

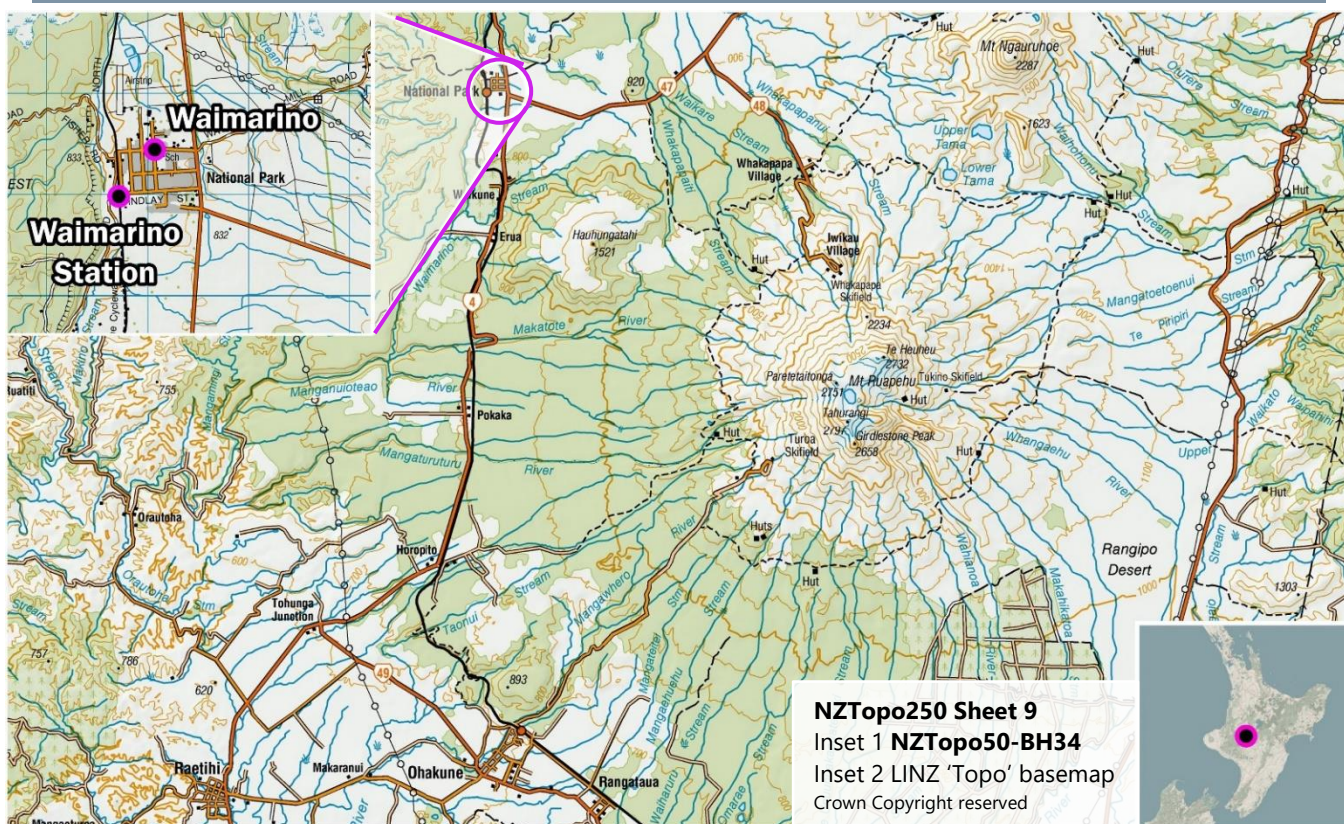
Proposals considered by the Board on 3 October 2023 for:

Waimarino (village)

[alter from National Park]

Waimarino Station

[alter from National Park Station]



Summary

The proposals from Uenuku/Te Korowai o Wainuiārua¹ are to alter:

- National Park to Waimarino, for the small village at the intersection of State Highway 4 and State Highway 47, northwest of Mount Ruapehu and west of Tongariro National Park, and
- National Park Station to Waimarino Station, for the railway station on the North Island Main Trunk railway line at the village.

The proposers seek to restore the original Māori name which refers to the 'calm waters' pooling on the plains as they come down from the maunga. They consider their voice has yet to be heard in the last 100 years of debate on the name of the village and railway station. They state they continue to refer to National Park village as 'Waimarino Pā' or 'Waimarino Kāinga'.

