

23 March 2020

Hon. Andrew Little, Minister for Treaty Negotiations  
Parliament  
Wellington 6140

### **Treaty Settlement Negotiations and the Introduction of the Mori Settlement Claims Bill**

Tena koe e te Minita,

In reply to your letters of 16 and 23 March, I re-affirm the commitment and desire of Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust to progress Treaty Negotiations with you as expressed in our letter of 9 March 2020.

Part of the purpose of that letter was to inform you of the response your decisions about the Hospital Block had engendered in the form of a Waitangi Tribunal claim. Your letter of 16 March pre-supposes that this claim is being made by the Trust. It is not. Neither the Trust nor its Negotiators are Parties to this contemporary claim which I understand is being prepared by Jeanette Page, the daughter of the original claimant, Ngawhata Page. We are not aware of the stage that this application has reached.

As you are aware, any Māori has the right to lodge a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal and Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust cannot be held responsible or punished for other persons exercising that right. The threat contained in your letter of 16 March to discontinue negotiations with the Trust in that eventuality is completely unwarranted and unfortunate.

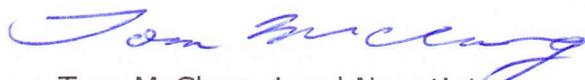
Our letter of 9 March was intended to inform you about the depth of feeling within Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri about your Hospital Block decision – a depth of feeling that adds a layer of difficulty to the Trust's challenge of getting strong support for a settlement with that unreasonable element in it. We choose the word 'unreasonable' carefully in this context because none of your correspondence so far provides a reason or rationale for your Hospital Block decision. What they contain are simply brief statements of your powers and (by reflection) a statement of our powerlessness in this negotiation process. We do not need to be reminded of this in the form of a threat.

As mentioned in our earlier letter, for our part we strongly desire to continue the 'Webber Process' once John Armstrong has completed his Taranaki MACA project. It is now clear, however, that the constraints associated with

combatting coronavirus will affect the likely mode and timeframe of this work. Our previous estimate of a three-month timeframe pre-supposed a face to face working method. It is probably reasonable to double this timeframe for a less intensive programme more dependent on email exchanges. We therefore ask that you mandate and resource this length of time to conclude this very constructive work. During that time, I would still anticipate the opportunity to present and discuss the development of other parameters for a successful Treaty settlement.

Finally, thank you for informing us that you are introducing the Moriori Settlement bill today. We look forward to achieving a complementary settlement so that the many shared redress arrangements previously discussed can be given legal effect in a Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Claims Settlement Act.

Naku noa na,



Tom McClurg, Lead Negotiator,  
Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust.