

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday June 11, 2007

**Attention: All chief reporters, Māori affairs reporters
(fact sheet and map of affected area attached below)**



Hapū appeals airport plan to move children and marae

Ngāti Uenukukopako has appealed plans by Rotorua District Council and its airport company to force them to move their kohanga, kura and marae and stop them from building on ancestral land.

The Te Arawa hapū recently filed the appeal to the Environment Court against proposals which would introduce harsh land use restrictions and turn Rotorua Airport into an international aerodrome.

Hapū appellant Hera Naera said the proposals would be disastrous for Ngati Uenukukopako's future and the current Te Kohanga Reo and Te Kura Kaupapa o Ruamata Marae, Ruamata Marae, Pikirangi Marae and hapū members wanting to build homes.

“Even with the mitigation that's being offered, the hapū will still not be safe and able to grow and prosper – RDC and the airport company should be ashamed of themselves,” Mrs Naera said.

“This hapū is still recovering from the confiscation of their land, the relocation of their marae and the desecration of their burial grounds which allowed for this airport to be built in the first place.

“All the hapū want is what any other community in Rotorua wants – to ensure the health and safety of their children and to be able to develop their culture, land and resources in a sustainable way. And this is what they will be seeking in the appeal.

“Ngāti Uenukukopako has paid the piper and to ask them to compromise anymore than they already have would be tantamount to raping them all over again.”

Two independent commissioners heard submissions on the airport proposals, but hapū submitters believe the pair struggled to understand the impacts on the hapū, Mrs Naera said.

While central Government was addressing the hapū's historic land grievances, RDC and their airport company were advancing plans to repeat similar wrongs, Mrs Naera said.

Ends

For all media inquiries please contact Hera Naera, mobile 027 281 4465, phone (07) 349 0234, email ngatienukukopako@gmail.com

FACT SHEET

Monday June 11, 2007

Attention: All chief reporters, Māori affairs reporters



Ngāti Uenukukopako vs Rotorua District Council & Rotorua Regional Airport Ltd

Ngāti Uenukukopako contribution to Rotorua, New Zealand

- Reference to the Fenton Agreement and Maori Land Court records will show that Ngāti Uenukukopako gifted about 3000 acres for the township of Rotorua in 1880, had about 218 acres of arable land confiscated in 1900 to defray survey costs of about £98-0-0 and had land taken under the Public Works Act for the airport and the weigh bridge at Rotokawa.
- A number of Ngāti Uenukukopako men served in the wars, and many of them never returned home, to fight for the freedom of every man, woman and child of this country, and others, regardless of race or creed.

Memorandum of Understanding between RDC, RRAL and hapū

Rotorua District Council have been reported in the media as wanting to draw up a MOU with Ngāti Uenukukopako that will deal with the issues the hapū have about the airport but the council has not given the hapū any direct written or verbal indication of this.

Kohanga and kura

Because the proposals promote larger aircraft to run more frequently, the Ministry of Education views this as being major safety and health risk for the children at the kōhanga and kura and therefore will limit their roll to 130.

Land use restrictions

The proposals promote the introduction of new land use restrictions which will mean that buildings can never be constructed on a significant amount of land for any purposes including living, recreational, cultural and business purposes. This will deter young people in the hapū from returning home.

Compulsory costs

The proposals promote that all new buildings constructed on the marae and ancestral land (if such constructions are even granted a permit) be acoustically insulated. The marae and land owners will have to cover the full costs of this which are likely to fall in the tens of thousands of dollars per building. This will deter people from building on their ancestral land. Because the marae do not have a regular income they will be forced to either go broke in an effort to meet the costs of acoustic insulations, see their buildings become dilapidated or move – the latter being the most likely eventuality.

Wetlands and springs

Because the proposals would allow for a major extension at the southern end of the airport runway, the Otairā wetland will be destroyed as will the Pikirangi Puna (spring) due to increased air pollution.

Customary activities

Due to current aircraft activity, elders at Pikirangi and Ruamata marae are struggling to practice their traditions and customs including welcoming visitors onto their marae. The karanga is done outside of the whareniui in the open so acoustic insulation will not address the problem the caller has. Any increase in aircraft activity, which will happen if the proposals are given the tick, will only make worse the situation our callers have.

Ends

MAP OF AFFECTED AREA



NOTES:

Land that falls in red contour: Building will be prohibited

Land that falls in green contour: Building will be discretionary

Affected Maori owned land and homes

