proposed to be named isn't named on plans and maps. However, Mechanics Bay is shown on the 1966 NZMS 1 as a bay feature, but after land reclamation in the early 1970s it is shown on subsequent maps as a suburb.

Map/plan	Date	Name
A(D)107A	1866	Not named
GAZ157	1881	Not named
DP 1343	1894	Not named
NZMS 16	1924	Not named
NZMS 1, N42, 1 st – 4 th eds.	1949, 1962, 1966, 1978	Not named
NZMS 260, R11	2006	Not named

[Geographic feature type](#), generic term, location and extent of the feature

The feature is an area of ~20 ha on Auckland's CBD waterfront bounded by Britomart Place, Beach Road, Ronayne Street, The Strand and Quay Street. In the proposal form the proposers describe it as 'an inner city suburb/contiguous land block'. It does have some characteristics of a suburb as defined in the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008 which states that a suburb 'means an identifiable area within a local authority area, usually urban in character, with facilities such as those for education, transport, and shopping'. However, it is significantly smaller than the Auckland suburbs of Wesley and Stonefields which the Board has recently officially named. The Secretariat considers the feature type to be more appropriate as an 'area'.

Noting that the Board has previously assigned some traditional area names without a generic term, for example [Paekākā](#), [Awarua](#) and [Maioro](#), it is not considered that one is required in this instance.

[New Zealand Gazetteer](#), associated place names and duplication

The area itself isn't named in the Gazetteer. However, it partially covers the suburbs of [Parnell](#) and [Mechanics Bay](#), which are unofficial recorded place names, and Central Auckland. These suburb names will not be altered by this proposal.

No other features in the Board's jurisdiction are named Te Tōangaroa.

Research, history and references to the feature

Graham & Simmons record that 'Mechanics Bay (now wholly reclaimed) was known as Te Toangaroa, (the long dragging up, no doubt because of the dragging into the waters of canoes here in old times to escape from a coming enemy). History almost repeated itself here in 1851 when Sir George Grey ordered a hostile party away, threatening them with the guns of the warship. No time was given for the tide to come in, and the natives [sic] were obliged to drag their canoes to low water mark. This incident is still known as Te Toangaroa, and

doubtless further accentuated the memory of the place name long after the bay itself had disappeared'.¹

The conceptual framework for Te Tōangaroa is recorded in Auckland City's *Masterplan Phase 3*. The unique history of the site will be referenced by the creation of a series of north-south pedestrian connections. This concept relates to the understanding that at Te Tōangaroa waka had to be 'dragged a long way' to the shoreline.²

The website at <https://www.tetoangaroa.co.nz> describes Te Tōangaroa as 'a vibrant urban neighbourhood where lively events, delicious kai and mahi toi are waiting to be discovered'.

A nearby Hall of Residence is named Te Tirohanga o te Tōangaroa.³

Consultation with iwi

Ngāti Tamaoho have advised that as the proposal is within the rohe of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, they 'support them in whatever they choose to do there'.

Ngāti Whātua have advised that they fully support the proposal.

Te Ākitai Waiohūa have advised 'Nothing wrong with the name, just the proposer and supporting korero [sic] for it', but they haven't offered an alternative kōrero.

To date there has been no response from the other overlapping or neighbouring iwi groups: Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki, Ngāti Manuhiri, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Paoa, Ngāti Rehua, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāti Te Ata, Ngāti Whanaunga, Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara, Ngātiwai, Te Ahiwaru Waiohūa, Te Kawerau ā Maki, Te Patukirikiri Iwi Trust, Te Uri o Hau or Waikato-Tainui. However, they will have an opportunity to make a submission on the proposal during the public notification period.

Advice on orthography⁴

A Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori licensed translator has confirmed that Te Tōangaroa is the correct orthography.

Relevant sections from the [NZGB Act 2008](#) and the

Section 3(e) of the Act provides for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features. And section 4 of the Act 2008 defines an area as a geographic feature therefore the Board may assign an official name to it.

The Board's functions include investigating and determining the priority of the discovery of geographic features and collecting and encouraging the use of original Māori names on official charts and maps (sections 11(1)(c)(d)(e) refer).

[Standard for NZ place names](#) criteria

1.1 Acceptable names

(b) The Board encourages contemporary Māori place names and the restoration of original Māori place names.

¹ Graham, G & Simmons, DR (1980). "MAORI PLACE NAMES." *Records of the Auckland Institute and Museum*, 16, 1–10. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42906271> Accessed 20 March 2024.

² Accessed from <https://aucklandccmp.co.nz/media/1012/te-toangaroa-masterplan.pdf> on 25 March 2024.

³ Accessed from <https://www.unilodge.com.au/student-accommodation-auckland/te-tirohanga-o-te-toangaroa> on 20 March 2024.

⁴ The conventions and rules of how to write a language

(d) Names that recognise the priority of discovery of significant places, including those of Māori pre-European contact.

The proposal would restore an original Māori name that is culturally significant to the proposers.

Concerns or issues for emergency services

The area includes Spark Arena and a number of commercial businesses and apartment blocks. However, the name is unlikely to be used for identification in an emergency, noting also that emergency services generally rely on digital technology to locate an emergency.

Cost implications

If the proposal proceeds, there should be no significant concerns because of cost. Updates to any existing signs, promotional material, maps, databases, websites, etc would be done over time during routine maintenance. The existing suburb names aren't being changed, so their signs and other publications will remain unchanged.

Media

The *Herald* published [Ngāti Whātua partners with companies to develop Auckland central block](#) in August 2023.

A February 2024 1News item records that 'the Te Tōangaroa bid proposes a new 15ha urban neighbourhood at Quay Park, bordered by Spark Arena and Quay St, on Ngāti Whātua land in the old Auckland Railways yard', the central focus being a 50,000 seat stadium.⁵

Supporting information

1. Proposal for Te Tōangaroa – 2023-08-10
2. Email with orthographic advice – 2023-09-20
3. Email from Ngāti Tamaoho – consultation – 2024-01-24
4. Email from Ngāti Whātua – consultation – 2024-01-24
5. Email from Te Ākitai Waiohūa – consultation – 2024-01-24

⁵ Accessed from <https://www.1news.co.nz/2024/02/10/ambitious-downtown-auckland-stadiumprecinct-plans-unveiled/> on 20 March 2024.