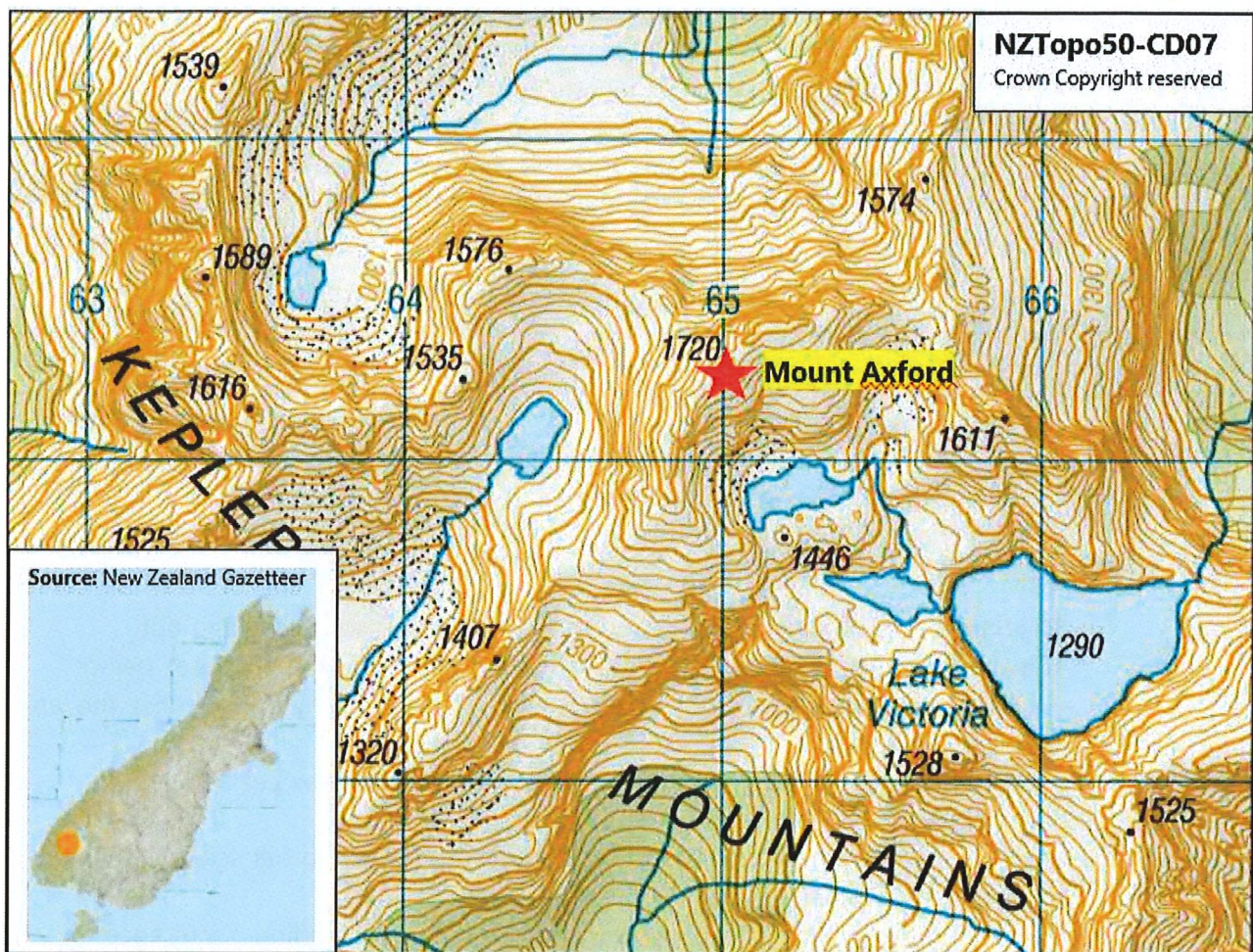


# Submissions for Mount Axford

[new name]

Considered by the Board on 22 July 2021



## Summary

At its hui on 20 April 2021 the Board accepted a proposal to assign Mount Axford as the official name of the unnamed highest point in the Kepler Mountains. During the notification period from 27 May 2021 to 28 June 2021 the Board received 27 submissions supporting and two submissions objecting to the proposal.

The supporting submitters consider it to be an appropriate and fitting tribute to name the mountain for the late Sir Ian Axford, who was an outstanding leader, teacher and mentor, and one of New Zealand's most distinguished, influential, and eminent scientists.

One objecting submitter considers that the Board should delay its decision until Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRONT) has capacity to advise an original Māori name. The other objecting submitter considers that adding another scientist from a similar field prejudices opportunities for those who have excelled in different areas, and proposed Mount Tohungatanga ('to-hu-nga-tanga' meaning expertise, competence, great skill) as an alternative name. This suggestion has merit. However, this alternative contemporary Māori name could be applied to any other unnamed feature in the Kepler Mountains. The proposal for Mount Axford is specific to the 1720m mountain and there is no compelling reason to change the original proposal.

The reasons given in the objecting submissions are not considered to outweigh the reasons that the Board accepted the proposal. During the Board's 20 April 2021 hui TRONT confirmed that the mountain does not have an original Māori name. Assigning Mount Axford as an official place name would not prejudice future opportunities to name features after people who have excelled in different areas, noting that the Board considers thematic naming to be appropriate. The Board has a strong desire to promote te reo Māori, including through the creation of contemporary Māori names for geographic features, so the objecting submitter may consider making a proposal to name any of the many other unnamed features Mount Tohungatanga.

---

At its hui on 22 July 2021 the Board resolved this recommendation

### Secretariat recommendation

---

**Consider** all submissions on the proposal to assign **Mount Axford** as a new official place name and their reasons,

**and**

**Reject** the two objecting submissions based on the reasons provided not outweighing those that the Board previously accepted for the proposal, being:

- an acknowledgement of the achievements of the pre-eminent scientist, the late Sir Ian Axford,
- continuing the theme of commemorating prominent New Zealand space scientists in the Kepler Mountains,
- the generic term 'Mount' being consistent with the two other scientist themed names on the Kepler Mountains, and
- naming the highest point on the Kepler Mountains providing a reference for recreational users and emergency responders as it is an area with very few names.

**Noting** that Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu has confirmed that the mountain does not have an original Māori name,

**and**

**Confirm** the Board's earlier decision to accept the proposal to assign **Mount Axford** as an official place name,

**and**

**Report** the Board's decision to the Minister for Land Information **and request** the Minister to make the final determination on the proposal,

**and**

Following the Minister's final determination, subject to the Minister confirming the Board's decision, **inform** the objecting submitters that no original Māori name exists for the feature and invite a new proposal to assign Mount Tohungatanga to another unnamed feature in the Kepler Mountains.

---

## Background

### Draft Board minutes 20 April 2021

[abridged]

The Board was concerned that the late Sir Ian Axford was not associated with, or had connections to, the area where the feature is. The theme of naming features on the Kepler Mountains is after space scientists, for example, Mount Pickering and Mount Tinsley, who also didn't have a connection to the area. There is an implied association because of Sir Ian's achievements as an astrophysicist. Sir Ian Axford made a huge contribution to New Zealand science, and it is a strategic goal of the Board to recognise/commemorate prominent New Zealanders in place names. Naming the mountain for Sir Ian Axford would continue the theme of commemorating prominent New Zealand space scientists in the Kepler Mountains. TRONT confirmed later in the hui that the mountain does not have an original Māori name.

---

## Notification

Advice to mana whenua of public notification

On 29 April 2021, the Secretariat advised TRONT that the Board would be publicly notifying the proposal for submissions between 27 May 2021 and 28 June 2021. TRONT has not made a submission.

Advice to MPs

On 1 June 2021, the Secretariat advised the Members of Parliament for Te Tai Tonga and Southland, and all adjacent electorates that the proposal was open for submissions until 28 June 2021.

Public notification including social media

The Board advertised the proposal:

- in the [New Zealand Gazette](#),
- in the *Sunday Star Times* and *Southland Express*,
- on the Toitū Te Whenua LINZ<sup>1</sup> [Consultation](#) and [Facebook](#)<sup>TM</sup> pages, and
- on the New Zealand Government's [Consultation](#) page.

An advertisement was submitted to Te Puni Kōkiri's [events calendar Rauika](#) on 27 May 2021 but was not published.

The Secretariat also advised DOC<sup>2</sup> that the proposal was open for public consultation until 28 June 2021.

---

## Media

The Board released a media advisory in English on 28 May 2021 and te reo Māori on 31 May 2021, which was also [posted on the Toitū Te Whenua LINZ website](#). [scoop.co.nz](#) and [voxy.co.nz](#) syndicated the English version on 28 May 2021.

---

## Summary of the 27 supporting submissions

During the notification period between 27 May 2021 and 28 June 2021 the Board received 27 submissions supporting the proposal. Many of the submitters identified as having a connection to the late Sir Ian Axford, either personal, academic, or as a colleague. Half of the supporting submissions are from overseas.

---

<sup>1</sup> Land Information New Zealand

<sup>2</sup> Department of Conservation

The supporting submissions reaffirm the reasons the Board accepted the proposal:

- it is a fitting tribute and recognition of one of New Zealand's most distinguished, influential, and eminent scientists whose contribution to international scientific research is acclaimed by space scientist communities,
- Sir Ian Axford was an outstanding leader, teacher and mentor who also gave generously to his local community,
- it is an appropriate and a fitting honour to commemorate Sir Ian Axford with other New Zealand space scientists in the Kepler Mountains.

Sir Ian Axford's wife and family also confirmed their full support for the proposal.

Southland District Council's GIS<sup>3</sup> team advised that it is not aware of local impacts or effects on the council's geographic processes.

One submitter supporting 'ingoa Māori' made the same submission for most of the ten proposals open for consultation, including Mount Axford. Therefore, it is questionable if the submitter supports this proposal.

---

## Summary of the two objecting submissions and the Secretariat's comments

The Board received two objecting submissions during the public notification period with these reasons:

- Delay decision until TRONT has capacity to advise an original Māori name.
- Adding another scientist prejudices opportunities for those who have excelled in different areas. Suggests Mount Tohungatanga ('to-hu-nga-tanga' meaning expertise, competence, great skill) as an alternative proposal to reflect cultural and contemporary attributes and extraordinary achievements. Mount Tohungatanga would provide a cultural and physical reference for tourist operators, profitable marketing campaigns, recreational users, and emergency responders.

During the Board's 20 April 2021 hui TRONT confirmed that the mountain does not have an original Māori name. TRONT may make a proposal to alter if an original Māori name is discovered in the future.

Assigning Mount Axford as an official place name would not prejudice future opportunities to name features after people who have excelled in different areas. However, the Board considers that thematic naming is appropriate (*New Zealand Standard 1.1(f)*) and there is an existing theme of space scientists in the Kepler Mountains. The Board has a strong desire to promote te reo Māori, including through the creation of contemporary names for geographic features. The submitter may consider making a proposal to name another unnamed feature Mount Tohungatanga. However, while 'Mount Tohungatanga' would be a unique name, Mount Tohunga (*lit.* expert, skilled person) was officially assigned in 1979 to a peak in Butler Range, near Franz Josef/Waiau. There are also several 'Tohunga' names in Te Ika-a-Māui.

---

<sup>3</sup> Geographic Information System

## **Supporting information**

1. Board report – Mount Axford – 2021-04-20
2. Online submissions spreadsheet (26 supporting, two objecting)
3. One supporting submission not received through the online platform

