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29 September 2023

Kāinga Ora  
Homes and Communities  
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### **Feedback to Tauranga Western Corridor (TWC) potential Specified Development Project (SDP)**

Te Whatu Ora leads the day-to-day running of the health system across Aotearoa New Zealand, and either provides or commissions services at local, district, regional and national levels. Under the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022, one of the key objectives of Te Whatu Ora is “to promote health and prevent, reduce, and delay ill-health, including by collaborating with other agencies, organisations, and individuals to address the determinants of health.” The National Public Health Service (NPHS) is a division of Te Whatu Ora and leads the delivery of Health Protection, Health Promotion and Prevention services, as well as working with the Public Health Agency and Te Aka Whai Ora on intelligence, population health and policy. As a Tiriti o Waitangi partner NPHS advocates for equitable health outcomes, by striving to eliminate health differences, particularly for Māori, and build towards pae ora (healthy futures) for everyone.

### **Our Connection to Tauranga Western Corridor Area**

Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora) sits within the NPHS and is the public health service for the Bay of Plenty and Lakes districts. Toi Te Ora supports evidence-based approaches to improving health and wellbeing. This includes promoting healthy environments and ensuring whānau and communities can live healthy lives. Urban development contributes to health and wellbeing. Good urban development has the potential to protect and promote health, as well as improving health equity and disability outcomes.<sup>1,2</sup>

### **The Proposed Project Area**

Toi Te Ora recognises Tauranga is experiencing a significant housing shortage and is supportive of solutions that enable housing to be delivered quickly and equitably. Toi Te Ora would prefer to see intensification and infill within the existing Western Bay of Plenty urban footprint (e.g., Katikati, Te Puke, and Paengaroa) to address housing shortages as the supporting infrastructure already exists. Compact urban footprints can increase connectivity, promote active transport, and improve health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health Agency. 2022. [Principles for Healthy Urban Development](#). Wellington: Ministry of Health.

<sup>2</sup> Te Whatu Ora, Health New Zealand [Urban Development](#) website.

<sup>3</sup> Zapata-Diomedes B, Boulangé C, Giles-Corti B, Phelan K, Washington S, Veerman JL, Gunn LD. Physical activity-related health and economic benefits of building walkable neighbourhoods: a modelled comparison between brownfield and greenfield developments. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*. 2019 Dec;16(1):1-2.

Toi Te Ora support Kāinga Ora undertaking a climate risk assessment on the proposed land. Development should not occur in areas that are likely to be hazardous due to the effects of climate change and extreme weather events. Recent events in Tairāwhiti, Hawkes Bay and Auckland reinforce the risk of urban development on incompatible land.

### Proposed Project Objectives

Toi Te Ora supports the themes of the proposed objectives as they align with key urban development principles including healthy, safe, and resilient communities, wai ora (healthy environments), equity and climate change mitigation and adaptation<sup>1</sup>. Aligning development with these principles can support communities to thrive and contribute to achieving health equity.

Toi Te Ora would like to comment specifically on the following objective themes:

- Partnership and coordination

Toi Te Ora wishes to reinforce the importance of genuine partnership with mana whenua, iwi and hapū. Under Te Tiriti o Waitangi Māori have rights to equity and tino rangatiratanga (sovereignty). Prioritising and centring Māori views on the proposed project is essential to meet Te Tiriti obligations and to deliver equitable urban environments for Māori<sup>4</sup>.

- Mana whenua identity

Toi Te Ora supports the objective that mana whenua is enabled to exercise kaitiakitanga. As previously highlighted, mana whenua views over land use and development must be prioritised.

Toi Te Ora also support Māori-led housing development and papakāinga and consider this an essential aspect of any proposed Kāinga Ora development to promote equity for Māori.

- Land use, housing and urban form

Toi Te Ora strongly recommends that if industrial areas are developed, these must be sufficiently separated from residential zones. The health impacts from poor air quality in Mount Maunganui, contributed to by industrial land use, highlights the importance of healthy urban development and spatial planning.

There is an opportunity to learn from past planning mistakes and ensure that economic growth decisions do not negatively impact public health.

- Thriving and inclusive neighbourhoods

Toi Te Ora wishes to highlight that neighbourhoods must be safe for **all** people to access social, educational, and cultural needs. Urban development can provide an opportunity to improve connectedness for other groups that experience inequities, including people with disabilities<sup>1</sup>. Toi Te Ora recommends that genuine partnership occurs with other communities, such as disabled and Pacific, to ensure that the proposed SDP is inclusive for all and promotes equity.

- Well-connected and accessible

Toi Te Ora recognises that establishing an SDP may help enable housing more quickly and efficiently. However, housing is only one determinant of health. Communities thrive when urban development supports health, safety, and wellbeing. This requires urban development projects to deliver infrastructure and services from the outset.

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<sup>4</sup> Ryks J, Howden-Chapman P, Robson B, Stuart K, Waa A. Maori participation in urban development: Challenges and opportunities for indigenous people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Lincoln Planning Review. 2014 Dec 15;6(1-2):4-17.

For instance, public and active transport infrastructure and transport links need to be delivered before people live in the project area. Current connection, congestion, and access issues experienced in the Western Bay of Plenty reinforce the need for urban developments to be connected to alternative modes of transport.

- Respected natural environment

Toi Te Ora support prioritising Mātauranga Māori and mana whenua views regarding the natural environment in the proposed SDP. Māori relationships with the natural environment are an essential element of hauora<sup>5</sup>, and degradation of the natural environment will harm whānau, hapū and iwi.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, Māori have rights to kaitiakitanga (guardianship) over the natural environment under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The ability to exercise kaitiakitanga will support the achievement of Pae Ora.

### Proposed Project Governance Body

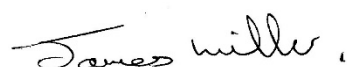
Toi Te Ora wishes to highlight the contribution and value the National Public Health Service can add to planning processes and practices to ensure development promotes health and equity.

Toi Te Ora wishes to be given an opportunity to participate in this committee by providing independent advice to support further development of the plan. Toi Te Ora will be able to provide health expertise to the governance body on a SDP that will significantly influence community health and wellbeing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. Please contact Annaka Davis, Health Protection Officer should you wish to discuss this feedback further. Toi Te Ora welcomes the opportunity to meet to further discuss areas of collaboration.

Toi Te Ora wishes to be kept informed on the SDP process. Please send updates to [enquiries@toiteora.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@toiteora.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Dr Jim Miller**  
Medical Officer of Health

### Copy to:

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<sup>5</sup> Durie (1998); M. Durie, "Te Pae Mahutonga: a model for Māori health promotion" (Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand newsletter 49, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Jones R, Bennett H, Keating G, Blaiklock A. Climate change and the right to health for Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Health & Hum. Rts. J.. 2014;16:54.

### Appendix 1: Resources

- Toi Te Ora has various position statements which may assist Kāinga Ora deliver urban design and development in a healthy way. These include; [active transport](#), [built environment](#), [food security](#), [housing and health](#) and [sanitary services](#).
- The World Health Organization Source Book Directory is a global online repository of resources and tools for integrating health and urban planning. The Source Book Directory provides information about the importance of planning and designing urban areas from a health perspective, as well as concrete guidance on how to do it regardless of user knowledge level the entry point of interest. It is intended to be useful for public health practitioners and stakeholders involved in urban planning and design, to support their work towards developing healthy urban environments. The recently published Sourcebook Directory includes a reference and link to Toi Te Ora Biophilic Public Health work (under the Resources tab, row 128). To learn more about biophilic public health and how this plan change could take this approach into account, go to <https://toiteora.govt.nz/public/biophilic-public-health/>.