The Board has considered the names several times previously, declining proposals to alter one or both names back to Waimarino in the 1950s and 1960s. This was based on established use of National Park, evidence of local opposition to the proposals and potential for confusion with other Waimarino names used for other areas. Similar considerations apply to the current proposals (see below). It was also despite support for these prior proposals from Waimarino County, the railway operators of the time, Tongariro National Park Board, and other interested parties.

The proposers have provided evidence of support for either or both proposals from:

¹ Te Korowai o Wainuiārua is a Large Natural Group (LNG) representing the descendants of three tupuna - Uenuku, Tamakana and Tamahaki. Uenuku Charitable Trust is mandated to represent Te Korowai o Wainuiārua in Treaty settlement negotiations with the Crown.

- Ōwhango-National Park Community Board,
- Ruapehu District Council,
- Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand,
- Tongariro-Taupō Conservation Board,
- KiwiRail,
- Visit Ruapehu,
- some locals.

The proposal material also includes evidence of opposition to the proposals from some local residents and the National Park Business Association. Noting the status of Uenuku as mana whenua, no evidence of consultation with other Māori groups that may have current or ancestral interests was provided.

There are administrative 'Waimarino' names for an addressable locality and a community board under Ruapehu District Council. These are legacies of Waimarino County which was located entirely south of the village from 1910 onwards.

Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board is the latest inheritor of what are more or less the same boundaries and people will likely have strong associations of 'Waimarino' to this area to the south after 120+ years.

Secretariat recommendations

At its hui on 3 October 2023 the Board resolved these recommendations.

Accept the proposal to **alter** the existing unofficial recorded village name National Park to the official village name **Waimarino**, based on:

- the Board's function to encourage the use of original Māori names, and recognising the traditional narratives and cultural values associated with the name Waimarino and the area as it originally applied to,
- the existing name National Park not being suitable for a village and creating confusion, as there are many actual national parks,
- evidence of support from:
 - o Ōwhango-National Park Community Board,
 - o Ruapehu District Council (the relevant Local authority),
 - o Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand,
 - o Tongariro-Taupō Conservation Board,
 - o KiwiRail,
 - o Visit Ruapehu.
- some evidence of local support (ie those living in the area), noting there is also evidence of local opposition,
- the Board's primary responsibility to name geographic features and its purpose to achieve a coordinated and standardised approach to official naming, noting evidence of longstanding confusion about the name of the village is partly as no name was made official through a statutory process,

Noting that the wider 'National Park' addressable locality in the NZ Suburbs and Localities dataset managed by Toitū Te Whenua LINZ, which the proposed Waimarino (village) and Waimarino Station sit within, would need to be changed to Waimarino; and an existing nearby addressable locality 'Waimarino' would need to be changed as well; so as to avoid confusion,

Noting the implications for associated Community Board names which are not in the Board's naming jurisdiction,

and notify as a proposal to alter for three months.

and

Decline the proposal to alter National Park Station to Waimarino Station,

and

Accept a new proposal from the Board to **alter** the existing unofficial recorded railway station name National Park Station to **Waimarino Railway Station**, based on:

- the Board's longstanding consideration that railway stations should typically be named for the populated places they service, for consistency and to prevent confusion for travellers and tourists,
- ensuring standard and consistent generic terminology for official railway station names, ie 'Railway Station' not 'Station',
- KiwiRail's agreement to the proposal, being the rail operator, which is a Board requirement for railway feature name proposals,
- support from Ōwhango-National Park Community Board and Ruapehu District Council, and likely support from the other institutions which specifically supported the proposed name of the village,

and notify as a proposal to alter for three months.

Secretariat assessment and advice

The proposal

The proposals from Uenuku/Te Korowai o Wainuiārua are to alter:

- National Park to Waimarino, for the small village at the intersection of State Highway 4 and State Highway 47, northwest of Mount Ruapehu and west of Tongariro National Park, and
- National Park Station to Waimarino Station, for the railway station serving the village.

They advise that Waimarino refers to the '*numerous tributaries that flowed down the flanks of the maungā tūpuna to pool on the vast plains below*'. They consider that restoring the name would '*celebrate the deep and intrinsic links of our hapu/whānau to their lands and history*.' They note that over what is nearly 100 years of debate (and confusion) about the name National Park nobody sought to hear their voice, although their narratives and associations of Waimarino have not changed. Some presenters to the Ōwhango-National Park Community Board's 1 August 2023 hui described how they grew up using the name Waimarino only to find out about the name National Park later.

The proposers have provided evidence of wide institutional support for their proposals and some evidence of local community views (both supporting and opposing). This is detailed under the 'Consultation with others' heading below.

In December 2022 the Secretariat provided the proposers with all scanned Board archives relating to its decisions on National Park and Waimarino. The proposer combined this with other research such as in the Waimarino County archives to produce the chronological narrative '*The Change of name to Waimarino Controversy*' in the supporting information.

Acknowledging the comprehensiveness of their supporting evidence there are a few points clarified in a separate document in Supporting information, eg around what 'official names' were under the NZGB Act 1946, legal appellations, etc. These do not materially affect the rationale for the proposals nor the Secretariat's supporting recommendations.

Names shown on plans and maps

Early maps and survey plans name Waimarino for the plains, the stream, and the land block. Some plans name a Waimarino village and pā approximately 3.8km south of the current National Park at [Waikune](#). The pā name is correctly Ngātokoerua² and it's unclear if 'Waimarino' is colloquial, ie 'the village at Waimarino Plains'. The railway station opened in 1908 and the 'Town of Waimarino' was surveyed in 1910 and sections opened for sale on 26 February.³ After 1926 official maps show National Park consistently for the railway station. However, depiction of the village name is variable. Topographic and other map series' show an inconsistent transition from Waimarino to National Park. In 1985 the Secretary of the Board advised Lands and Survey staff that Waimarino should not be shown on topographic maps based on the Board's 1956, '58, and

² <https://www.govt.nz/assets/Documents/OTS/Central-Whanganui/Te-Korowai-o-Wainuiarua-Settlement-Summary-29-Jul-2023.pdf> - last accessed 5 September 2023

³ NZ Gazette 1910 (4) p.242

'69, decisions which declined proposals for Waimarino, and based on the Board's desire to discontinue use of alternative names.⁴

Some apparent inconsistency is due to the different purposes of maps. Cadastral maps continued to use 'Waimarino' for the legal appellation (correctly). Legal descriptions do not change until they are surveyed again even if the inhabited place name is altered (whether by the Board or unofficially). Most legal property parcels in National Park (village) are still described as being in 'Town of Waimarino'.

A full table of maps and survey plans is in Supporting information.

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

National Park is a small village approximately 19km south of Ōwhango and 26km north of Ohakune.

No generic term is proposed, which is normal for populated places⁵. No boundary extent is proposed, and the Secretariat does not recommend one be formally assigned.

National Park Station is a railway station at National Park (village) on the North Island Main Trunk railway line. The proposed name Waimarino Station does not include the full generic term 'Railway Station' which is needed for consistency. Nearly every official railway station name uses the full generic term.

Population

National Park (village) had a population of approximately 235⁶ under the 2018 census. However, it is an established tourist destination with over 1,000 beds, as well as holiday homes and club facilities, and reportedly grows to 1400 people at a '*conservatively estimated peak*'.⁷

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

[National Park](#) (village) and [National Park Station](#) are unofficial recorded names in the *Gazetteer*. The Honorary Geographic Board's eventual agreement to the railway station name as National Park in 1927 was not gazetted under [Section 17 NZGB Act 1946](#) with other Honorary Board decisions. It's unclear why not. [Tongariro National Park](#) (official name) is associated with the existing names, being their namesake.

[Waimarino Stream](#) (unofficial recorded) for a stream 4km south of the village, and [Waimarino Scientific Reserve](#) (official), for a Crown protected area on the edge of Erua Forest immediately west of the village, are associated names.

[Waimarino Forest](#) (unofficial recorded) is an associated name for a forest west of Raetihi, south-southwest of the proposal. 'Waimarino Forest' was used historically for the forest across the entire Waimarino Block. However, this name as shown on official maps is for a more recently established plantation forest.⁸

⁴ Board Archives File 22/2605/3 Vol. 13 f.326

⁵ *New Zealand Standard 1.4*

⁶ Based on the New Zealand 2018 Estimated Resident Population Statistical Grid 250 metre (prototype), 2022: <https://datafinder.stats.govt.nz/layer/110655-new-zealand-2018-estimated-resident-population-statistical-grid-250-metre-prototype-2022/>

⁷ [National Park Village Plan 2020-2030 \(2021\)](#) National Park Village Progressive Association – accessed 5 September 2023

⁸ <http://ngaporowaimarino.maori.nz/history/> - last accessed 5 September 2023

Duplications

A second [Waimarino Stream](#) (unofficial recorded) is a small stream south of Waimarino Forest and approximately 46km southwest of the proposal. This may be an original Māori name and a duplication rather than associated with the proposed names.

[Waimarino River](#) (unofficial recorded) is a 24km long river flowing into the south of Lake Taupō / Taupōmoana at Stump Bay northeast of Tūrangi, 47km northeast of the proposal. [Waimarino River Recreation Reserve](#) (official name) is at its mouth.

Confusion with duplicated Waimarino names is unlikely due to the different feature types and their generic terms. National Park is duplicated in the generic terms of the official names of 12 national parks other than Tongariro National Park, the next closest being Whanganui National Park. The closest access to Whanganui National Park is 22km west of National Park (village).

Board archives and Secretariat Research

An original village and pā in the early 1900s and prior was approximately 4km to the south. Waimarino Station opened in 1908 and the 'Town of Waimarino' was established in 1910. In 1926 the Railways Department agreed to a local request to alter the railway station name to National Park despite some protest from the recently established Honorary Geographic Board. Depiction of National Park for the village followed on official maps and in local use, but inconsistently due to confusion whether the village/township name had also been altered.

The Board declined proposals to alter National Park back to Waimarino three times in 1957/58, 1958, 1968/69. The decisions were based on a lack of local support, 'established' or long term use of National Park, and potential confusion for postal services as Waimarino County was based in Raetihi and Waimarino electorate in Taumarunui. The Board also considered both names to be confusing and suggested an alternative be put forward. In 1969 the Board declined a further proposal to alter 'Waimarino Township' to 'National Park Township'. This may have been due to confusion around legal appellations (unchanged as 'Town of Waimarino') but illustrate enduring confusion since the Board never gazetted either name. Confusion as to the village name is evident in the Board's archives, inconsistency on official maps, and in the proposal material.

Refer to separate document in Supporting information for more details.

Consultation with iwi

The proposers are mana whenua and have not included any evidence of consultation with other iwi. Based on Te Puni Kōkiri's Te Kāhui Māngai, Ngāti Hāua and Whanganui iwi have interests in the area.

The Secretariat wrote to these groups requesting any views on the proposal and wrote to Te Puni Kōkiri for advice as to whether there were other groups with ancestral interests in the area whose views should also be sought.

To date no responses have been received.

Consultation with others

The proposers have provided wide evidence of support included in their proposal from:

- Ōwhango-National Park Community Board (for both names),
- Ruapehu District Council (for both names, minuted resolution),
- Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (for the village),
- Tongariro-Taupō Conservation Board (for the village),
- KiwiRail (for the railway station),
- Visit Ruapehu (for the village),
- some locals (in deputations to the Community Board).

The proposal also includes evidence of some local opposition the proposal, including from the National Park Business Association. This may provide insight into what to expect should the proposals be accepted and notified.

Advice on orthography⁹

A Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori licensed translator confirmed the orthography for Waimarino.

Key Criteria from the [Standard for NZ place names](#)

1.6 Altered names: a name may be altered when:

- the location of a feature or place is unclear,
- it is confusing or ambiguous,

Any alteration should balance the cultural and historical significance of the name against long-term use and the practical need for location identification.

1.3 Undesirable names and other considerations

(a) The names of populated places should be unique and unambiguous. Populated place names should support identification for emergency services and property addressing.

Secretariat comment: Either name is unique for the village. However, confusion in addressing and postal services has been a longstanding issue when considering proposals for either name. For Waimarino, Waimarino County and Waimarino electorate (which no longer exist) were based elsewhere nearby, and mail intended for national park authorities for all national parks all across the country was received at National Park village. Similar issues for potential confusion with other Waimarino names could arise with the new Community Board and due to an addressing 'locality' to the south, unless they are changed.

The proposers contend (as have earlier proposals) that National Park is an ambiguous name due to the many national parks (Crown protected areas) across New Zealand. However, the proposal does not include any evidence of recent confusion for postal services or issues of identification to emergency services.

Having no gazetted decisions on the names has itself been a longstanding source of confusion. This potentially led to inconsistent naming on official documents. In 1968 and 1969 the Board received back to back proposals, the first seeking to alter National Park to Waimarino, the second vice versa, demonstrating confusion as to which was the 'existing' or 'official' name. Due to the issues with both names, the Board has also previously suggested that a different, entirely unique name should be put forward instead for the railway station and village.

⁹ The conventions and rules of how to write a language

(d) Long-term existing names or names that are in common local use may take precedence over new names if they conform to this standard.

Secretariat comment: The railway station was named Waimarino for 16 [note: 18] years and has been National Park Station since 1926 (97 years). National Park is in long term use for the village in local use and on official maps, which followed the change to the railway station name over time. However, Waimarino for the village remained in use on some official maps until 1973 (50 years ago). The proposers advise they continue to refer to the village as Waimarino.

Addressing implications and concerns or issues for emergency services

National Park (village) is within a 'National Park' locality in the [NZ Suburbs and Localities dataset](#). This covers a much greater area (~94.5km²) than the small village. This dataset is used to add 'locality' and 'suburb' names to official property addresses and is used for emergency response.

These areas are not necessarily the same as the Suburbs and Localities within the Board's jurisdiction as defined by the NZGB Act 2008. But they can be. The names and extents in the dataset are consistent with official Board decisions for place names as far as they can be.

Should National Park be altered to Waimarino for the village, the Secretariat would request Toitū Te Whenua LINZ to update the dataset for the wider locality name. However, 'Waimarino' is already a name in the dataset for a nearby area 33km to the south. This name is a legacy of the former area of Waimarino County whose former headquarters were in nearby Raetihi. The 'Waimarino' addressable locality covers approximately 250km² and is sparsely populated with 85 residents in the 2018 census.¹⁰ A map of the areas is in Supporting information.

The Secretariat would also make a recommendation to Toitū Te Whenua LINZ to update the dataset to use another name for the southern Waimarino addressable locality. Not changing the NZ Suburbs and Localities dataset would be confusing and undermine the statutory process, should the name be altered.

Other uses of the name

As a result of various former electorate and local government boundaries, an area identified as Waimarino has been in long term use for 120+ years for generally the same area, and entirely south of National Park. People likely have strong associations of the name Waimarino to this area. The latest iteration is Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board under Ruapehu District Council, established in 2022. Conversely, the proposed Waimarino is located in Ōwhango-National Park Community Board, so the proposal also has implications for this name. These names are not under the Board's naming jurisdiction.

See more details in Supporting information.

Cost implications

The Board considers that updating physical products such as signs, promotional material, maps, charts, should be completed over time and in the

¹⁰ Based on the New Zealand 2018 Estimated Resident Population Statistical Grid 250 metre (prototype), 2022: <https://datafinder.stats.govt.nz/layer/110655-new-zealand-2018-estimated-resident-population-statistical-grid-250-metre-prototype-2022/>

course of usual maintenance programmes. Costs for updating electronic documents such as databases are negligible.

However, there may be wider financial impacts due to the associated names described above. KiwiRail also erected new signs at National Park Railway Station in August 2023, reading 'Waimarino National Park'. The proposers advise that this new signage came as a surprise and they '*agree with kōrero that "Waimarino National Park" Station will potentially cause more confusion than a reversion to "Waimarino" Station.*'

Should Waimarino Railway Station become the official name then KiwiRail will need to replace the signs for compliance, also noting concerns they are confusing for travellers and tourists. This would incur a cost to them.

Media

Media coverage is likely should the Board accept the proposals, noting they are for outright changes to existing names for a tourist destination. *Newstalk ZB* and *Ruapehu Bulletin* have reported on the proposals already, eg:

- [Name change for National Park Village gains support](#), *Ruapehu Bulletin*, 9 August 2023
- [Unanimous RDC support for Waimarino name change](#), *Ruapehu Bulletin*, 13 September 2023

Supporting information

1. Proposal for Waimarino – 2023-08-08
2. Proposal for Waimarino Station – 2023-08-21
3. Supporting document - Previous considerations by the Board and other commentary
4. Supporting document - Secretariat research for Waimarino proposals.
5. Map of NZ Suburbs and Localities dataset from National Park to Waimarino (the southern one)
6. Media articles