

CHAPTER 5

THE BULLDOZERS ARRIVE: A REVIEW OF THE TURANGI TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT

5.1 THE TOWNSHIP TAKES SHAPE

5.1.1 Traumatic change

Cabinet approval for the construction of the TPD and the Turangi township was granted on 21 September 1964. By 1 October, the bulldozers were on site in Turangi, beginning a traumatic two years for the Ngati Turangitukua community as a whole new town was almost literally dumped on them. The pace of change was staggering as a farming landscape was transformed almost overnight in an attempt by the Ministry of Works and contractors to meet tight deadlines. In chapter 12, we examine in more detail the impact of the township construction on Ngati Turangitukua families. The following sections in this chapter provide a narrative of the events concerning the lands affected by construction under the Turangi Township Act 1964.

Terewai Grace described the Turangi of early 1965 in her submission to the Tribunal. She had just taken up a senior position at Tokaanu District High School (which later became Tongariro High School):

By the time I began work at the school, life in the town was already moving at a tremendous pace, and that was reflected in the life of the school. When I set out for work each morning, I never knew what each day would bring. There was uncertainty in every area of my life. For instance, I never knew when I left for school in the morning if I was going to be able to get back home by the same route or not. The huge machinery could completely change the landscape in the course of a day, and there was always the fear that if you went home the same way that you had gone in the morning, you might collide with fast moving machinery or find that the road had been moved. At school, the roll was climbing rapidly. From about June of 1965, families had begun to move into the houses that had been deposited on the sites in the new town. The new primary school buildings were quickly put in place. . . .

Naturally, our new school was much bigger . . . But it didn't take long for those classrooms to fill up. . . . We were in a constant state of re-organisation, juggling children and classrooms and teachers to try and achieve proper ratios.

Nothing in our training or experience had prepared us for this situation. For the teachers it was horrendous. Not only were there large numbers of new children, but of course new teachers had to be appointed too in order to cope.

The children were disoriented too, both the local children and the newcomers. Once the newcomers were in the majority, a hostile attitude toward the local children began to emerge. The locals were now 'has beens', and the new children claimed the town as their own. We had to manage this problem. . . . We used to have to organise the desks in the classrooms to cluster together the children who knew each other. All of the children had been uprooted from their previous lives, and needed whatever security they could get from people they knew. There would be one area for the Mangakino children, one for the Atiamuri children, and the local children would be scattered in between.

The children had nowhere to play outside because all the green grass had been bulldozed up to make the new town. While the grass was being put down, they were restricted to the courtyard and concrete paths, areas far too small for them to play properly. Sometimes the children couldn't go outside at all, because of the big dust storms which blew up whenever there was much wind. We had to bring the children inside during recess, and shut all the windows and doors until the dust had subsided. On those days you couldn't even see outside because of the dust.

As mothers, we teachers were concerned about our own children whose life in the town had changed completely. The countryside was no longer theirs to roam through. Many of their playing areas were now privately owned, and they were confined to much smaller spaces. The nature of the community had changed, with so many strangers in town.

Our town was being overrun with strangers. It got to the stage where, when you saw someone from the old community in the street, who previously you might have smiled at and passed, now you would almost run up and hug them. In the past, my friends had mostly been amongst the Maori community and the teaching community, but now both Maori and Pakeha from the old days were always delighted to see each other. A familiar face was a scrap of security in a rapidly changing world.

The migrants came in such numbers that it wasn't a question of them adapting to our way of life. We had to change to accommodate them.

We had to learn to live on our own little sections, where previously the whole area was ours to wander in and call our own. We changed from being country-dwellers to town-dwellers overnight, and against our will. Some of the changes were convenient. We had shops we could walk to easily, more to choose from, and increased facilities. . . . So I am not saying that all the things were bad. But on balance, I didn't like the new place we were living in by comparison with former times. (A21:7-13)

5.1.2 Proposed layout accepted

The proposed layout of the Turangi township had been accepted by the Taupo County Council in September 1964 (B2(a):101-102). This did not give the final street layout, but the basic pattern of curving residential streets and the relationship of the town centre to the realigned SH1 was established. The industrial area, workers' camps, and

other buildings and service areas associated with the construction work were to the south of the township, separated by the new SH41. The sites for the water supply pumping station and reservoir, and the oxidation ponds for sewage treatment, had also been decided. In this chapter, we review the overall development of Turangi and in later chapters we consider the components of the Turangi township and the Tokaanu power project so far as they affected the lands described in the First Schedule to the Turangi Township Act 1964.

5.2 MINISTRY OF WORKS PUBLICITY PAMPHLETS

A publicity pamphlet published by the Ministry of Works in 1969 described Turangi at that time as a pleasant and attractive town of 5000 people which offered a ‘balanced community life’. The pamphlet enumerated the town’s amenities, shops, and services, such as its mall, schools, sports facilities, library, maternity hospital, parks, and, not least, its wide, grassy verges and kerbing.¹

John Gardenier (formerly a senior engineer with the Ministry of Works) described the immigrant population which settled in Turangi as an ‘instant population . . . arriving from all quarters of the wind, including even a number of Italians’. The first of these were the ‘hydro workers’ who were already employed on

other hydroelectric power projects on the Waikato River, such as Maraetai, Atiamuri, and Aratiatia. In addition to the construction workers, of course, came the professional people necessary for any town to function. For Gardenier:

The story of the TPD was also a story of giving and taking. Would the local marae extend its hospitality to hydro folk? Could a public cemetery be established around the marae cemetery? Who would build toilets on the sports grounds? Could removal of gravel from the river serve both project and fishing interests? Who controlled the riverbanks? Subjects like these were vigorously debated at Marae Committee meetings, Liaison Committee meetings, Welfare Society meetings, Taupo Council meetings, Project Engineers meetings, River Protection meetings and ad hoc meetings of any other group with a calling to be heard.²

Another edition of the Ministry of Works' pamphlet was issued in 1971 under the title *Turangi Scenic Attractions*, but with a similar text to the 1969 version. In a 1975 edition with the same title, the text had been revised. Turangi was described as 'a thriving community of 5,500 residents', which had now become 'an ordinary country town' after its hectic beginnings. The pamphlet stated that:

Several sites were investigated and finally the present site was chosen for its agreeable climate, and because it was convenient to construction sites and the established tourist area of the Tongariro River, Tokaanu and Waihi.

The Maori owners of the land, the Ngati Tuwharetoa, agreed to make the land available, for they realised that the establishment of a permanent town at Turangi could help their young people in their transition from country to town life. In the town plan 8 hectares were set aside for the Hirangi Marae, or meeting house.³

This was the Ministry of Works' version of the history of Turangi for general public consumption, which glossed over the contentious issues between Crown and Maori. The reality of the ongoing negotiations was much more complex. Also, because of its rapid growth and distinctive form of development, and the continuing presence

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of the Ministry of Works, it would be difficult to describe Turangi in 1975 as ‘an ordinary country town’ (fig 10).

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5.3 FRUSTRATION AT DEVELOPMENT WORK

By early 1967, many Maori owners were feeling angry and frustrated over the disruption caused to their lives by the development work on the township site, the lack of information about how much land was required, the delays in the payment of compensation, and other irritations, including general stress. There was some media comment in April 1967 that local people were unhappy and planned to send a deputation to meet the Prime Minister to talk about the amount of land required by the Crown. The Minister of Works responded by explaining that the Turangi Township Act 1964 authorised the Crown to take 1450 acres but:

every endeavour was being made to acquire as little as possible consistent with the economic welfare of the township . . . [and] only land needed for the scheme would be taken when it could be defined by survey.

The Minister added that some land required ‘could not be defined accurately until the relevant part of the project was completed’ (B3(a):8).

The Minister of Works also referred to the Maori Trustee’s role in negotiating the payment of compensation, noting that some advance payments were being made, as requested by the trustee. Under section 104 of the Public Works Act 1928 (as substituted by section 6 of the Public Works Amendment Act 1962), the Maori Trustee was responsible for negotiations concerning Maori land in multiple ownership taken for a public work. In chapter 14, we review the involvement of the trustee in the assessment of compensation.

5.4 BRIEF REVIEW OF LAND REQUIREMENTS

At this point, we review briefly the various statements of land requirements for the Turangi township recorded in documents submitted to us.

- **November 1963: Gibson's memorandum recommending the Turangi West site suggested 'about 1,100 acres' (B2(a):35), although the site shown on the accompanying map was larger than this (B2(a):37).**
- **April 1964: A Department of Maori Affairs report on a meeting with the Ministry of Works recorded 600 acres freehold in a triangle between Hirangi Marae, the old SH1, and the old SH41, the 'paper road' (Maori roadway), as well as 200 acres west of the paper road as leasehold for industrial purposes (B2(a):53).**
- **May 1964: The notice of the 24 May owners' meeting stated that 800 acres freehold and 200 to 300 acres leasehold was needed for the industrial area (B2(a):61).**

- **August 1964: A draft memorandum to Cabinet approved by the Minister of Works, Percy Allen, stated:**

It is proposed to purchase about 900 acres and lease some 200 acres from Tuwharetoa tribal lands to the west of [State] Highway 1 and south of [State] Highway 41 at Turangi. (B2(a):93)

- **September 1964: Plans produced at the 20 September owners' meeting included lands north of SH41. George Rawhiti and others objected to this. Gibson stated that 'everything is not detailed yet', but thought 'about 1,000 to 1,200 acres' would be required in total: 600 to 800 acres freehold and 150 to 200 acres leasehold (A7:84).**

- **Cabinet approval on 21 September was for 'the purchase of about 900 acres and the lease of some 200 acres of Tuwharetoa tribal lands situated to the west of [State] Highway 1 and to the south of [State] Highway 41' (A7:95). This approval did not include lands north of SH41, although owners had been told the previous day that lands to the north would be included.**

- **December 1964: The Second Schedule to the Turangi Township Act 1964 described an area of 1450 acres for the township and 90 acres for oxidation ponds, a total of 1540 acres, which could be taken under section 11 of the Act. No evidence was submitted to the Tribunal that these figures or the boundaries described were discussed with Maori owners prior to this legislation being enacted on 4 December 1964.**

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When the adverse publicity about the Crown relationship with Maori owners appeared in the press in April 1967, the Commissioner of Works asked Gibson to provide clarification of land requirements in Turangi. In response, Gibson produced the following table showing the relationship of the areas in acres suggested at the two meetings of owners in 1964 and the areas actually occupied in April 1967 (A8:143).

	24 May Meeting		20 September Meeting		Actual
	Verbal	Plan	Verbal	Plan	
Township					
(including oxidation ponds)	600–800	768	600–800	896	
Industrial area					102
MOW	150–200	ns	150–200	102	87
Private		ns		87	
Water Supply Reserve	ns	ns	ns	128	341
Fisheries Reserve	ns	ns	ns	165	340
TOTAL	750–1000	—	1000–1200	1242	1766

In this table, 'ns' means the area required was 'not specified' at the meeting or on a plan. The fisheries reserve area was estimated on the basis of the verbal statement that a five-chain strip on either side of the Tokaanu River would be suitable.

A small area of the 896 acres of the township in European title was purchased by negotiation. Gibson proposed in October 1964 (A7:26) that the industrial area of 189 acres should be taken, although, at the meetings of owners on 24 May and 20 September 1964, it had been stated that this would be a temporary leasehold of 10 to 12 years. All these areas were inside the boundaries specified in the Second Schedule to the Turangi Township Act 1964. Of the 341 acres in the proposed water supply reserve (including 34 acres 'now rezoned for rubbish dump'), only 59 acres were within the boundaries detailed in the First and Second Schedules and 282 acres were outside the Act boundaries. Of the 340-acre proposed fisheries reserve, 222 acres were within the Second Schedule boundaries, 53 acres were outside those boundaries but within the First Schedule boundaries, and 60 acres were outside the boundaries of the Act altogether. The proposed fisheries reserve was not taken, although part of it was included in the land taken for the water supply reserve in 1974. In the same report, Gibson provided a somewhat extraordinary explanation for the location of the southern boundary given in the Turangi Township Act:

The Water Supply Reserve was indicated to the owners at the meeting of September 1964 as a tentative requirement of unspecified size. In fact, the southern boundary of the reserve was dictated by the size of the sheet of paper on which the plan was drawn. Unfortunately this line was also used as the boundary of the Turangi Township Act and much of the Reserve, which was not defined at that time, is outside the township. (A8:145)

The even larger area of 539 acres, subsequently taken for the water supply reserve in 1974, and the occupation of the rubbish tip are outlined in chapter 7. The argument over the leasehold or freehold status of the industrial area is also discussed in chapter 6.

The Commissioner of Works had established a committee of senior officials to consider land requirements and report to the Minister of Works in response to the Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board's representations to the Government on behalf of the Maori owners. In July 1967, the committee considered in detail each of the numbered areas on a plan, TPD 8501/2/41 (B3(a):9), which is redrawn in figure 11. Areas 1 and 2 on this plan had already been taken by proclamation or purchased by negotiation, and comprised a total of 837 acres. Another 22 acres in area 3 were under negotiation and were to be subsequently acquired. Area 4 comprised 78 acres, and was also to be taken for the oxidation ponds. An area of 15 acres in area 5 and seven acres in area 6 were required for the new SH41. Areas 7, 8, and 9 comprised the contentious industrial area. Area 9 (114 acres) was occupied by the Ministry of Works. Area 7 comprised 29 acres of the private industrial area that had already been developed that Gibson recommended should be taken. Area 8 (28 acres) was also in the proposed private industrial area but had not yet been developed, and was subsequently excluded. Area 10 (22 acres) was needed for the water reservoir, spring, pumping station, and access road. Area 11 (34 acres) was required for a rubbish tip, but it had not been decided whether to take it or lease it. Area 12 was the water supply reserve of 289 acres (later enlarged to 539 acres), which could be taken or leased, but this

had not yet been decided. Area 13 was a severance occupied by Seton's camp, which was to be purchased if areas 11 and 12 were purchased. The question of taking all or part of the fisheries reserve, area 14 (326 acres), was considered to be the responsibility of the Department of Internal Affairs. Area 15 (6 acres) was an area where gravel was being extracted, described in some reports as 'Mrs Grace's borrow pit', which Gibson recommended should be taken 'to ensure logical development of the area [of the township already allocated] for NZED operating staff housing' (A8:113–115).

The taking of the industrial area by proclamation, in the face of previous undertakings given at the owners' meetings in 1964, became a major source of contention. The developed portion of the private industrial area was taken in 1969 (B3(a):30). The Ministry of Works' industrial area was taken on 20 September 1971 (A9:28). Just prior to this latter taking, on 16 September, Pat Hura and Hepi Te Heuheu had been appointed by the Maori Land Court as trustees of the Waipapa 1E2C and Ohuanga North 5B1F blocks (B3(a):38). On the instructions of the trustees, R T Feist, who was the solicitor for the Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board, lodged an application challenging this proclamation in the Supreme Court under the Declaratory Judgments Act 1908. At the same time, there were Crown moves to acquire control of Lake Rotoaira. There were also unresolved issues concerning the proposed water supply and fisheries reserves, the rubbish tip, and a number of places where the Ministry of Works had entered for construction purposes or extracted material such as pumice, rock, and river gravel. A letter to the Minister of Works dated

24 September 1971, written by Feist on behalf of the trustees of the blocks in the industrial area, summed up the Tuwharetoa attitude toward Crown dealings at this stage:

The trustees who have been appointed to deal with this land are empowered to contest the proposed compulsory taking of the land and steps are being taken to this end. My clients still hope that the matter can be resolved by negotiation. They believe that their request for payment at current market valuation is just and fair and that any attempt to pay less than current market valuation is an abuse of the spirit and intention of the Turangi Township Act and cannot do otherwise than upset the friendly relationships that have existed between the Tuwharetoa people and the Crown.

You will appreciate that developments in the Taupo area are leading to the loss by the Maori people of much of their hereditary land and that this is a matter of extreme concern to them. They are, therefore, endeavouring to retain as much of their land as they can. They realise that in some cases title must go, but it rankles with them when the Crown appears to be endeavouring to force an issue unnecessarily and on unreasonable terms. (B3(a):54)

5.5 A DELEGATION MEETS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

In January 1972, a Tuwharetoa delegation met with the Prime Minister, Keith Holyoake. Their principal concerns were to retain the ownership of Lake Rotoaira and to resolve certain ongoing issues in Turangi. Feist wrote to Holyoake that the owners had been assured in ‘all early discussions’ that no more land would be taken than was absolutely necessary, and that they would be able to retain certain areas, including Lake Rotoaira. As Feist put it:

The Tuwharetoa people are becoming increasingly concerned that statements and assurances given by Senior Departmental officers are not being honoured by Government. My clients appreciate the seriousness of this accusation. I refer specifically to two matters. The first concerns the industrial area at Turangi. (A10:93–97)

Feist then outlined the undertakings given at the May and September 1964 owners' meetings that an industrial area of up to 200 acres would be a temporary leasehold only. He explained that the land had now been taken by proclamation and that legal proceedings had begun to determine the validity of this taking. He stressed to the Prime Minister that:

the owners' co-operation in the establishment of Turangi Township was materially influenced by the assurances given at the early meetings and they are deeply concerned that those assurances have not been kept. (A10:94)

He also pointed out that the land for the water supply reserve was not to be taken compulsorily, but that the Ministry of Works had recently issued a notice of intention to this effect. Feist reiterated that:

The records of the early meetings make it clear how important the owners considered the statements and assurances given at these meetings. A large area of Maori land was going to be taken. It had been indicated that this would not be done without the full support of the Maori owners. It was appreciated by the owners that the limits of the land to be taken for different purposes could not be exactly defined and might be subject to some slight variations. However, matters of principle were clearly established. My clients feel that any changes on matters of principle which may be forced on them by utilising statutory powers of compulsory acquisition makes a mockery of the negotiations which have enabled so much progress to have been made both in the national interest and in their own interest. (A10:96)

5.6 DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND THE TUWHARETOA MAORI TRUST BOARD

On 16 February 1972, Ministry of Works officials formally met with nine Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board representatives to discuss the issues in contention: the water supply reserve, the rubbish tip, the industrial area, Lake Rotoaira, and other matters related to the TPD. The meeting was also attended by Feist and the district officer of the Department of Maori

Affairs, J E Cater. The principal issue in relation to the Turangi township was whether the freehold needed to be taken or whether some form of leasehold would suffice for the water supply reserve (now about 539 acres), the rubbish tip (34 acres), and the industrial area.

In May 1972, the Ministry of Works produced a draft agreement covering the matters discussed in the February meeting. There were more letters and more meetings over the next few months.

On 30 November 1972, a document titled 'Heads of Agreement: Tongariro Power Development Land Compensation Claims Maori Owners' was signed by the Minister of Works, Percy Allen, and Hepi Te Heuheu and Pat Hura as 'representatives of the Maori Owners' (B3(a):94–98). While this did not resolve all the outstanding issues, it provided agreement on the retention of Maori title to Lake Rotoaira (a separate agreement was also signed with the trustees of the lake on the same day, which set out certain Crown rights there); confirmed the taking of the industrial area and water supply reserve, but with better compensation arrangements; withdrew the legal proceedings; and resolved other matters in relation to TPD works.

Tuwharetoa leaders had supported in principle the development of a permanent town at Turangi as being in the long-term interests of their people. They had also, however, to protect the interests of these people and their lands from the depredations of the Ministry of Works. It was also in Tuwharetoa interests to support any measures to ensure the continuing viability of the town as construction work came to an end. A public statement of Tuwharetoa faith in the future of Turangi was made by the

secretary of the trust board, John Asher, at a seminar sponsored by the Turangi Lions Club in September 1973.⁴

5.7 AN ORDINARY COUNTRY TOWN?

Although the Turangi Township Act 1964 expired in 1975, the Ministry of Works had not yet left Turangi. At that time, the Ministry envisaged maintaining a substantial presence in Turangi until 1981 at least, when the underground Rangipo Power Station was expected to be completed. After that, according to the Ministry's 1975 publicity pamphlet, 'the growing interests of forestry, tourism and private ownership will have secured a permanent and stable community'.⁵

It was not in fact until 1983 that the Rangipo Power Station was commissioned. Given the continuing substantial presence of the Ministry of Works; the genesis of the township as a hydro town, with pretensions to a permanent existence; and 1960s concepts of a model township with curving tree-lined streets and underground services, it is difficult to accept that Turangi became 'an ordinary country town' as envisaged in the pamphlet.⁶ It was conveniently glossed over in the publicity material that

the location of two prisons and associated farms in the district, at Hautu and Rangipo, also meant that many Department of Justice employees were accommodated in Turangi. In addition to this, from 1983 to 1988, the Ohaaki geothermal power project was under construction by the Ministry of Works, and many of the project workers kept their homes in Turangi and commuted daily on ‘workers’ buses’ to Ohaaki. The New Zealand Forest Service also set up a regional headquarters in Turangi in the former TPD office of the Ministry of Works. However, in the restructuring in the mid to late 1980s that translated several Government departments into State-owned enterprises, many Forest Service employees found themselves redundant. In the late 1980s, unemployment levels rose in Turangi, with few alternative job prospects for many families who had bought homes and were trapped by their mortgages.⁷ Turangi was not yet a typical New Zealand country town. Although there has been some expansion of tourist services, local employment prospects are still limited.

In the following sections, we examine in more detail some specific issues already alluded to. We begin by considering the commercial and residential area of the township taken by proclamation in 1965 and 1966. In chapter 6, we consider the industrial area and the abandonment of the original Crown undertaking to lease this area. Chapter 7 reviews the issues relating to the water supply reserve, the rubbish tip adjacent to the industrial area, the Tongariro River, the Tokaanu River, and the Tokaanu

Power Station and tailrace. Issues relating to wahi tapu are reviewed in chapter 8. Finally, we consider the oxidation ponds in chapter 9 and the residual Maori lands west of the Turangi township in chapter 10.

5.8 THE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS

5.8.1 Grace farm lease bought

The transformation of a rural countryside into an urban landscape is shown graphically in figures 12 and 13. The town plan shown in figure 13 was the one accepted by the Taupo County Council in September 1964 as a basis for the zoning changes to be made in the district scheme (B2(d):101). The principal area affected was the Grace farm, shown in figure 12. However, it was not a ‘green field site’ because there were houses clustered along the old SH41 and in the Turangi village on the Tongariro River bank on both sides of SH1. The Ministry of Works purchased the lease of the 743 acres in the Grace farm held by Arthur Grace under Part XXIV of the Maori Affairs Act 1953. On 22 September 1964, Arthur Grace was told verbally that the Ministry of Works was about to enter the land (B10:27). Shortly afterwards, the stock was sold and farming operations ceased, although the Grace family were able to stay in their house for the time being while the bulldozers worked around

them. Other householders also had to cope with town development on their doorsteps. Some houses were taken away and others moved within their sections to make way for the new alignment of SH1 and the new curving residential streets that took no account of the existing pattern of housing. In chapter 12, we review in more detail the impact on Ngati Turangitukua families.

5.8.2 Assurances given to owners

At the meeting of owners at Tokaanu on 24 May 1964, Ministry of Works officials gave assurances about how the relocation of houses and families would be dealt with in the development of Turangi. Gibson said plenty of advance warning should be given to families who would need to be shifted, and he promised to look into the case of Jane Hurae, who requested she not be disturbed from her residence. Bennion said the Ministry would arrange for subdivided sections to be returned to displaced residents as part of their compensation. Lynch said that, while the town plan must take precedence over existing house sites, houses could be removed to new sites or replaced by way of exchange, and the Ministry's intention was that 'the owner should be left as well off as he was previously'.

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He also said that displaced residents would be placed 'as near as possible to where they wanted to go', and promised that 'sections would be made available to absentee members of the tribe, returning to the area' (A7:80, 82).

A second meeting of owners was held on 20 September 1964, and further assurances were given by Ministry of Works officials in response to a number of questions. At the morning session in Tokaanu, the fate of existing houses was briefly referred to. Gibson explained that the question of whether displaced residents would have the opportunity of exchanging their property would 'naturally . . . be a matter of separate negotiation with each of the individual owners themselves on a personal basis' (A7:73). In the afternoon, when the meeting reconvened at Hirangi Marae, Gibson was questioned by several individuals about housing on the old SH41. He assured them that, once the houses had been shifted and the sections redeveloped, the residents would enjoy 'first class frontage'. Alternatively, he said, they could move to a new site elsewhere in the town: 'They will have the opportunity of doing what they wish.' He explained that the Crown would acquire all the land around the highway while it was being resited, but that the owners could later buy it back. He acknowledged that some owners would simply have to move, but added that it might be that the Ministry would only have to move houses slightly forwards or backwards on their present sections (A7:83).

5.8.3 Negotiation techniques

The discussion turned to other matters, including how compensation would be assessed, before returning to the issue of the existing houses along the old SH41. George Rawhiti expressed his disappointment at seeing his own family land (Waipapa 1F) included within the town plan. He asked that it be excluded so that his people's children living away from Turangi would have land to build on when they returned to the district. If the Ministry of Works excluded 16 acres of that area, he said, he would be 'the first to help them build the town'. Lynch, however, was non-committal in his response, and repeated his invitation to individuals to come and talk to him, as each case would have to be looked at individually and could not be dealt with at a meeting such as this (A7:88).

This exchange suggests that the Ministry of Works was imposing a style of individual negotiation on owners, whereas Maori tikanga suggests it would have been quite appropriate to air individual family matters such as housing in a Maori way, in the meeting house, on the marae.

We did not receive any specific evidence of negotiations with residents and landowners of the old Turangi village, but it seems that they were influential in protecting their lands from any impacts from the construction of the new township. These 'resident fishermen' included those who had 'retired from influential places', and they won an 'undertaking... not to intrude on "old Turangi" in housing developments'.⁸

5.8.4 Other possible reasons for choice of Turangi West site

In the early stages of planning by the Ministry of Works, outlined in chapter 2, it had been implied that the choice of the Turangi West site had been influenced by the existing settlement, which provided a basis for expansion into a permanent town. It was also stated that the existing commercial premises in the Turangi village would be incorporated in the new 'town centre'. However, it seems that other influences were at work and the new township was developed on Maori lands, west of the realigned SH1. There was considerable disruption for householders at the northern end of the new SH1 route, while lands south of the Tongariro Road subdivision remained undeveloped. In effect, the lands between the old and the new highway became a buffer zone separating the old Turangi village from the new construction town.

John Asher, in his submission to the Tribunal, expressed the view of many local people that the realignment of SH1 was for the benefit of the residents of the old Turangi village:

It was apparent to people living here that there was one law for European land owners and one for Maori land owners. This came out in the fact that the old part of Turangi, the houses along the Tongariro River which were in freehold title and owned by Europeans, were untouched. The main road was diverted to keep the European-owned part of Turangi in an exclusive and untouched area so that those owners were largely unaffected by the works. (A12(1):7)

5.8.5 The 'island'

The 'island' between the old and new routes of SH1 still effectively separates the two parts of Turangi. At the northern end, some houses and motels were built. To the south, an area of about 34 hectares taken for the Turangi township remained undeveloped and is now held by Landcorp, subject to a memorial under section 27B of the State-Owned Enterprises Act 1986 (fig 14). In 1973 the local pony club leased part of the land. Over the period since it was taken it has been leased for grazing and not used for any purpose associated with the development of Turangi. The Landcorp block is currently the subject of offer back procedures under the Public Works Act 1981, which are reviewed in chapter 17.

The Ministry of Works' town and country planning division report of February 1967 on planning for Turangi's future referred to the large 'island' created by the realignment of SH1 (B8(a):126–145). The report stated that the land to the south would be held in reserve by the Crown until the number of residential sections finally required for the township was known, but that any accommodation erected there would be temporary and the land would revert to non-urban use in due course. Land to the north, it was noted, was mainly Maori-owned, with a scattered mix of permanent and holiday dwellings. No services existed in this 'island' area (B8(a):140–141).

It was assumed for planning purposes that the 'island' and vacant land east of the old SH1 would be built on eventually, but the process would be 'hastened if and when the County supplies services'. One difficulty was that to gain access to services in the new

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town required pedestrian and vehicular traffic across the new SH1. From this point of view, the report called the creation of this island of residential development by the new highway route ‘unfortunate’, and observed that ‘Careful handling will now be required to ensure the dangers implicit in the present situation are reduced to a minimum’ (B8(a):141).

5.8.6 The new SH1 route

The inset on figure 14 indicates how the new SH1 route was carved through existing residential sections. Not all were occupied by houses, but it was in this area that some houses were either taken away or relocated on their sections to make way for the highway. As part of the compensation provisions, a strip of land along Taupahi Road was added to these sections, and the old SH1 was reduced to the width of a suburban street. ‘Segregation strips’ were set out along the new SH1 to restrict access to it. Apart from access at the northern end of Taupahi Road, the principal vehicular access from the Turangi village to the new township was via Arahori Street across SH1 to Pihanga Road and the town centre. A pedestrian underpass between Arahori Street and Pihanga Road was also constructed at this point.

On either side of Arahori Street, east of the new SH1, were two blocks of land that had not been developed (fig 15). In 1965 a survey for a proposed residential subdivision had been carried out, on the assumption that this area would ‘meet some of the anticipated demand from shopkeepers and others to whom it is proposed to make priority allocation’ (B7(a):39). Presumably, the shopkeepers chose to live elsewhere, as these lands were not developed, although the Ministry of Works still expressed an intention to develop them in 1970. In response to an Ombudsman’s inquiry, Lynch advised that the area provided ‘essential access’ to the land acquired by the Crown to the south, and that, while not required for immediate development, ‘Its retention is in the best interests of the orderly development of the township for which purpose it was acquired’ (B7(a):40). Gibson added that the Ombudsman should note that the land was ‘taken . . . for the development of the township . . . with the unconditional agreement of the Maori owners’ (B7(a):41).

It is hard to regard a taking by proclamation under the Public Works Act 1928 as an unconditional agreement, especially when one of the owners, Tutemohuta Te Rangi, had strenuously opposed the taking of part of his land at Arahori Street, had refused to accept the compensation money, and had complained to the Ombudsman in 1970. By April 1972, the Ministry of Works had decided it no longer needed this land for residential development and resolved to promote it as motel sites. In February 1973, the blocks were put up for sale by tender, transferred from the Ministry of Works to the Department of Lands and Survey and declared Crown land in August 1974, and offered on licence to two successful tenderers. However, neither built on their sites and the blocks were readvertised in June 1978 (B7:16). In August 1979, another complaint was lodged with the Ombudsman by Hono Lord, on behalf of Tutemohuta Te Rangi. The Ombudsman conducted an inquiry, finally reporting in 1982 and questioning whether a motel site was an appropriate use of land taken under the Turangi Township Act 1964, especially after the Act had expired in 1975. The Ombudsman also found that there was some justification for the return of land to the Te Rangi family. After further negotiation, an adjacent block on Arahori Street was returned and the rest of the area disposed of for motel development.

While some of the existing houses on the Tongariro River bank at the SH1 end of the old SH41 were excluded from the township development, others had the township built around them. Opposite Hirangi Marae, the extended Rawhiti Rangataua family lived on the Waipapa 1F block, which had been partitioned into several house sites (fig 16). George Rawhiti's concerns about maintaining the land north of the old SH41 for future Maori housing had been voiced at the owners' meetings in 1964. At the first meeting on 24 May, a committee of owners had been set up, and this committee met on 31 May. In a letter to the Minister of Works on 14 August 1964, Arthur Grace Snr reported that the committee, among other things, had agreed that the two areas to be retained for Maori housing should be 'between the northern side of the Turangi-Tokaanu highway [old SH41] and the Tongariro River' as well as 'Certain sections along the [former] No 1 State Highway Turangi-Waiouru-National Park and bounded by the western side of this road' (A7:144-146).

The second area along the old SH1 was taken but not used, and is now part of the Landcorp block. Most of the area north of the old SH41 was also taken. As we have already noted, Ministry of Works officials did not consult with the owners' committee, and this attempt to preserve areas of Maori land for housing Ngati Turangitukua families was ignored. It may be relevant that in the 1960s the current Government policy on Maori housing was to 'pepperpot' Maori homes in urban areas under the guise of 'integration', as set out in the Hunn report on the Department of Maori Affairs.⁹ The development of the Turangi township meant that only the

zoned residential areas would be available, and returning Ngati Turangitukua would have to purchase urban sections at urban prices, rather than return to a 'family block'. The fate of the Rawhiti Rangataua block illustrates this.

5.8.7 Residential development north of the old SH41

The original plan showing the possible township sites did not include any land north of the old SH41 in Turangi West. It is not clear just when this land was included because the draft plan shown to Maori owners at the 24 May 1964 meeting has not been located. It seems that Jack Asher had indicated that some land north of SH41 'might be made available by the owners' (A7:203). The plan accepted by the Taupo County Council in September 1964 did show proposed residential development in this area, although on the Rawhiti Rangataua land it was not as extensive as that subsequently developed. Figure 16 shows this land before and after the taking. In 1964 a smaller portion of the Waipapa 1F block was to be used, with an extension west to Waipapa 1D2B3B. However, this latter block was outside the area described in the Second Schedule to the Turangi Township Act 1964. The Second Schedule boundary also extended upstream along the banks of the Tongariro River, giving the Crown powers to take any land between the river and the old SH41. In 1965 a subdivision plan was prepared which incorporated the existing houses and took the

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residential sites to the edge of the terrace above the Hirangi Stream. A 'retention area' was discussed with Jim Rawhiti Rangataua, the brother of George Rawhiti, 'who was not at all happy with it'. Apparently there were two reasons for this:

(a) A large macrocarpa tree on the edge of the bank, which has sentimental value serves as a focal point for an outdoor living area (as evidenced by considerable development work). Important that this area be retained.

(b) Adult family overfills small house. Extensions required urgently, also provision made if possible for sufficient land to subdivide and build another house. (B5(a):11)

This was the version reported by Lynch, but it was only part of the story. Jim Rawhiti Rangataua explained in his submission to the Tribunal that:

There was a Turangitukua marae next to my house. That old pa site was part of our history. We naturally thought that would be coming back to us. Opposite my house across the [Hirangi] stream was the original site where the afterbirths of my family were buried, and also on the same side of the stream as my house. With the new storm water system, that area flooded. So I established a new area for the afterbirths up the bank from my home. (A22(1):4)

Eileen Duff also spoke of Tomohukahuka, the former marae site, in her submission to the Tribunal:

Tomahukahuka [sic] was inhabited by Turangitukua people as their principal marae up until the beginning of the twentieth century. The old people wanted the marae to move to its present site at Hirangi, which was on higher ground. But the site of the former marae remained tapu after the people left. (A22(2):13)

Tomohukahuka was lost in the residential subdivision. 'Substandard' houses were put on the block, to be taken away when

construction finished because they did not meet the Taupo County Council's requirements. The family expected the land would be returned to them but, in 1966, it was taken by proclamation.¹⁰ When the substandard houses were removed, the sections were sold. The only area retained was around existing houses, and only included one of the wahi tapu – the macrocarpa tree of 'sentimental value'. This was a rakau pito, a tree marking the place where whenua (afterbirth or placentas) were buried. The word 'whenua' also means land, symbolising the connection between the people and their ancestral land. But many other people are now living on what once was the Rawhiti Rangataua family papakainga.

Because the Ministry of Works excluded only the sections already occupied by houses from the land taken, some members of the extended family lost all their interests in the family papakainga. Jim Rawhiti Rangataua explained:

as far as the wider family is concerned, the intentions of my grandmother Rea was that that block leading down to the Tongariro River [Waipapa 1F3B2B3B] would be a papakainga for her descendants. She had two daughters, Mihipeka and Te Hirau. My immediate family is descended from Mihipeka. Some of my brothers and sisters had freeholded sections from the block prior to the project coming to Turangi, and accordingly their descendants have a papakainga there. As I have said, my half acre was the only part of the block still in Maori title which was not taken for the project. My older brothers and sisters who would have been entitled to land there, but who did not freehold their interest, missed out completely. There were three of those. The descendants of Te Hirau also missed out because they did not freehold their interest. This has meant that some of Rea's great-grandchildren have no place in Turangi to call their own, although her clear intention was that both her daughters' descendants would have a place to come back to. (A22(1):3–4)

When 'betterment' of \$2800 was deducted from the total of \$6200 compensation assessed for Waipapa 1F3B2B3B, the balance of \$3400 was paid to the 35 owners (A6:3). In 1970 a section adjacent to Jim Rawhiti

Rangataua's house was sold for \$7000 (A22(1):3). Compensation matters are reviewed in more detail in a later chapter.

The lands north of the old SH41 taken for the Turangi township extended to the boundary of the river protection reserve. Less than half of the area up to the edge of the terrace taken between 1965 and 1971 was used for residential development (fig 17). The balance comprised low-lying swamp lands drained by the Hirangi Stream. This area had formerly been used for cultivations, but was prone to flooding. In 1958 the Tongariro River had flooded, breaking through to the Hirangi Stream and forming a new channel, which the Ministry of Works blocked in 1965. The Hirangi Stream and the spring which fed it were important to Ngati Turangitukua, as Eileen Duff explained:

The Hirangi Stream was a trout-spawning stream, and a source of watercress, koura [freshwater crayfish], drinking water – that stream was full of life. You could tickle the trout for dinner. The stream is woven into the history of our families, and figures in our waiata . . . the waiata connected with the puna [spring], which told the story of the taniwha coming up at that point and making its way back to the Tongariro River and out into the lake. The waiata was a very sad one, because the taniwha had originally lived further up the Tongariro River and the stream is the tears of that taniwha. (A22(2):2)

The whole area between the houses and the Tongariro River is now described as a recreational reserve, sometimes called Crescent Reserve. The area adjacent to Tautahanga Road is grassed, but the remainder is covered in scrub with tracks through it. The puna is now overgrown. Eileen Duff told the Tribunal that the Hirangi Stream is now muddy and contaminated by storm water draining into it (A22:6).

In chapter 12, we examine the impacts on Ngati Turangitukua of the taking of these lands and the construction of the Turangi township. We

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also examine in more detail the effects of housing policies and, in particular, how the Ministry of Works allocated house sites in Turangi to Maori families. In chapter 14, we review how compensation was assessed for the lands taken for the residential and commercial areas of the township in 1965 and 1966.

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