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**3: STATEMENTS OF ASSOCIATION****Balance of the Opouahi Scenic Reserve** (as shown on deed plan OTS-201-31)

For Ngāti Kurumōkihi, the balance of the Opouahi Scenic Reserve (the Reserve) and environs are integral to the distinct identity and mana of the Hapū. The importance of the Reserve derives from its position along the eastern slopes of Maungaharuru (the Maungaharuru Range) and the location of Lake Opouahi within the Reserve. Accordingly, the following statement of association is relevant to the Reserve.

- Peaks of Maungaharuru Range.

*Spiritual importance*

Lake Opouahi is regarded as a particularly spiritual place of Ngāti Kurumōkihi. The tuna (eels) were renowned as being unique to Lake Opouahi. Oral traditions tell of tuna known as the kēhua tuna (ghost eels). The tuna would often challenge whānau (families) in defiance of being harvested. They were famed as the kaitiaki (guardian) of Ngāti Kurumōkihi and the area. Also in this area appeared a tipua (a supernatural being) in a form similar to a white pig. This tipua was revered as a tohu (sign) and would appear at a time of misfortune, either after the event, or as a warning. Patupaiarehe (fairies) are also known to dwell in the area.

*Kōrero tuku iho – historical importance*

Nearby the Reserve and at the foot of Maungaharuru are several pā (fortified villages) that are associated with Ngāti Kurumōkihi and are still identifiable today. They are Kokopuru and Matarangi. Kokopuru pā was built on the hill of the same name. Kokopuru pā was heavily fortified and surrounded by extensive cultivations, wāhi tapu (sacred places), midden, ovens and cave shelters. According to a source who visited the pā in 1882, the main defensive structures were, at that time, almost intact, with heavy palisades of upright tōtara poles and boughs stood in a circular formation around the hill.

Close by is Matarangi pā, on a peak near Lake Opouahi. The pā was formerly surrounded by cultivations where kūmara (sweet potatoes) and taewa (potatoes) were grown and the water supply came from two lakelets – Ngā Ipu-o-Te-Amohia. Another prominent feature was a carved meeting house which was unfortunately destroyed during a skirmish with a warparty. Over the generations, a number of Ngāti Kurumōkihi chiefs, including Waiatara, based themselves at Kokopuru and Matarangi.

In the vicinity of Lake Opouahi are a number of caves that are also known to have been occupied from time to time, and some are the ancestral resting place for tīpuna (ancestors).

The Reserve is one of the few areas of remnant and regenerating native ngahere (forest) on Maungaharuru. It is located at an altitude of 500 to 700 metres above sea level.

In this area, plentiful flora and fauna were available for harvesting. In particular, rongoā (medicinal plants) were abundant, including red matipo, māwe, parapara, harakeke (flax), mānuka (tea tree), kāmahi, tawa, rewarewa (New Zealand honeysuckle) and tātarāmoa (bramble / bush lawyer).

The ngahere provided the ideal habitat for a large number of native birds including kiwi, kārearea (native falcon), kākā (native parrot), kererū (native pigeon) and tūī (parson bird). Many of these birds were harvested for kai (food) and their feathers used for decorating garments and personal adornments.

Lake Opouahi and its associated waterways were also significant sources of kai for the Hapū. The lake and waterways supplied uniquely tasting tuna, kākahi (freshwater mussels), kōura (freshwater

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crayfish) and kōkopu (freshwater fish), as well as the daily water supply for the Hapū, as Lake Opouahi is a deep, spring-fed lake.

The Hapū have cultural, spiritual, traditional and historic associations with the Reserve and its environs, its waters, associated land and flora and fauna. The Hapū have a responsibility as kaitiaki in accordance with their kawa (rules) and tikanga (customs) to restore, protect and manage all those natural and historic resources and sites. This relationship is as important to present day whānau (families) as it was to their tīpuna (ancestors). The continued recognition of the Hapū, their identity, traditions and status as kaitiaki is entwined with Maungaharuru, including the Reserve and associated resources.