

Place Name Summary Report

Wanganui to Whanganui

(spelling alteration)

General Background

Board's decision of 27 March 2009:

- ① **accepts** the proposal to change the spelling of Wanganui to Whanganui, based chiefly on the Board's statutory functions:
 - to examine the spelling of place names;
 - to collect original Māori place names;
 - to encourage the use of original Māori place names; and
 - to seek advice from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) on Māori place name orthography.
- ② **notes** the decision is also based on the fact that tangata whenua and many iwi from the region strongly support the change; that many other people support the change (though they are a minority); and many other organisations now use Whanganui in their business names.
- ③ **proceeds** to publish in the NZ Gazette and publicly notify as a Board proposal, for a period of not less than 3 months. The Board will determine which newspapers or publications to notify in.
- ④ **recognises** that submissions objecting to such a proposal that are not upheld by the Board would result in the final determination being made by the Minister for Land Information.

Resolution

The Board, in noting that it has a function to investigate/consider the correct spelling of original Māori names, and that there is a valid case made to change the spelling of the name of the city, and that the public should be given an opportunity to make their views known directly to the Board, resolves to proceed to publicly notify for a period of 3 months, the proposal to correct the spelling from 'Wanganui' to 'Whanganui'.

Further comment on the Board's Decision to Proceed to the Public Notification/Consultation Phase:

The Board:

Recognised	the correct spelling as Whanganui, and
Acknowledged	the local long term usage of Wanganui, and
Noted	the outcome of the referendum of 2006, and
Noted	that the Wanganui District Council advised that no change be made to the spelling of 'Wanganui' – either city or district:

The Board considered that there is now much more documentation and information available from the research that was provided by the proposers and extra research undertaken by the Board, and the Board believes the public of New Zealand, including the people of Wanganui, need an opportunity to consider this matter in the light of this new information, and make those views known directly to the Board.

NZGB Communications:

- March 2009 Communications Plan (now updated version of July 2009 attached)
- 30 March 2009 Emails to McCaw Lewis Chapman and Wanganui District Council
- 30 March 2009 Advice to LINZ Customer Support (0800 and info@linz to be prepared for the high volume of calls from the public and media about the Board's decision, and advice on how to respond)
- 30 March 2009 Email to Minister for Land Information's press secretary
- 30 March 2009 Media release, including frequently asked questions; the summary/proposal report completed by the Secretary; and links to the webpages about the Board and consultation/decisions
- From 30 March 2009 Numerous TV and Radio interviews by the Chair

- From 30 March 2009 Numerous responses to various newspapers managed by Strategic Communications staff, Secretary and the Chair
- 14 May 2009 NZ Gazette Notice, LINZ webpages, online submission form with auto response
- 25 May 2009 Media release re statement from the Board regarding the outcome of the Wanganui Referendum 09
- 24 July 2009 Email to various local newspapers and other local media advising that the submissions deadline is less than a month away
- 12 August 2009 Biographical information about the Board members posted on website
- 18 August 2009 Webpage statement that consultation period ends and the online submission form is no longer available

Advice to the Minister for Land Information:

- 30 March 2009 Weekly Status Report
- 6 April 2009 Weekly Status Report
- 22 May 2009 Briefing
- 29 June 2009 Weekly Status Report
- 4 September 2009 Briefing
- 7 September 2009 Weekly Status Report
- 14 September 2009 Weekly Status Report

Submissions:

Notes:

- Refer to the CD provided, for copies of each submission received. Physical files with paper copies of all submissions will be available at the Board's meeting.
- Refer also to the 3 separate summary spreadsheets for objecting, supporting and neutral submissions, including categorisations of the reasons provided by all submitters.
- Refer also to the system generated spreadsheet produced for the 672 online submissions.
- The information in these spreadsheets does not replace each full submission received, and is provided only to assist the Board members in their review of all of the submissions. Board members will have available to them, copies of each full submission received.

Statistics

The following statistics indicate the breakdown of views as at the end of August 2009. However, majority/minority numbers may not necessarily influence the Board's consideration – they assist the Board in gauging public views. Equally relevant are the reasons provided by submitters to back up their submissions, which provide the Board with the indicators and rationale on which it must assess against its statutory functions and its naming policies, in order to reach its decision.

1. During the 3 month submission period (14 May 2009 to 17 August 2009):

Number of objecting submissions	414
Number of supporting submissions	429
<u>Number of neutral submissions/correspondence</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number of submissions	847

2. Prior to the statutory consultation period (27 March 2009 – 14 May 2009):

Number of objecting submissions	26
Number of supporting submissions	6
<u>Number of neutral submissions/correspondence</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number of submissions	36

3.	After the statutory consultation period (after 17 August 2009):	
	Number of objecting submissions	4
	Number of supporting submissions	1
	<u>Number of neutral submissions/correspondence</u>	<u>2</u>
	Total number of submissions	7
4.	Overall total objecting submissions	444
	Overall total supporting submissions	436
	<u>Overall total neutral submissions/correspondence</u>	<u>10</u>
	Overall total number of submissions	890

Online Submission Form

This option was very well used by the public, accounting for around 3/4 of the total number of submissions received. Some respondents made more than one submission, sometimes with additional reasons, and these were counted as one submission, but all their reasons were captured. LINZ is currently working on making an online submission form available for all proposed place names in the future.

Objections that Support the Existing Name of Wanganui

The number of objecting submissions that stated their support for the existing name of Wanganui was 87.

Alternative Names Provided

The following are the alternative suggestions provided by submitters who objected to the proposal for changing Wanganui to Whanganui.

- Petrie (sic)
- Petre (3 submitters)
- W^hanganui
- Wanganui/W'anganui
- Wanganui/Whanganui (6 submitters)
- Lawsland
- Fonganui
- The River City
- Waenganui
- W'anganui

Where are the Submitters from?

This question has been posed by the media. It was also reported that the Mayor of Wanganui considered that the people of Wanganui should be making this decision, not the rest of New Zealand. Submitters have not been asked to provide details of where they live, but where this has been provided, it has been entered in the 3 separate summary spreadsheets.

Correspondence to the Minister for Land Information, received by the NZGB on 8 September 2009

Opposing the change = 22; Supporting the change = 1 (from Hon. Tariana Turia)

Adding these to the submission statistics brings the overall totals to:

Overall total objecting submissions	466] 29 difference
Overall total supporting submissions	437	
<u>Overall total neutral submissions/correspondence</u>	<u>10</u>	
Overall total number of submissions	913	

Original Proposal From Te Rūnanga o Tupoho Re-stated:

The submitter is Te Rūnanga o Tupoho (submitted on their behalf by lawyers McCaw Lewis Chapman), who are seeking to correct the spelling for the name of the city (not the territorial authority district) from 'Wanganui' to 'Whanganui'. The proposal, dated 11 February 2009, covers the following points:

1. that the logical next step after correcting the river name, is to correct the name for the city, which takes its name from the river;
2. early evidence of the intended spelling as Whanganui;

3. Waitangi Tribunal briefs of evidence by three separate claimant groups;
4. evidence of local and growing usage of Whanganui as the spelling used by organisations and businesses in the city.

The submitter had also provided:

- (a) A written submission by Te Kenehi Mair on behalf of Te Rūnanga o Tupoho and Te Iwi o Whanganui;
- (b) A consultation/communication report;
- (c) A cultural report prepared by Che Wilson;
- (d) An historical report prepared by Bruce Stirling;
- (e) A Statement of Evidence by Rangi Wills (a current Wanganui Councillor) that was filed as part of the Wai 999/Te Poho o Matapihi hearings before the Waitangi Tribunal; and
- (f) Two historical maps referring to the town as Whanganui.

Protocol for Māori Place Names:

In terms of this Protocol, two iwi were written to on 7 April 2009, seeking their views on the proposal (Whanganui River Māori Trust Board and Te Whiringa Muka Trust).

The Whanganui River Māori Trust Board had written to the Board on 4 March 2009 to advise of its support for the proposed spelling correction, but no further correspondence has been received.

Te Whiringa Muka Trust has not responded.

Other iwi to offer support include:

- Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Iwi, letter of 12 February 2009
- Te Ahi Kā o Paerangi, letter of 20 February 2009
- Ngā Tai o Te Awa, letter of 4 March 2009

Referendum 2009:

61% of the registered population voted (over 19,000 voters):

- 77% preferred that the city and district be spelt as 'Wanganui'
- 22% preferred the name change to 'Whanganui'
- 1% informal/blank

This response provides the Board with a very clear indication that the majority of people in the Wanganui District who responded to the referendum, do not want the spelling of their city name changed, no matter what their reasons. This response aligns with the earlier 2006 referendum that the Council undertook. The 2009 referendum was done at a time when the community had much more information available, so as to allow them to make an informed vote. It should be noted that the Board had agreed to proceed to public consultation in 2009, so as to receive direct feedback from the community. The Board did not ask the Council to arrange for the 2009 referendum.

When considering the results of any referenda, other factors may need be noted:

- The unknown views of a large proportion of the community who did not vote (39%). However, the response rate is relatively high for a local authority referendum;
- Polling in this way can simplify the decision action for people, by providing an accessible means to allow them to respond when they may not normally otherwise get involved;
- The issue of who has the most votes does not necessarily apply in matters relating to any place name. Progress towards addressing historical errors might never gain popularity with the mainstream population, if numbers alone were permitted to decide, in every case;
- Through the normal statutory process, the Board seeks submissions with reasons, but none are provided through a referendum.

Polls/Blogs:

- New Zealand Herald, 13 May 2009, web log: http://blogs.nzherald.co.nz/blog/your-views/2008/5/13/should-it-be-wanganui-or-whanganui/?l_id=322&objectid=10571961
- The Research New Zealand poll of 501 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between the 24 and 30 April:
 - 28% wanted to include the 'h'
 - 54% wanted the spelling to remain the way it is
 - 13% didn't care
 - 5% didn't knowsee <http://www.researchnz.com/pdf/Media%20Releases/RNZ%20Media%20Release%20-%2005-08-09%20Half%20of%20Kiwis%20happy%20with%20Wanganui%20spelling.pdf>
- Stuff web log, 56 comments: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/1997406/W-swapped-for-Wh>

Board under the Spotlight:

Much attention has been focussed on the Board through this debate, with criticism such as:

- the composition of membership (perceived imbalance of Māori members)
- being a bunch of bureaucrats
- political correctness gone mad

With the raised profile, there has been an opportunity to provide some education to the public through media responses and through the LINZ website. An invitation to speak with Wanganui North Rotary Club members in May had to be turned down by the Chair due to other commitments as Surveyor-General and the probability that other organisation would likely extend invitations to speak also, which would not be manageable.

Kensington Swan:

- 21 April 2009 Advice that Kensington Swan have been asked to act for Wanganui District Council
- 27 May 2009 Advice that the Wanganui District Council had sought a legal opinion from Kensington Swan on whether the Board had followed a proper process

The Board should be aware that judicial review may be sought no matter what the outcome.

Official Information Act Requests:

- 31 March 2009 From Mayor Michael Laws, responded to on 15 April 2009, 30 April 2009, and 24 June 2009
- 6 April 2009 From Sarah Bristow, TVNZ, responded to on 16 April 2009
- 8 April 2009 From Mr Crafar, responded to on 15 April 2009
- 27 April 2009 From Mr Lincolne, responded to on 5 May 2009
- 14 May 2009 From Renika Smillie, McCaw, Lewis, Chapman, responded to on 19 May 2009
- 18 August 2009 From Simon Wood, The Dominion Post, responded to on 20 August 2009

Documentary Evidence:

Despite views expressed to the contrary, there is a significant amount of historical documentation that supports the spelling with an 'h'.

It has been suggested that there was no record of Wanganui being spelt with an 'h' in the nineteenth century. In fact both forms of spelling were frequently used – sometimes both in the same document – by both Māori and Pakeha. For example, in the Crown Purchase Deed from 1848 when the Crown purchased the land from Māori, W(h)anganui is spelt with and without the 'h'. And while the spelling without an 'h' was more common in newspapers, research on digital news archives has

uncovered thousands of references in New Zealand newspapers in the nineteenth century where it was spelt with an ‘h’ – especially newspapers in other parts of New Zealand reporting news from the town of ‘Whanganui’. Some examples of this spelling even appeared in the Wanganui Herald between 1876 and 1909 – often when reprinting articles about the town from other newspapers in New Zealand. There were also official documents in the nineteenth century that used the spelling with an ‘h’. Land titles issued by the Native Land Court state that the court sat in ‘Whanganui’ and recorded titles in the District of ‘Whanganui’.

However, the documentary evidence of the name spelt without the ‘h’ is noted as far outweighing the evidence with the ‘h’, as revealed in the research by Diana Beaglehole.

Oral Evidence:

The Board has not pursued this directly from iwi, but has noted the local dialect sets the tangata whenua of this area apart. However, the proposal to include the ‘h’ comes from local iwi and the Board has received evidence of support from the Whanganui River Māori Trust Board, Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Iwi, Te Ahi Kā o Paerangi, Ngā Tai o Te Awa. In addition, the original proposal provides evidence of support from Te Poho o Matapihi Trust, and briefs of evidence from other individuals. Refer also to the Board’s comment on orthography and pronunciation below.

Orthography and Pronunciation:

The Board’s discussion on these matters was noted in its minutes of its meeting of 27 March 2009:

- *The most obvious dialectical variation in Te Reo Māori is in the pronunciation of consonants and the presence of those variations is a common cause of discussion, much of which is not well informed. The now standard orthographic representation of [wh] to represent the soft /f/ sound is long established in written Māori. The pronunciation of [wh] ranges from a ‘pure’ [h] through to ‘soft’ [f] to an aspirated [h] (as in Eng. ‘wheel’/‘where’) and a ‘pre-aspirated’ [h]. The range of dialectical variation in pronunciation of Te Reo Māori is substantially less than in standard English. The Whanganui River tribes tend to use the soft /f/ variant of [wh], whereas their neighbours of Southern Taranaki tend to the ‘pre-aspirated’ [h]. It is not correct to say that the latter “drop their Hs” as English speakers do with ‘honest’. Whatever the dialectical pronunciation, however, the correct orthography to represent the name of the river from which the present town takes its name, is ‘Whanganui’. A further consideration is that the usage of ‘Wanganui’ has no meaning. A news clip from TV3 News 2006 was shown to the Board members so they may hear pronunciation from local iwi. The Board’s mandate does not run to pronunciation, however. It is limited to correct orthography and the correct application and recording of place names. In following that mandate the Board must rely on a range of authoritative sources and scholarship. In respect of Māori place names those sources and scholarship should have standing within Te Ao Māori.*
- *The issue of spelling in relation to pronunciation shows a lack of understanding for any language, citing that words in English are spelt differently but pronounced the same.*
- *Pronunciation should be seen as a separate issue and not what the Board rules on, it should be left to the individual.*
- *The letter from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) of 3 March 2009 was noted, in particular: “The word Whanganui is a compound word made of the words ‘whanga’ and ‘nui’. There is no such word as ‘wanga’ in the Māori lexicon. The convention is that however a word is said, its standard form is written to convey meaning and it is widely accepted that ‘whanga’ is written with an ‘h’. How people choose to represent it orally is a separate issue.”*

Linguistic¹/Typographic²/Lexicographic³:

Several comments have been made about these matters. The task of transcribing an oral language with regional variations naturally posed challenges to those taking on the task. New Zealand was one of the last countries to be ‘colonised’ by the British, and so had some advantage in respect to these fields having been formerly studied, refined and standardised with the benefit of experiences from other ‘colonisation’. Generally the task was undertaken with a high degree of scholarship, applied consistently, but naturally not without human error.

Further Research:

Diana Beaglehole – research report commissioned by the Wanganui District Council

In her paper (which she advises that she only had a month to produce and so was not able to sight every record at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Archives NZ, and Wanganui Museum), she touches on ‘Wanganui’ being used by the Rev. Richard Taylor.

It should be noted that Bishop Selwyn demanded that ‘Whanganui’ be used, at the first synod in 1844, but Taylor probably influenced the retention of ‘Wanganui’.

Diana Beaglehole confirmed that her paper, posted on the Council website, is her full report and not a summary.

She also confirmed that the ‘nigh on 100 years’ comment related to the fact that her research extended up to the mid-twentieth century – so she was not referring to when the NZGB Act 1946 took over the role of official names.

There has been some criticism of Diana Beaglehole’s research paper, but this needs to be balanced with her statement about the scope of the research, which essentially provides evidence of the written record.

Dr Phil Parkinson

Dr Parkinson is a librarian at the Alexander Turnbull Library. Refer to his comment in his letter dated 28 April 2009, about the debate in the early 1840s within the church, and that the promulgation without the ‘h’ was “probably due to the influence of Rev. Richard Taylor, the local missionary, who was a notoriously bad philologist and lexicographer.”

Dr Parkinson has provided significant evidence of the use of the ‘h’ in early historical records, and the fact that the issue of spelling was one which began from the 1840s.

Secretariat

Other historical land records held by LINZ:

W(T)19a	no date	Town of Petre
W(T)6	1842	Map of the County Sections of the District of Wanganui
G171	1863	Petre and Whanganui River
G156	1887	Lighthouse Chart showing Wanganui

Several very early accounts also refer to Knowsley Bay.

Official Status:

In terms of the NZGB Act 2008, the name of Wanganui city is not an official name at the moment. Wanganui remains as a ‘recorded’ name, which means that it has been consistently shown that way on authoritative maps. This is based on the legal definition of ‘official geographic name’ in section 4 of the NZGB Act 2008. This essentially states that a name is official if it has been gazetted by the

¹ relating to language

² relating to the appearance of printed characters on the page

³ the writing and editing of dictionaries

current Board under the 2008 Act, the previous Board under the 1946 legislation or set by a Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Act. None of these actions have happened for the name of the city of Wanganui.

The name proposed by the New Zealand Company was Petre (pronounced Peter). The residents of the town petitioned the Governor in 1844 to change the name to that of the river, which was then spelt Wanganui. The change did not happen until 1854 when an Act was passed by the Provincial Council, but the wrong spelling was used, in terms of modern standard Māori – as advised by Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori. The Board noted that the name therefore had legal status at that time.

The Wanganui Herald, on 13 August 1902, reported a council meeting in which the then Mayor of Wanganui is reported to have sought, “to have the name of our town spelt correctly – viz, by reinstating the letter ‘h’ making it ‘Whanganui’ in accordance with its original name and meaning”. The Mayor said that, “many old residents always wrote the name of our town ‘Whanganui’; in fact, quite objected to the way in which it is now spelt and pronounced”. The Wanganui Herald, on 1 September 1902, reported a later meeting at which the matter was debated. One of the councillors opposing the change noted the advantages for mail delivery of being different from other towns that had corrected the spelling of similar names. He said, “the name of the town now stood in a group of four, nearly all the other towns that were spelled without the ‘h’ having of recent years, inserted it”. The motion to not change the name was passed and thus the name has remained unchanged.

