Index to cross examination bundle

Witness	Topic	Appendix	Pages
Suzanne Woodley	Rating of Ngāi Tamatea hapū land, papakainga, and the provision of Council services	Appendix A: Brief of evidence of Kate Keita Hudson dated 9 February 2021 in the Housing Policy and Services Kaupapa Inquiry (Wai 2570, #B23) at [16] – [21].	1 - 5
Lynda Walter and Dr Andrew Brown	Traditional land use and pā sites.	Appendix B: Letter of Te Waru Tamatea to Henry Clarke dated	6 - 8

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Waitangi Tribunal
13 Feb 26
Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

Appendix A

#B23

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL	**WAI 2570** **WAI 1511**
CONCERNING	the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
AND **IN THE MATTER OF**	Housing Policy and Services Kaupapa Inquiry
AND **IN THE MATTER OF**	A claim by Kate Keita Hudson on behalf of the descendants of Te Waru Tamatea and his people of Ngāi Tamatea ki Waiotahe Hapū (Wai 1511)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF KATE KEITA HUDSON

Dated this 9th day of February 2021

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Introduction

1. My name is Kate Keita Hudson and I live in Waiotahe Valley, Ōpōtiki within the Bay of Plenty. I am the sole claimant for Wai 1511, a claim on behalf of Ngāi Tamatea ki Waiotahe hapū and I have held a number of pōtae for our whānau, marae, hapū and iwi including being a present trustee on the Whakatōhea Pre-settlement Claims Trust, a present trustee of Ngā Tokorima a Hinemanuhiri Trust which is the post-settlement governance entity for Te Wairoa ki Kahungunu, and the Chair of our whānau Ahu Whenua Trust which houses our papakainga development.

Homelessness within our Rohe

2. Homelessness is a very real issue for our whānau, hapū and iwi. Even within my own home we have two of our adult mokopuna living with us, despite their efforts to find their own homes simply because they either can't find appropriate rental accommodation, or they can't afford what has been offered to them.

3. We took one of my mokopuna in with his whole whānau (a family of four) and housed them for over a year while they were without a home. The stress on my moko and his whānau was immense, and eventually led to a breakdown in their relationship. My mokopuna stayed with us, and his partner and their two children eventually moved to Auckland where she is housed in emergency accommodation.

4. For me this is the ultimate example of the sacrifice that our whānau pay when living under already stressed conditions with the added stress of not being able to meet the basic need of housing your whānau.

5. The reality is that there are simply no available rental properties in Ōpōtiki. So, what usually happens is that any available rental houses become hugely overcrowded with whānau reaching out to help and house other members of their whānau. This is when other issues associated with overcrowding arise, with whānau living on top of each other.

6. Within Whakatohea, we are lucky to have social service providers who do fantastic mahi with what little resources they have to wrap around and support whānau with housing and associated issues. I am pleased to have that Amanda Walker of Whakaatu Whanaunga Trust has made herself available to presenting supporting evidence on this point.

Our Papakainga Development

7. Speaking specifically about our whānau papakainga development on Lot 388A 3 Waiotahi Parish Block administered by the Ahu Whenua Trust which I chair, we are trying really hard as trustees to ensure our papakainga remains a healthy place for our whānau to return to and to live. It's been 30 years since our 10-house papakainga development was built, and the vast majority of our homes fulfill our vision and are healthy, warm, insulated and safe.

8. However, we presently have two homes which require urgent repairs to bring them up to a livable standard. For example, there are issues with the breakdown of building materials which met the standard 30 years ago but are no longer safe or sustainable such as asbestos in the celling, and floorboards made of chipboard crumbling away.

9. Despite the state of these two homes, there are whānau living in them out of sheer necessity. As trustees of the Ahu Whenua Trust we have resolved that the whānau must be relocated in order for us to carry out essential repairs however, the whānau simply have nowhere else to go. Where does that leave us as a whānau, let alone trustees? We have a responsibility as trustees to maintain the homes, but we have an overriding moral obligation not to throw our own uri out onto the street to be homeless. We feel completely hamstrung and stuck between a rock and a hard place. Meanwhile support from the Government for our situation is little to none.

10. We are lucky to have been approved by Whakaatu Whanaunga to carry out funded repairs to two of our other papakainga homes however this funding won't cover the homes in urgent need of major works mentioned

above. The need within our own papakainga let alone our rohe far exceeds the funding available to Whakaatu.

11. On top of this, we have the overriding and underpinning issue of insufficient whenua upon which to build any further homes to house our whānau. Our tipuna were forcefully relocated here by the Crown in the late 1800s from Te Wairoa in an effort by the Crown to dissipate Te Kooti Rikirangi and his followers, including his righthand man Te Waru Tamatea who is our primary tipuna. Our people went from having plentiful whenua to sustain themselves to receiving an ultimatum which has been described as an “allocation” within Ōpōtiki of just 21 acres per tipuna to surrender and relocate. These 21 acres are totally insufficient to support the many uri whakatipu that descend from each of our original 14 tipuna.

12. Within our papakainga we have the 10 existing whare as well as two plots which have the groundworks and infrastructure in place ready to build. In the meantime, whānau are living in a tent waiting for their home to be built.

13. We have another three whānau who have tabled their intention with our Ahu Whenua Trust to return and build on our lands, however the infrastructure currently cannot sustain the extra housing requested by the whanau, to be able to fulfill this requires the Ahu Whenua Trust to Develop robust papakainga infrastructure. The Ahu Whenua trust is currently working through the cumbersome process with Te Puni Kōkiri to get support for that. For many whānau including us the application process to receive support is daunting, complicated, overly arduous and almost enough to make you want to give up.

14. There are many more whānau who want to return home to live however we will eventually run out of whenua and will have to turn whānau away. When that day comes, I do not want to be the one to have to tell them they can’t return home.

15. On top of this, our whānau have aspirations to build kaumatua units as many of our whānau are coming of age, and we want them to continue to be housed in warm, healthy homes in a safe living environment which includes appropriate facilities and access fit for kaumatua and the disabled. This aspiration adds another level of complexity to the build and application processes of the likes of TPK and others.

Rating of Papakainga

16. In conclusion I will also add that there are many additional regulatory and local government barriers to building and maintaining homes on our own whenua and creating permanent homes for our people.

17. This is despite our disadvantage, having lost our lands in a forced relocation and having been dislocated from our original papakainga in Te Wairoa.

18. Government support for us to rebuild papakainga is severely lacking. On top of the lack of support and existing complex application processes we have a local government rating system that further disadvantages us as Māori.

19. Despite that our papakainga is on a single parent block, each house is charged separate rates as though we were living on general land receiving the full array of council services. This is absolutely not the case. We receive no services in Waiotahe which is rural whenua. We have no rubbish collection, little road maintenance, we are off the grid with respect to water and have our own septic tanks.

20. The rates for ten houses as opposed to one block soon add up and are comparatively more expensive. This is money that our whānau can't afford and money that could be going toward bringing our homes up to a healthy livable standard and getting our whānau out of homelessness and into permanent, safe accommodation.

21. These are policy changes that the Government can change yet despite all their promises the state of homelessness is only worsening.

DATED this 9th day of February 2021

……..
Kate Keita Hudson

Apolihi. NZ 74/2857

Puaa 11 1874

Kia Hemare Karaka kei pone kē
E pa te ma koe kua tae mai
a kau kei waiotaka ta kihipa
kia koe te toki mokonga moko ku
ki te puaa oloaiotaka kei ka
i nga moko kia koki koki ai
a kau i te toki ra kou ma
ka ki kei tai apa kaikoka
kei wahie Engari kaaki a mo
te ma rau ka ka pai a mo te ra
ma te mai koki kaki no ti ka
mata moko kiwai otaka kei
ma kinga ra kau kei piiki
ano moko ku

Ka kae ko mai E koe
e pai ana kei kai nga
te kau kia ta hi pai kote ka
koi te mo pai nga
ko ko koi ne
E kore a kau e mau koi wa
i te ma kau e ka kia ko
a kau i te ro kau ka ta ki
ka ma ki koi te ma

E koa kai te mo ko pa
a kau ma ta e kota ki
koi a mo te mo koe
ka to mo kai a no ko

ka te Tau

Opotiki

11 May 1874

To Henry Clarke,

Dear Sir, greetings. I have arrived inland at Waiotahe. Do you have a place for me to reside at the mouth of the Waiotahe River? I'd like to obtain wood to make fences, build housing, and for firewood....It will enable us to reside appropriately here at Waiotahe.

My friend, those big Rākau are also good for housing and to carve waka...

From Te Waru