

## **Better Urban Planning – Wananga for Maori Practitioners working in the Built Environment: Te Noho Kotahitanga Marae – Tamaki Makaurau, 17 June 2016**

**Comments from Hirini Matunga via Papa Pounamu, NZPI – 16 June 2016**

**Apologies ... these were drafted – in haste and are unedited.**

### **INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

If the role of the Productivity Commission enquiry is to:

- Review our urban planning system, and
- Identify from first principles – the most appropriate system for allocating land-use-to
- Support desirable social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes

On the first point – what might our urban planning system look like – the first ‘bundled’ principle to underpin the process of defining our planning system in my view could be:

#### **Overarching Principle 1**

The creation of an urban planning system’ for Aotearoa/New Zealand that:

- Is established ‘**of this place**’, i tenei waahi, i tenei whenua
- Acknowledges under the Treaty of Waitangi, it’s dual planning heritage - one grounded in Maori tradition, philosophies, principles and practices (inclusive of Maori values ... such as mauri, kaitiakitanga, taonga ... attitudes to land and the environment, institutional frameworks for organisation and making decisions etc.) and the other grounded in an English/Western/colonial tradition
- Recognises that the current urban planning system has its roots in a colonial discourse which has generally ‘excluded’ Maori and, notwithstanding advances in the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 (in particular Section 3.1.g) and the Resource Management Act 1991 – continues to exclude Maori.
- Acknowledges that Maori Planning - as a distinct form of planning – does exist, but continues to function largely outside the machinery of ‘mainstream’ urban planning in NZ.
- Embraces this duality and uses it as the basis for a new paradigm for urban planning, that is uniquely of Aotearoa/NZ
- Incorporates this duality into the substance of any revised planning law and regulatory framework

On the second and third points, it is critical that definitional issues around what might be deemed ‘**the most appropriate system**’ for allocating land use to support ‘**desirable social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes**’ is contextualised to the Maori community and embedded in Maori values, realities and aspirations.

Maori approaches and systems, coupled with Maori processes for determining and influencing what might be deemed 'desirable social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes' must be incorporated into any revised urban planning framework.

Framed as another overarching principle it is also critical that:

### **Overarching Principle 2**

That the reformed urban planning system comprehend, provide for and accommodate:

- Maori systems, approaches and organisational frameworks for allocating and making decisions about land-use, spatial form, urban design, landscape and ecosystem management et al to support;
- Maori defined 'desirable social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes'.

## **FIRST PRINCIPLES OF MAORI PLANNING**

In my view and experience - Maori Planning is both a process **and** outcome. Put in an urban context, Maori 'Urban' Planning therefore could be defined as:

### **Maori Urban Planning**

A 'Maori defined process for achieving and/or maximising the pursuit of a set of desired Maori social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes in the urban context'.

Naturally this definition assumes planning processes and approaches that Maori not only accept as appropriate, but that they can also engage fully with, to achieve a set of desired outcomes. In my view Maori 'urban' planning has a number of critical components, including the following:

### **Critical Components of Maori 'Urban' Planning**

- Recognition of a distinct group of people with mana whenua status such as an iwi, hapu or other Maori entity, linked by ancestry and kinship connection.
- **Their** inextricable link to and association with traditionally prescribed custodial territory in an urban context that they claim as theirs – including lands, waters, resources, environments – irrespective of title.
- An accumulated body of knowledge about their territory - place, environment, resources, and history coupled with aspirations for the future of this territory.
- A culturally distinct set of practices and approaches for making decisions and applying these to facilitate pursuit of their aspirations in the urban context.

In addition and taking account of the now large numbers of Maori who have migrated to cities away from their ancestral whenua

