

**Media release**

18 January 2023

**Geographic Board opens consultation to change Russell to its original Māori name, Kororāreka**

*The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa is calling for public feedback on the proposal to change the name of the nation's first capital, Russell, to its original Māori name, Kororāreka.*

Russell, a small township in the Bay of Islands, has a special place in Aotearoa New Zealand's history. It was one of the first places where Europeans settled, and was well known as Kororāreka until the early 1840s. To this day, the township is still known as Kororāreka by many in the community.

Kororāreka tells the story of an unwell chief who was brought back to health with soup made from the little blue penguin. He declared "how sweet is the penguin" – kororā: blue penguin; reka: sweet.

Russell was named after the leader of the British House of Commons, Lord John Russell, who never visited Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Board encourages the use of original Māori names for places and features, especially when there is support from mana whenua.

The proposal to officially change the name to Kororāreka has had local support from Te Rūnanga ā Iwi o Ngāpuhi and the Far North District Council, and the Board wants to hear the public's views, whether supporting or objecting to the name change, to ensure all viewpoints are considered before a final decision is made.

The proposal is open for public submissions from 18 January 2023 to 18 April 2023. The Board will then consider feedback at its mid-year hui.

Anyone can make a submission supporting or objecting to the name change and also share their views on where the official boundaries of the township should be set, either [online](#) or by emailing [nzgbsubmissions@linz.govt.nz](mailto:nzgbsubmissions@linz.govt.nz).

Submissions can also be made by letter to the Secretary of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, c/o Land Information New Zealand, PO Box 5501, Wellington 6145.

The Board has also added macrons to three other names in the vicinity: Kororāreka Point, Kororāreka Point Scenic Reserve and Kororāreka Bay.

### **About Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa**

Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa New Zealand Geographic Board is an independent statutory body. The Board is supported and administered by Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand.

Anyone may propose a name for a geographic feature or place. The Board uses naming guidelines and standards and follows international good practice to help it to make robust and enduring decisions.

The Board recognises the importance of pronunciation in te reo and macrons support both pronunciation and meaning. Therefore, the Board follows the orthographic conventions of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (Māori Language Commission).

If the Board doesn't agree with a proposal, it may consult on a different proposal considered to be more appropriate.

The Board consults with relevant agencies, local communities, stakeholders and iwi. It researches all proposals and encourages the use of original Māori place names. Official place names must be used in all official documents like road signs, maps, websites, databases and publications for tourists.

Anyone can [make a submission](#) on proposed place names, either [online](#) or by emailing [nzgbsubmissions@linz.govt.nz](mailto:nzgbsubmissions@linz.govt.nz), or by mailing directly to the Board's Secretariat.

Official and recorded place names can be searched in the [New Zealand Gazetteer](#).

#### **Media enquiries:**

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