Treaty of Waitangi:

At its previous meeting of 27 March 2009, the Board noted that the Waitangi Tribunal will be hearing through to next year (2010), and their report will not be available for two years, i.e. at least 2011, maybe 2012. The Board therefore did not wish to defer to wait for the Tribunal’s views.

The Waitangi Tribunal, in its consideration of the issue of the name of the city of Wanganui, may possibly recommend that this could be separately considered/negotiated as part of a future Treaty Settlement.

Media:

Every media article has been forwarded to the Board over the past several months since its last meeting. A physical file with paper copies will be available at the Board’s meeting for reference. The following list is a snapshot of the many articles published nationwide and are highlighted in particular as having captured the most relevant issues, and these are tagged in the physical file:

New Zealand Herald – Not for Mayor to decide on river city’s ‘h’, 31 March 2009
Gisborne Herald – Fight to add ‘h’ to Wanganui not over, 31 March 2009
Manawatu Standard – Right an old wrong, put ‘h’ in Wanganui, 31 March 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – H destined for Referendum 09, 1 April 2009
New Zealand Herald – With an ‘h’ is right. Must I spell it out, 1 April 2009
Greymouth Evening Star – The divisive letter ‘h’, 2 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Signs could hit the Highway, 3 April 2009
The Dominion Post – The magical potency of names, 3 April 2009
Auckland City Harbour News – It’s Whanganui not Wanganui, 3 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Wanganui or Whanganui – the Geographic Board responds, 4 April 2009
Sunday Star Times – We will fight the big H on behalf of all Khiwis, 5 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – The H or not – the official opinion, 6 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – H or no H: you choose, 7 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Officially sanctioned, 7 April 2009
Waikato Times – Brought to you by the letter ‘h’, 7 April 2009
The Dominion Post – Wanganui voters get to put an x by the h, 7 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Board stands firm over H, 8 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – The eyes of NZ will be on us, 8 April 2009
Cook Strait News – Just a thought, 8 April 2009

Otago Daily Times – Knowing out name and place, 11 April 2009
Otago Daily Times – Racism is never honorable, 11 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Laughable, 11 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Historical facts 13 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Ridiculed, 13 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Insulting argument, 13 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – H delays delivery of referendum papers, 17 April 2009
Hawkes Bay Today – Name calling storm in H-cup, 18 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Naming debates raise eyebrows, 23 April 2009
River City Press – Latest NZGB decision “crazy”: Implications for Wanganui, 23 April 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Not an ‘f’ word, 24 April 2009
Rotorua Daily Post – Name won’t alter its attraction, 1 May 2009
Sunday Star Times – What’s in a name, 3 May 2009
Sunday Star Times – What’s in a name, 3 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – ‘H’ submissions open next week, 8 May 2009
Taranaki Daily News – Study in language, 11 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Wanganui or Whanganui? Consultation begins, 15 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – WDC Poll return reaches new high, 15 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Phonetics, 15 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Questionable innovations, 15 May 2009
The Listener – What the ‘h’?, 16 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Historian’s research support mayor, 19 May 2009
words@press.co.nz – Different sounds lost in writing
NZ Doctor – No literacy help for W(h)anganui voters, 20 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Let us paddle together, 23 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – But how’s this for another suggestion?, 23 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – H: Wanganui says no, 23 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Second historian supports ‘H’ in Wanganui, 26 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – It’s a spelling mistake – time to set it right, 26 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Let’s make it official: Mayor, 26 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – The H Debate So which historian is right, 26 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Spelling views keep rolling – 29 May 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – 650 have their say as H-day revealed – 11 June 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Councillors wrestle through the ‘h’ debate – 21 July 2009
Wanganui Chronicle – Dual name for city could work, says council – 18 August 2009

Some media reports had indicated that politicians Tariana Turia and Chester Burrows supported the change to Whanganui, but this has not been substantiated by any direct correspondence with the Board by them, however Tariana Turia has corresponded directly with the Minister for Land Information, seeking that the ‘h’ be added.

Wanganui District Council:

- 30 March 2009 Mayor and Chief Executive of the Wanganui District Council emailed and advised of the Board’s resolution.
- 31 March 2009 OIA From Mayor Michael Laws, responded to on 15 April 2009, 30 April 2009, and 24 June 2009
- 10 August 2009 Submission objecting to the change, with reasons, seeking that the status quo remains.
- 16 August 2009 Individual submission from Councillor Rob Vinsen, advising of support for a dual spelling.

The Council used its website to engage the residents of Wanganui in this naming debate.

The Wanganui District Council has confirmed that it does not want the spelling of Wanganui changed to Whanganui. The reasons provided in their submission are summarised as:

1. Upholding democracy
2. Common usage
3. The community's choice
4. Pronunciation

A transcript from a Radio NZ interview with Mayor Michael Laws, dated 18 August 2009, gave Mayor Michael Laws' following response to a question on the possibility of compromising with a two name solution:

"Given that there are two variants out there now, and that these two have existed, or co-existed beside each other peacefully for probably the last 160 years, then why would the New Zealand Geographic Board be required to choose one over the other? We're not asking it to."

Refer also to a recent article by the Wanganui Chronicle of 18 August 2009, suggesting that the Council "appears to be willing to accept a compromise . . . suggesting that both Wanganui and Whanganui could be given equal recognition."

In response to the Wanganui Chronicle article, Mayor Michael Laws clarified what seems to be a misinterpretation of a discussion that he had with Tupoho representatives during the previous week: "I want to make it clear that the council's position is that Wanganui continues to be spelt without an H. That is the gist of our submission to the New Zealand Geographic Board.

"I do observe that as a result of both the river and the region being spelt with an H a dual usage of both Wanganui and Whanganui has grown over the years. This dual usage has generally been accepted by the community.

"It is not the council's intention to seek any compromise but rather to place before the New Zealand Geographic Board the reality of the present situation – an acceptance that both spellings have a currency and that one relates to the city and another to the river and region. It is certainly an option for the New Zealand Geographic Board to formally gazette dual spelling and then allow individuals and organisations to adopt the spelling that best suits them.

"However the council's and the community's preferred option is to preserve the status quo."

Human Rights Commission:

This agency provided a submission dated 17 August 2009, stating its preference is that the spelling of Whanganui be adopted as the official name, but identifying a range of options for resolving the naming debate:

- preserve the status quo
- preserve the status quo but review within a specified time frame (e.g. five years)
- approve a dual name as 'Wanganui / Whanganui'
- approve an alternative name, so people can use either 'Wanganui' or 'Whanganui'
- change the name as part of a future Treaty settlement in the area
- change the name now.

Implications:

The Board acknowledges the concerns of people about numerous and significant impacts that changing the name would have on matters including:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Financial | • Confusion |
| • Race relations | • Other Wanganui names |
| • Business | • Precedent |
| • Tourism | • Legal Documents |
| • Emergency response/services | • NZ Post |
| • Cultural Recognition | • Transition |

However, should the change be agreed, then it would not affect the names of businesses, although it would affect their postal and physical addresses. If the name Whanganui becomes official, the government departments and local authorities that publish new documents (such as maps, but also including web pages) would be expected to use the official name. For private businesses and

organisations, it only applies to publications they produce that are intended for travellers or tourists (and for geographic and scientific publications). Therefore businesses or community groups supporting the tourist industry would be expected to use the official name in new tourist brochures – but only when referring to the city itself, rather than the valley or region. Other businesses could choose whether to adopt the official name in their business name and their publications, or whether to retain the historical spelling. Even within the tourist industry, there would be no requirement to change the names of any business or company – such as motels, guest houses, and so on.

Some people have expressed concern over their historical documents such as birth certificates, etc. These would not be required to change, so no cost would be incurred.

Note that the Wanganui District Council can apply to the Board to change its territorial authority name, but the Board has no power to change the name of the Council without the Council's agreement.

Note that there will be implications for the Board itself in respect to the precedent set, which might affect future Board decisions.

Examples of recent Proposals for Populated Places, with Objections:

St Arnaud to Lake Rotoiti (locality in the Nelson Lakes area)

The community was split, with a significant number of the community opposing the change, and with a neutral stance from the Territorial Authority, the Board was not convinced to change the name.

Gowanbridge to Gowenbridge (locality in the Nelson Lakes area)

Most of the community (45 objections) opposed the change. The Board agreed not to proceed.

Orotu vs Parklands (suburb in Napier)

Six objecting submissions received, one of which included a petition with 550 names. Withdrawn upon request of the Mayor of Napier to the Minister for Land Information.

Flat Bush vs Ormiston (locality/town, Manukau city)

Four submissions objecting received to Flat Bush, one of which included 30 signatories. The Minister agreed to Flat Bush, which was an original name of long standing.

Pegasus (locality north of Christchurch)

New name. Three objections to Pegasus Bay, so the Board/Minister agreed to just Pegasus.

Tophouse Settlement (locality in the Nelson Lakes area)

One objection. Board/Minister agreed to Tophouse Settlement.

Eyrewell (locality north of Christchurch)

One objection. Board/Minister agreed to Eyrewell.

NZGB Act 2008 - Statutory References

Section 3(e) of the NZGB Act 2008; the purposes of this Act are to:

“provide the means for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features.”

Section 6 of the NZGB Act 2008; Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) clause

Section 11(1) of the NZGB Act 2008; in order to carry out its principal functions under section 10, the Board may:

- (a) adopt policies, rules, standards, protocols, guidelines, or similar instruments for carrying out its functions, including, but not limited to, rules, standards, protocols, or guidelines that it

- considers appropriate for the spelling and systematic designation of official geographic names:
- (b) examine cases of doubtful spelling of names and determine the spelling to be adopted on official charts or official maps:
 - (d) collect original Māori names for recording on official charts and official maps:
 - (e) encourage the use of original Māori names on official charts and official maps:
 - (f) seek advice from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) on the correct orthography of any Māori name.

Board Policies

The following guidelines are copied from the Frameworks Document, which is currently under review to align it with the NZGB Act 2008. These practices relate to headings: ‘Spelling Standards’, ‘Nomenclature’, ‘Name Changes’, and ‘Suburb and Locality Names’:

- the views of tangata whenua Māori are taken into account
- names in long term local usage normally take precedence, but, subject to safety concerns, may be subject to spelling corrections or alteration if the correct version is discovered
- an original name, where suitable, should be given preference
- where the original name has been changed by publication or by local usage, the original name should be restored in the correct form
- where, however, the incorrect name has become established by local usage over a long period the Board may in its discretion retain such incorrect form
- where the choice lies between two or more names all sanctioned by local usage, then that which is most appropriate and euphonious should be adopted
- geographic names perform an important reference or label in language and for location. Consequently, changes to established names should not be made without good reason and should be considered carefully on a case by case basis.
- the Board should not change, for example the spelling of a name, if the incorrect form is in general public use and where a change may affect a community
- changes may be approved for statutory compliance
- changes may be approved to follow established local usage
- changes may be approved where there is an awareness that the current name is culturally inappropriate
- changes may be approved where the name is confusing to a local community
- changes may be approved where other issues e.g. safety, are a compelling reason to consider change
- support of the territorial authority is generally sought before the Board accepts a suburb or locality name
- consideration is given to local community views

Final Comment:

The decision on ‘Mount Taranaki or Mount Egmont’ in the 1980s was ground breaking and attracted a largely negative response from the public of New Zealand. Despite this, the then Board and Minister made the controversial though enlightened decision to restore Taranaki and 20 years on, that decision can be looked back upon as the correct decision to have made. Generally, people have accepted it and moved on. Similar thinking could be applied to this naming debate, and even though it is for a city as opposed to a mountain, the public response from the local community is comparable. Also, it is notable that a significant number of formal submissions received by the Board were in support of the ‘h’, and such a response cannot be easily ignored.

However, it is important to note the distinction between a geographic feature which had an original name prior to 1840 (e.g. the river), and communities which were established after 1840, where the name has greater impact on the residents of those communities.

It may also be worth recalling the decision over the changing of Murdering Beach to Whareakeake (Otago Peninsula) in the late 1980s/early 1990s. The Board's process failed to make this change, and consequently the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 promulgated it. Whareakeake was the only place name out of 89 that was not dual named.

In contrast however, there have been other examples (though less controversial) in the Board's history where the incorrect spelling has been upheld by the Board (or Minister), based on common and long term usage, as well as the community's response, e.g. Hataitai vs Whataitai.

It may be useful to note one of the purposes of the NZGB Act 2008 is to provide the means for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features [Section 3(e)]. This recognition relates to both Māori and non-Māori culture and heritage.

Essentially, the arguments for and against the inclusion of the 'h' can be reduced to:

- long term usage of Wanganui sought by the majority of the local community, as indicated by the 2009 referendum, by the Council's views, and by the objecting submissions
- versus*
- the correct spelling with an 'h' sought by tangata whenua Māori, with significant support expressed through the submissions

For the Whanganui proposal, the Board can be confident in the process it has followed and also of its consideration of all relevant information against its statutory obligations and rules of naming. This includes consideration of the significant response and reasons from submissions received (both for and against). Whether or not the final decision is to be made by the Minister for Land Information, the Board will have met its obligations in terms of its powers, functions and duties under the NZGB Act 2008.

Decision Options:

See table on page 15 of this Summary Report, for various decision scenarios. This is not a limited list, as Board members may determine other options.

There appears to be groundswell of support (though apparently not from iwi) for the possibility of both spellings being acceptable. There are three possible options that would allow both names to co-exist.

1. The Board could decline the proposal for Whanganui and could also decide not to make the current name Wanganui official at this time (and perhaps resolve not to reconsider the matter again for some period of time so as to let things settle down). This would result in the status quo where people can legally spell the name however they like in official documents – in particular both “Wanganui” and “Whanganui” would be allowed in law – as they are now. Under this option it would be expected that LINZ maps and charts would continue to use the current spelling Wanganui which has status as a ‘recorded’ name but not as an ‘official’ name.
2. The Board could gazette both names as official (dual naming). This is more problematic because dual naming is intended for places that have different names in two different languages – not really for variations in spelling. Therefore it does not sit well with international best practice in place naming or established naming practice/policy in New Zealand. Also the default position for a dual name is that both forms must be used together in official documents. For example “Aoraki/Mt Cook” is the official name of our highest mountain and is the name that appears on LINZ maps. Neither “Aoraki” nor “Mt Cook” are technically allowed as separate names in official documents. So dual naming would require “Whanganui/Wanganui” to always appear in that form in official documents – including LINZ maps.
3. Alternative naming is also a theoretical possibility (similar to that being proposed for the North and South Islands and that which applies to the alternative names of Mount Taranaki or Mount Egmont). For W(h)anganui the Board could decide to gazette the name in a form that required

one spelling or the other to be used at the discretion of the author of official documents. This would allow either “Whanganui” or “Wanganui” to be used with the status of an official name. What would then appear on LINZ’s maps is unclear. Again this does not fit with international best practice in place naming. Also, the small number of existing/proposed cases for alternative naming in New Zealand only have names in two different languages – not just variations in spelling.

While option 3 is possible, and may be considered by the Board, and would at least offer certainty as to what was allowed and what was required, it might also create a difficult precedent and does not offer any more flexibility (less in fact) than option 1.

Decision Options continued:

	Options	Permitted/Required Names in Official documents	Likely Depiction on LINZ Maps & Databases	Names not Permitted in Official Documents	Impact on Agencies, Businesses & Community
1	Status Quo. The proposal rejected and the current name left with the status of recorded name.	"Wanganui" OR "Whanganui" OR (any other name)	"Wanganui"		No compliance costs. LINZ maps and databases would probably continue using Wanganui as the status quo. Some agencies or businesses may change over time as a result of being informed by the debate.
1a	A variation to option 1 - the proposal rejected but the Board decides to review at some future date (e.g. 5 – 10 years ahead or 2015 after Treaty Settlements completed).	"Wanganui" OR "Whanganui" OR (any other name)	"Wanganui"		No compliance costs. LINZ maps and databases would probably continue using Wanganui as the status quo. Some agencies or businesses may change over time as a result of being informed by the debate.
2	The proposal rejected and the current name made official.	"Wanganui"	"Wanganui"	"Whanganui" AND (any other name)	No compliance costs. This will make the use of "Whanganui" in official documents (including those for tourists) contrary to the Act (unless referring to the river and region). No change to the name on LINZ maps and in databases.
3	The proposal accepted.	"Whanganui"	"Whanganui"	"Wanganui" AND (any other name)	Significant compliance costs. WDC and government agencies would be expected to comply in all new publications. LINZ databases would change immediately and maps would change on re-publication. Businesses are not required to change their names but those in the tourist sector would need to update their publications and brochures before the next publication.
3a	The proposal accepted but the gazette expressly allows a specified period of (say) several years of transition so as to reduce compliance costs.	"Whanganui" OR "Wanganui" (for x years)	"Whanganui"	(any other name)	Minimal (deferred) compliance costs covered by on-going maintenance and re-printing. WDC and government agencies required to change to the new spelling over time. LINZ databases would probably change immediately and maps would change on re-publication. Businesses are not required to change their names but those in the tourist sector would need to update their publications and brochures when re-printing within the timeframe.
4	Dual names.	"Wanganui/Whanganui" (or reverse order?)	"Wanganui/Whanganui" (or reverse order?)	"Wanganui" AND "Whanganui" AND (any other name)	Significant compliance costs. WDC and government agencies required to change to the new longer dual name. LINZ databases would change immediately and maps would change on re-publication. Businesses are not required to change their names but those in the tourist sector would need to update their publications and brochures.
5	Alternative names. Both the existing and new names can be retained and made official with the gazette expressly providing for either name to be used individually or together in official documents.	"Wanganui" OR "Whanganui" OR "Wanganui/Whanganui"	"Wanganui/Whanganui" (or reverse order?)	(any other name)	Minimal compliance costs except LINZ databases would probably change to the dual form immediately and maps would probably change on re-publication. Some agencies or businesses may change over time as a result of being informed by the debate.
5a	The gazette would permit the name to be written in alternative forms such as specified permitted abbreviations or spelling.	"Wanganui" OR "Whanganui"	"Wanganui"?	(any other name)	No compliance costs. LINZ maps and databases would continue to show the current name as the status quo. Some agencies or businesses may change over time as a result of being informed by the debate.
6	Other names have been suggested during public consultation and the Board is required to make a decision on them.	"Petrie" (sic) OR "Petre" OR "Wanganui/Whanganui" OR "Lawsland" OR "Fonganui" OR "The River City" OR "Waenganui"	"Petrie" (sic) OR "Petre" OR "Wanganui/Whanganui" OR "Lawsland" OR "Fonganui" OR "The River City" OR "Waenganui"	"Wanganui" AND "Whanganui" AND (any other name)	The suggestion of "Wanganui/Whanganui" is considered above under options 4 and 5. For the other suggestions there would be considerable compliance costs, confusion and disruption