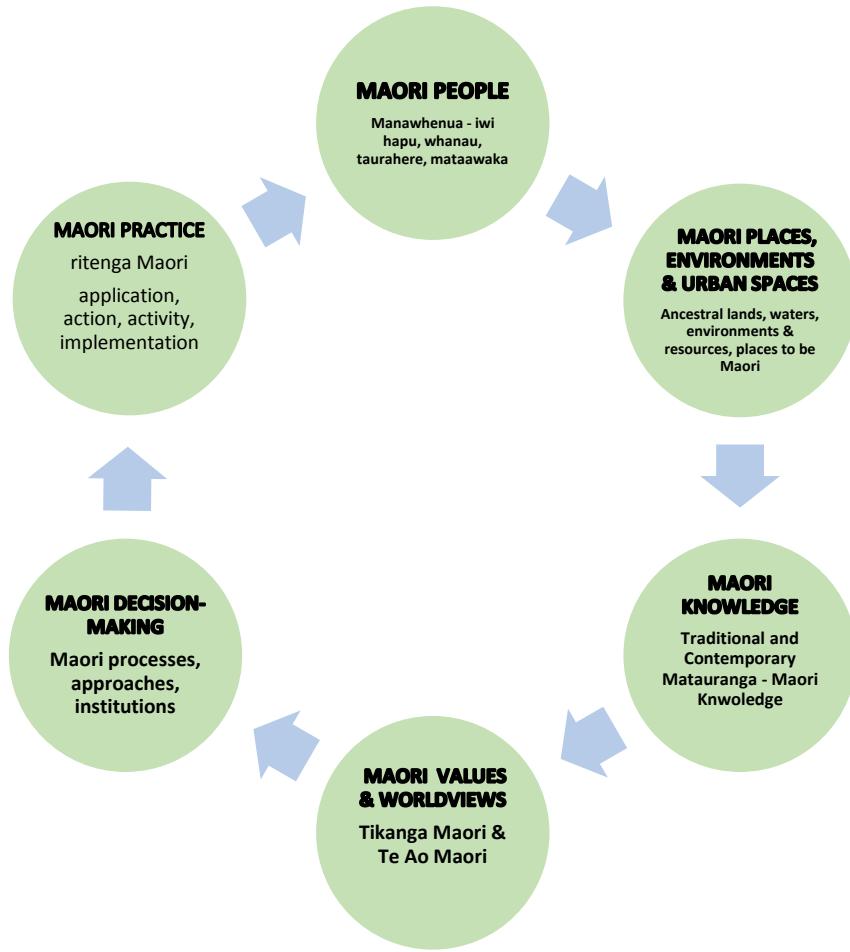
- Recognition that mataawaka and taurahere also have a desire to live 'as Maori' in the urban context and therefore must be provided for.

## MAORI PLANNING AS A PROCESS

Following my earlier commentary that Maori Planning is both process and outcome, it is essential that appropriate processes to indeed facilitate Maori 'Urban' Planning be incorporated into any revised Urban Planning System.

If we were to take the notion of Maori Planning - as a process, it would require legislative and regulatory recognition as a legitimate planning process both connected by, and **connecting** a distinct set of component parts, as follows:

**Figure 1: Maori Planning as a Process**

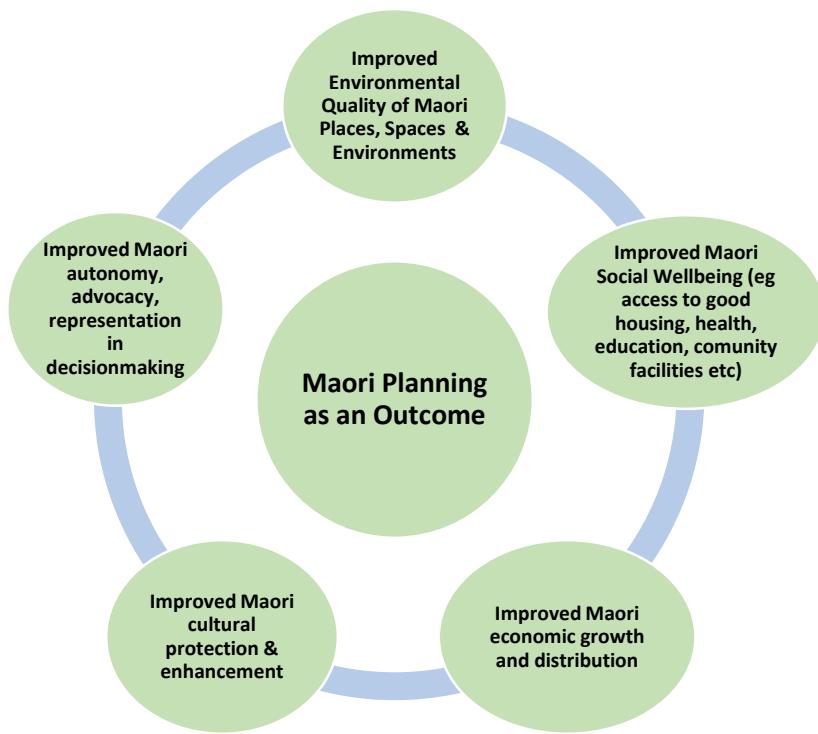


## MAORI PLANNING AS AN OUTCOME

Maori Planning is also outcome driven. While appropriate, culturally robust planning processes are critical, so too are Maori planning outcomes whose aims should be to improve the present and futures of Maori communities and their urban environments. The shape and nature of these Maori Planning outcomes would need to be contextualised to specific Maori peoples and specific communities 'in place' – or in other words 'spatially configured' to manawhenua and/or mataawaka/taurahere and given a degree of specificity appropriate to the 'local' context.

As generic Maori planning outcomes however, they need to be included in any revised urban planning system, and legal or regulatory framework.

**Figure 2: Maori Planning as an Outcome**



#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTARY

- While the Town and Country Planning Act 1997, recognised for the first time in NZ planning law the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, as of national planning importance, it also had within it a framework for good urban and social/community planning – that arguably benefitted urban Maori communities, interests and realities.'
- However, the Resource Management Act 1991, shifted the emphasis to the biophysical environment – and arguably 'defaulted' Maori planning interests to the natural environment, away from the urban and social environment/context of our cities. While the RMA includes significant innovation and potential for Maori Planning – including provisions in Part 2 (i.e. Section 6e, 7a and 8), provisions for 'taking into account' planning documents recognised by iwi, along with the potential transfers of authority (under Section 33), and uniquely Maori cultural concepts such as kaitiakitanga, taonga and mauri - it lacks the ability to comprehend and respond to urban Maori communities and their planning interests – both in terms of process and desired outcome.
- Given Maori today are predominantly urban dwellers, any urban planning reform, must take the best of provisions for Maori both in the 1977 and 1991 Acts, combine it with the commentary above, and use this as the basis for a new paradigm for urban planning that is uniquely '**of this place**' Aotearoa/New Zealand.

## **POSSIBLE URBAN MAORI PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

With 25 years' experience of the RMA, coupled with the proliferation of Iwi Management Plans and Treaty Settlements since the RMA was first enacted, there might be merit in considering the possibility of a National framework for Maori Urban Planning, coupled with the creation of a set of Maori Urban Planning tools, techniques, approaches and mechanisms to articulate Maori Urban Issues, sustainability, design, economics, infrastructure etc.

For instance the framework could be constructed as follows and incorporated into the relevant statute, including a revised Resource Management Act, Local Government Act, or Te Ture Whenua Maori Act

### **Ideas for a National Planning Framework for Maori Urban Planning**

- **National Level: Maori Urban Planning and Design Guidelines**
  - National guidelines for best Maori Urban Practice
- **District and Regional Level Maori Urban Strategy and Policy**
  - Maori Urban Sustainability Strategies (MUSS) – with a focus on the urban environment
  - Note: Iwi Planning Documents under the RMA are obviously iwi focussed but strongly biophysical in orientation.
  - District and Regional MUSS would require alignment between mana whenua and taurahere with a focus on the urban environment
- **Sub district Level – Spatial Implications of Strategy: Maori Outline Development Plans**
  - Applicable to ancestral land (for mana whenua) or land under the control of a taurahere based community
  - Consistent with a MUSS
  - Managing effects and boundary/border issues

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

The aim of Maori Urban Planning should be to "***Create great spaces and places for Maori to be Maori – in the urban environment***"

To do this requires a strengthening of the connection between mana whenua and their ancestral lands in the urban environment as well as provision for existing and new taurahere/mataawaka communities in the urban context. However this will only occur if our urban planning system is innovative, creative and robust enough to acknowledge and accommodate Maori Planning as both a process and set of outcomes.

Equally it needs to be able to acknowledge that under the Treaty we do have a dual planning system, and then consider how best to provide for this duality in an urban context.