1. SCOPE OF SUBMISSION
This submission is made on behalf of NGA AHO, the multidisciplinary Society of Māori Design professionals, as its contribution to any RMA panel review process considering Crown responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the role of Māori in Environmental and Urban development. It is anticipated that the complex considerations outlined here will invite further discussion on challenges facing Resource Management, Environment and Urban Development and promulgate greater consideration of Māori perspectives on any enabling provisions under Te Tiriti in National Policy Statements or in related legislation.

2. PREAMBLE:
NGA AHO welcomes the opportunity to make this submission, emphasising that since 1840 and almost immediately after signing Te Tiriti Māori leaders have made innumerable approaches to successive governments arguing the need for special recognition of the Māori relationship with their land. To this end NGA AHO offers its view that the context for this submission is that of a nation in an ongoing state of debate and further consultation must be anticipated before the fundamental issues are fully resolved. NGA AHO recognises that the focus of any review will look to achieve comprehensive improvements in both natural environment conditions and urban and development outcomes. In making an appeal to the panel for further engagement on the issues outlined here NGA AHO reiterates that it would like to assist the panel with the detailed practical considerations required to implement an improved focus on the cultural issues and challenges summarised below in our submission points. We suggest assembly of a technical advisory group of expert practitioners to review our comments and prepare appropriate practice change advice and recommendations.

3. ABOUT NGA AHO:
Society membership embraces Māori designers working in all fields of design including Urban Design and Planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Design and Engineering, Traditional and Contemporary Art forms, and Graphic Design. However, its members have developed specific competencies in interpreting cultural distinctions in the Aotearoa New Zealand design context. In sharing this expertise NGA AHO now enjoys strong working relationships with the national membership organisations currently representing individual design disciplines. NGA AHO has prioritised the development of co-governance agreements within its assumed areas of responsibility across multiple disciplines, promoting and protecting Māori knowledge and practice in these creative industries.

A fundamental tenet of the NGA AHO practice model is to specifically support and encourage a cross-disciplinary dialogue between Māori practitioners, recognising that from a Māori world view practice is not regulated by the existing conventions of gathering expertise into vertical silos of knowledge. The goals developed as its kaupapa tino/foundation principles include the protection of Matauranga Māori wisdom and practice.

4. DEFINING A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE:
In this submission NGA AHO targets improvements in interpretation and understanding of the cultural landscape of Aotearoa/New Zealand as reflected in the experiences of its formal membership body over two decades. Our objective is to ensure repair measures to improve the
existing consultative framework which - in its many guises - has ignored some important and distinguishing characteristics of a Māori approach to environmental development. This Māori-centric approach advocates a prescriptive framework that will minimise any disturbance and detrimental impact beyond natural cycles. To this end we will identify outstanding practical constraints and failures that frequently interfere or disadvantage client and practitioner relationships and propose how any discussion document - or any pending or future drafting, revision and implementation of a National Policy Statements related to its areas of interest - should impact on design practice and policy decision making.

5. A NECESSARY POCKET HISTORY:
NGA AHO members began formally challenging the standard definitions of urban design practice in 2005, identifying Māori culture and identity as Aotearoa New Zealand’s point of difference in the world. This group of professionals had called for discussions with the Ministry for the Environment on what they saw as failures in the Ministry’s recently-published Urban Design Protocols. They called for reforms to the language of design along with unrestrained adoption of Māori concepts that would reflect a Māori world view embracing whenua, taiao, mauri and kaitiakitanga. In addition to identifying a lack of consultation and multiple shortcomings in the ‘Protocols’ they proposed measures to redefine critical concepts. Constructive recommendations that would address failures in approach were contributed, culminating in work with Ministry representatives to establish a more inclusive definition of Māori priorities in Urban and Rural Design. The members position at the time - and reaffirmed in this submission - was that embracing Te Ao Māori (a Māori world view) and integrating Matauranga Māori principles and definitions related to the environment was consistent with guarantees made under articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty of Waitangi. It advocated renewed emphasis on establishing a design process anchored in non-negotiable Māori values in accord with guarantees affirmed in the Māori language version of the Treaty. Carefully considered language definitions adopted for articles 2 & 3 required full recognition of such specific Māori concepts related to the singular importance of land and the associated values of place as exemplified in the concepts of Kainga, Atanoho, and Taonga and would need careful and explicit redefinition in a modern design context. This more inclusive lexicon would present significant design opportunities of benefit all New Zealanders, correcting a superficial understanding of design that had been distorted by commercial interests, poor journalism in popular print and online media, and reality television.

6. TE ARANGA PRINCIPLES:
This submission refers deliberately to the Te Aranga Principles as a groundbreaking moment in articulating a Māori relationship to whenua(land) and integrate Matauranga Māori concepts in defining a cultural landscape free of association with central european narratives. The Principles established the first real structural framework for a constructive design-based examination of the mythological, epistemological and ontological foundations of a Māori cultural relationship with land. Māori scholarship and research had highlighted fundamental differences in concept and understanding and attachment to land through uniquely Māori concepts of whakapapa and kaitiakitanga. The timely articulation of the Te Aranga Māori Design Principles (the Principles) as a
set of seven outcome-oriented design principles evolving from the foundation work achieved with MfE at Te Aranga was summarised thus in carefully chosen language:

“as Māori we have a unique sense of our cultural landscapes. It includes past present and future. It includes both physical and spiritual dimensions. It is how we express ourselves in our environments, it connects whānau, whenua, awa and moana through whakapapa, it includes both urban and rural, it is not just where we live it is who we are.”

The importance of this dedicated design approach built around a growing body of research represents the most comprehensive change in emphasis on cultural differences relating to land development and continues to shape present day strategies. It reflects a need for continuous refinement of key elements of Māたuranga Māori for incorporation into urban planning to facilitate achievement of Māori aspirations. Further development in understanding this cultural dimension will complement and improve existing urban planning practices.

The Te Aranga principles are now influencing the Local Body decision process in several Aotearoa New Zealand towns and cities. NGA AHO learning following implementation of the principles is that:

- adopting the term ‘Māori cultural landscape’ embraces the landscape in its widest form.
- ‘urban design’ does not resonate with a connected Māori worldview.
- hapū and Iwi rohe encompass all parts of the physical environment
- a clearer picture is emerging as to how iwi/hapū are likely to view, value and wish to participate in the design and development of the built environment within their ancestral rohe
- an enabling strategic foundation for iwi/hapū to adopt, customise and further develop in response to local context is essential
- outcome-based goals founded on core Māori cultural values in the design language of Aotearoa New Zealand are required
- a codesigned framework is needed to build capability and increase Māori equity in the design process
- regulatory measures are required to provide practical guidance to reinforce outcomes reflecting mana whenua presence, visibility and participation in the design of the physical environment
- robust relationships predicate the development of high quality durable outcomes between iwi/hapū, their mandated design professionals and local and central government
- clear markers foster and guide culturally appropriate design processes and design responses that enhance appreciation of all inhabitants of the natural, landscape and built environment.
- enhanced protection, reinstatement, development and articulation of mana whenua cultural landscapes enables every user (mana whenua, mataawaka, tauiwi and manuhiri) to connect to and deepen our ‘sense of place’.  

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NGA AHO recommends that recognition of the ongoing practical contribution of the
Principles will further embed understanding. We advocate widespread national integration
of the Principles in local and national planning regimes.

7. The RMA context:

While it may be said that the RMA has forged a new legislative response to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the
Treaty) NGA AHO sees the need for further significant change to fully embrace the Māori
emphasis highlighted in the design principles in 6 above. We suggest that development of Māori
capability in this area has been funded through allocations from Iwi settlements rather than
through budgetary provision. This has constrained Māori participation.
• Measures leading to an integrated cultural landscape strategy explicitly including Te Ao Maori are
  necessary.
• There are too many individual district plans enjoying independent status in the Local
  Government legislative environment. The planning decision process lacks cohesion as a result.
• Development of a coherent set of national directions to decision makers for implementing
  provisions to secure the sustainable wellbeing of current and future generations is now critical.
• Māori should be accepted as full partners leading policy and strategy initiatives.
• Iwi Māori need to be accorded similar status in the decision process and empowered to engage
  on the same platform with their local body.
• Iwi Māori intervention in Heritage protection areas should be a given.
• A constructive approach to policy development through co-designed working partnerships
  would ensure that governance would shift from the superficial consultative routine in the current
  fragmented model.

NGA AHO proposes that the purpose of all legislation needs to be reviewed to explicitly
include Te Ao Māori and Matauranga Māori and provide for full working partnerships.

8. Imperatives for a National Policy Statement:
NGA AHO emphasises the primary importance of acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the
rights and interests of Māori affirmed by articles two and three. The inclusion of reference to Te
Tiriti o Waitangi in a pre-amble to any NPS will strengthen the context of iwi, hapū and whanau
and ensure that development does not compromise the aspirations of tangata whenua. The Treaty
principle of active protection places an obligation on the Crown and local authorities to provide
for the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites,
wahī tapu and other taonga. The Treaty principle of partnership should ensure that iwi and hapū
are engaged in a manner that meets the threshold of partnership as opposed to being engaged as
stakeholders.

NGA AHO advocates renewed emphasis on engagement and understanding of the full
history of Māori interaction with representatives of the crown during the decade leading up
to signing of Te Tiriti and the turbulent exchanges of the decade that followed. Looking to
the past to inform future planning, Ka mua, ka muri: will facilitate greater understanding of the deep attachment Māori have formed to their lands.

9. Ko Aotearoa Tenei:  
NGA AHO is represented on Nga Kaiwhina a Wai262 and aligns its position with The Waitangi Tribunal report Ko Aotearoa Tēnei, quote extensively from this report. This is a report with extensive implications for redefinition of the Aotearoa New Zealand cultural landscape. While the Tribunal has refrained from providing any directives on how the Wai 262 findings and conclusions should be implemented, it has proposed that the resource management system needed to find avenues for better engagement with Māori and to this end the tribunal infers the need for material changes to the policies that expressly require “reasonable steps” to be taken to “involve iwi and hapū in the management of …ecosystems” (Policy D1). It reinforces the need for government to act on its Treaty promises and implement the changes that have been in discussions since the uncertain, problematic to implement, and risk incurring considerable cost without commensurate benefit. Further, a co-design approach to policy options and resources should become a regular feature of government where Māori interests are concerned.

However, the incorporation of Māori values into a comprehensive design process will further foster Māori engagement with the system, which is a key recommendation of Ko Aotearoa Tēnei. The restoration of traditional Maori culture begins with tino rangatiratanga and mana/ownership of its intellectual property. Manuka stated that increasing Maori equity is necessary and runanga have become irrelevant.

10. Mana Whenua Capacity  
The experience of practising professional members of NGA AHO has been that little specific resource has been allocated to developing Mana Whenua participation in strategic land use planning. The integration of Mātauranga Māori and tikanga in the planner’s lexicon has developed strongly, but a vacuum exists around iwi capacity in resource management decision-making and practice. Rapid growth in our major cities is creating strenuous demands across all areas requiring understanding of submission and consent procedures. These are weighing heavily on Mana Whenua capacity. The outcome is that Mana Whenua participation is unpredictable and often criticised as erratic. Absence from formal participation is misinterpreted as disinterest, whereas the real cause can be explained by a simple lack of capacity. There is no apparent understanding that this is a first-generation demand for expertise to be available on order; when the extensive calls for capacity in other areas of greater need – health, social services, housing – has drained the tank. The situation in some urban areas might be described as close to a crisis point. This is unacceptable. Targeted and programmed planning for the specific qualifications and expertise required to ensure participation is urgent.

Some simple and cost-effective solutions are indicated. Graduate Cadetships with Local Bodies and in a learning capacity in professional practice. Work experience in areas related to planning. Fee subsidies. Scholarships.

It is of paramount importance that adequate provision is made for a sustainable future for iwi, hapū and whānau participation in areas that critically impact economic planning and
housing and land-use development. Any NPS must be carefully drafted to reflect Māori aspirations in regard to their cultural, social spiritual and economic development.

II. Matauranga Māori
Matauranga Maori is a body of knowledge built over millennia by Maori wisdom and experience and has been used in traditional practices to manage resources in the natural environment. It may also be said that Matauranga Maori knowledge has been largely unexplored as a planning tool towards sustainable management, particularly in respect of integrated management and generational outcomes.

Related practices framed by Te Ao Māori (the Maori world view) embrace a holistic view that connects people intimately with the environment and provides guiding principles impacting everything in it. Maori perspectives consider the wellbeing of the people is reflected in and linked to the wellbeing of the environment, and when the environment suffers the people suffer. NGA AHO considers that inclusion of this knowledge system can only add a positive dimension to resource management. Recognising that the Maori economy is strongly linked to natural resource development, there is a clear line linking economic benefit in good management of natural resources for Maori and for economic growth in all areas. Inclusion of the Matauranga Maori perspective as a guiding principle in planning and policy, will produce outcomes that are more equitable and appropriate for all New Zealanders.

NGAAHO considers it should be given the same weight as European/western science and thinking to be consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

II. Principles for Engagement:
NGA AHO recognises the concentration of policy expertise amongst the MfE staff or consultants engaged to prepare NPS proposals, but hereby expresses concern at the absence of practitioner experience in the NPS development process and the preparation of legislation reform. NGA AHO is a membership organisation without its own secretariat and funded by goodwill. NGA AHO notes that its lead practitioners are regularly invited to participate in preliminary discussions framing policy. However, these invitations often originate through junior policy researchers lacking in commensurate experience or decision-making capability.

NGA AHO also notes that the changing and developing role of Māori in urban design which has been driven primarily through processes outside the RMA, such as Treaty Settlements is not sustainable in the long term.

Changes that expand roles and participation in decision-making as outlined throughout this submission will require further Government support and capacity building to ensure adequate professional contribution and active participation from all iwi and hapu organisations.
13. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

NGA AHO proposes that measures proposed for legislative change or planning should focus on alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular:

- the Goal for Transforming Governance for Sustainable Development and

- the Goal to Secure Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity, ensuring good management of all Natural Resources.

- the Goal to make cities and Human Settlements (our emphasis) inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable
APPENDIX: CORE VALUES DEFINED

Core Māori values have informed the development of earlier Māori design principles. These process-oriented principles have provided the foundation for, and underpin the application of, the outcome-oriented Te Aranga Māori Design Principles.

• Rangatiratanga: the rights of Mana Whenua to shape and control their own destiny including the right to exercise authority and self determination within the individual iwi / hapu realm
• Kaitiaki - our individual and collective custodial rights and responsibilities to protect and nurture our environment and living places
• Kaitiakitanga: managing and conserving the environment as part of a reciprocal relationship, based on the Māori world view that we as humans are part of the natural world
• Manaakitanga: the ethic of holistic hospitality and reciprocity on our interactions with one another, whereby mana whenua have inherited obligations to be the best hosts they can be the practice of hospitality
• Manaakitia - According respect and extending friendship towards one another.
• Wairuatanga: the immutable spiritual connection between people and their environments
• Kotahitanga: unity, cohesion and collaboration
• Whanaungatanga: a relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging
• Mātauranga: Māori / mana whenua knowledge and understanding
• Whakapapa - recognition of our connections with one another and place, our connection with past and future
• Mana Whenua - recognition of the innate rights and responsibilities accorded through whakapapa to those tangata whenua who hold mana over place through primacy of occupation and connection with whenua
• Ahi Kaa Roa - the importance of maintaining occupancy of and connecting with whenua as the Puna (wellspring) of our identity and recognition of the value and importance of those who ‘keep the home fires burning’.
• Tapu - recognition of those things deemed sacred by tangata whenua and the importance of their protection and observance.