



14 July 2021

Hon Trevor Mallard,
Speaker of the House,
Parliament Buildings,
Wellington.

Tēnā koe,

We are writing to you in our capacities as the Chair and Deputy Chair of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga and the Chair of the Māori Heritage Council.

The purpose of this letter is to draw your attention to the concerns that the members of the Board and Māori Heritage Council of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga have with the lack of acknowledgement and recognition of Māori within the Parliamentary Precinct.

We have many heritage related business interests in the Parliamentary Precinct.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga are currently progressing the Parliamentary Precinct as a National Historic Landmark/Ngā Manawhenua o Aotearoa me Ōnā Kōrero Tūturu. This work will culminate in a recommendation to you that acknowledges and recognises the Parliamentary Precinct with the highest status of heritage recognition in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The staff of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga have regular engagement with the Education Section and the Landscape Advisory Section of Parliamentary Services. The purpose of this is the provision of our heritage advice.

The staff of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga have advised on the conservation of the carvings and taonga within the Māori Select Committee room. As an aside, in our view this project has stalled and we will be following up with Parliamentary Services to have it re-initiated.

As our organisation undertakes its work, we receive heritage presentations and undertake heritage discussions on matters that relate to the delivery of our core statutory functions and services. At the Board and Māori Heritage Council meeting on 1 July 2021 we received a presentation from a member of the Board and Māori Heritage Council on the Parliamentary Precinct. The presentation highlighted the following:

- There is a sculpture being planned for Parliament Grounds to commemorate women MPs. The Chair of the Wellington Sculpture Trust says that the “work is not to celebrate one woman, but the journey of many who fought for the right for women to vote. They did this through incredible hard work and personal sacrifice, as did the inspirational women who first stood for Parliament against the odds”.
- The Parliamentary Precinct has three prominent buildings, all of heritage and architectural significance. The Library is in a neo-gothic style; Parliament itself is classical, referring to ancient Greece and Rome; and the Beehive is modern, all imported European styles.

- There are two monument statues on the grounds of the Parliamentary precinct, one of Ballance and the other of Seddon.
- There are a number of plaques across the Parliamentary Precinct, including one commemorating the site of the first St Paul's Church (1844-1866); one commemorating the first Parliamentary session in 1865; one commemorating the Cook Bi-Centenary (1970); one 'atomic bombed stone' remembering the bombing of Hiroshima in WW II (erected in 1991); one commemorating Women's Suffrage (1993); and one in honour of the 16 men who were awarded the Victoria Cross in WW I, from the people of the United Kingdom.
- It is acknowledged that within the buildings of Parliament there are fantastic examples of taonga, including those within the Māori Select Committee room.

The Board and Māori Heritage Council member also commented that, in his view, there was minimal use of Te Reo Māori on signage within the Parliamentary Precinct, with the only visible sign being the 20 or so notices dotted around the grounds stating 'No Smoking - Auahi Kore'.

We have reviewed the Parliament Website and are aware that there is a history of the buildings and grounds with no mention of the use of the land or acquisition of the land prior to its use for Parliament. There are also pages that reference statues and plaques, including those already mentioned.

The self-guided tour map of the Parliamentary Precinct lists the features of interest, including the Kate Sheppard walk. The narrative associated with this map is a concern, as the only mention of Māori relates to the narrative that it was "considered to be of little value when Māori settled on this side of the harbour". The remaining narrative is silent on Māori history with the site and of any specific reference to Manawhenua.

The Board and Māori Heritage Council agreed to write to you and seek a meeting to discuss what can only be described as our shared concerns.

While the celebration of women who first stood for Parliament is deserving, it leaves open a discussion on an appropriate acknowledgement and recognition of Māori on the Parliamentary Precinct.

The Māori Heritage Council expressed concern that this national site is not reflective of the national identity of Aotearoa. They have requested our organisation progress the potential for the Parliamentary Precinct to be listed as a wāhi tupuna, with consideration of the area extent to include the site where Te Tiriti o Waitangi is. They discussed the appropriateness of a national memorial and offered that Kupe warrants the recognition that exists with the Cook Bi-Centenary plaque, that if we have Balance and Seddon honoured then we should also have Ngata, that if we have Victoria Cross recipients recognised and honoured then why not Te Whiti and Tohu and if the site of the original St Pauls is recognised then why not Pipitea Pā.

The Board of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga concurs with the Māori Heritage Council. The opposition to the lack of current recognition of tangata whenua, mana whenua, Māori values, and cultural landscapes associated with Māori within the current extent of the Parliamentary Precinct is of concern to our shared heritage interests.

As we progress the considerations of the Parliamentary Precinct as a National Historic Landmark/Ngā Manawhenua o Aotearoa me Ōnā Kōrero Tūturu the lack of current

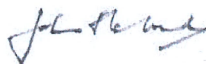
acknowledgement and recognition will likely be managed as a significant risk to this national heritage status.

We believe there is much to discuss and we would like to establish a suitable date and time to talk with you more on these matters. With the work that Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga has underway across the broad interests of Parliamentary Services we believe there is some urgency in progressing the concerns that we have outlined. Please let us know of your availability in the near future.

Ngā mihi



Hon Marian Hobbs
Chair
Board
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga



Ta (Sir) John Clarke
Chair/Deputy Chair
Māori Heritage Council/Board
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga