

KIA

KŌTAHI

MAI

Representation Matters



Introduction

He kupu whakataki

We're doing a representation review to look at how Northland communities are represented at the council table.

We need to decide how many councillors we'll have, what area they'll represent and how our new Māori constituencies will work.

This document outlines a proposal we think could work best to provide fair, effective representation across the region.

Now we need to hear from you – do you think we've got it right?

Have your say online or send in the submission form at the back of this booklet.

Feedback closes on 10 September
nrc.govt.nz/representationmatters



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Ihirangi

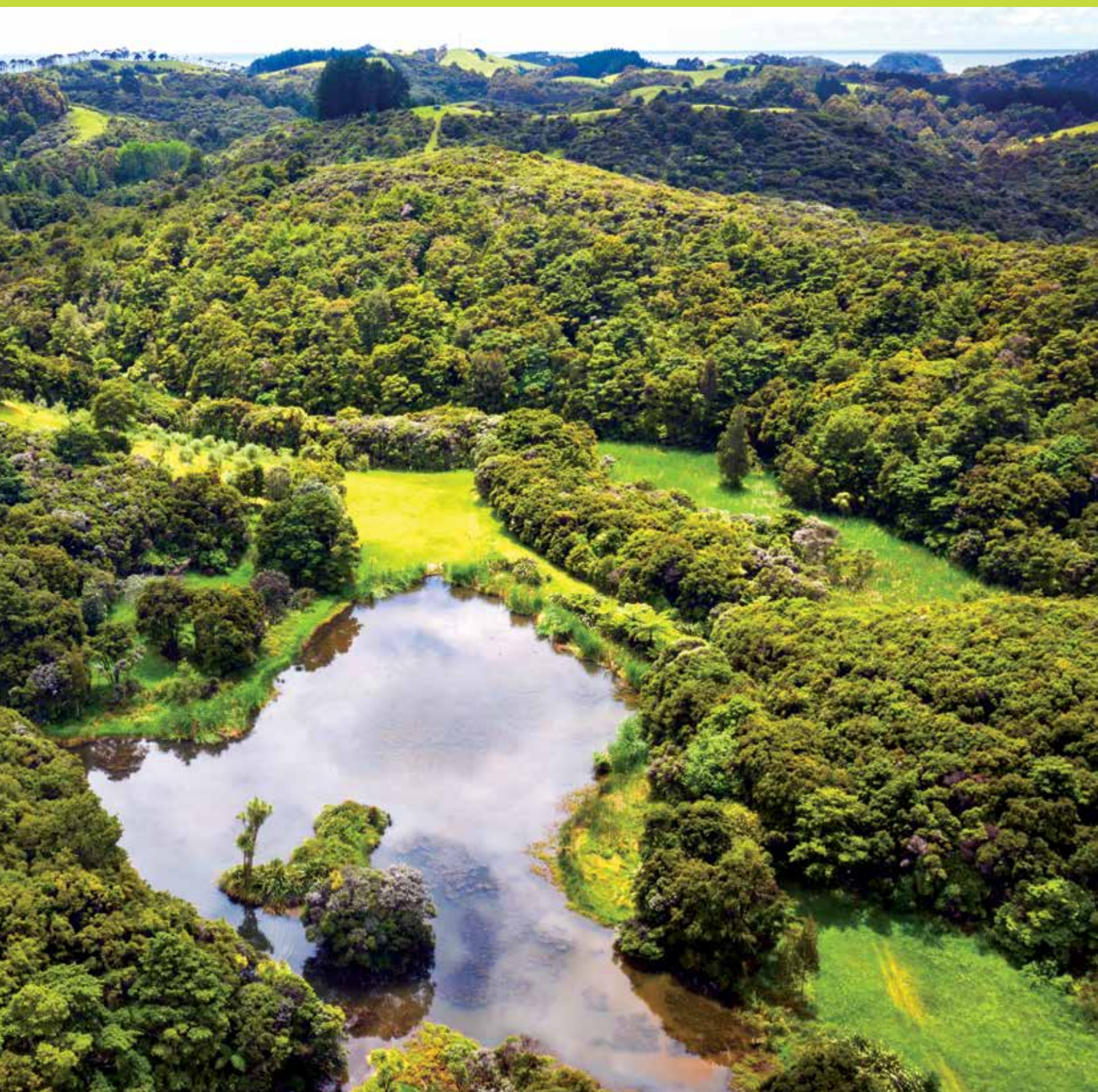
Nau mai, haere mai

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Representation review

Arotake Whakaahuatanga

As a council, Northland Regional Council is required to review its representation arrangements at least every six years.



Overview | Te Tirōhanga Whānui

Following council's decision to establish Māori constituencies, we are doing a representation review now so we can get new arrangements in place for the next local government elections in 2022.

This review will look at the number of councillors we have; the areas they are elected from (constituencies), and the names of those constituencies.

At its heart, the review is about how best to achieve fair and effective representation for Northlanders, within the legislative requirements councils are bound by.

We have worked with a range of people, including our Māori advisory group, to put together a model that we think will best serve our communities.

Our proposal is to keep the total number of councillors the same – nine – made up of:

- » Seven councillors elected from seven general constituencies (one from each); and
- » Two councillors elected from one region-wide Māori constituency.

Submissions can be made on this initial proposal between Tuesday 10 August and Friday 10 September 2021.



What's up for discussion?

Please note that while we really encourage feedback, there are some aspects that are up for discussion and some that are not.

What's in?

- » The total number of councillors;
- » The number and boundaries of general and Māori constituencies (this includes whether the Māori councillors should be elected from one or more Māori constituencies);
- » The names of general and Māori constituencies.

What's out?

- » Council's decision to establish one or more Māori constituencies; and
- » Council's decision to conduct the 2022 local body elections using the First Past the Post (FPP) electoral system.

These last two decisions have already been made and can't be reversed through the representation review process.

Ehara taku toa | te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini
Success is not the work of one, but the work of many

What is a representation review?

He aha te arotake whakaahuatanga?

Every three years elections are held for council. To make sure we have fair and effective representation at the council table, we are required under the Local Electoral Act 2001 to review our representation arrangements at least every six years.

A representation review looks at how Northland Regional Council can best represent the people of Northland.

It covers:

- » The total number of councillors; and
- » The number, boundaries and names of the areas from which councillors will be elected (referred to as constituencies).

Our council last did a representation review in 2018. However, as council recently voted to establish Māori constituencies, we need to review our representation arrangements now in 2021.

This document presents the Northland Regional Council's Representation Review 2021 Initial Proposal which provides the detail and reasoning behind proposed changes to its representation arrangements.

Most importantly we would value your input as to whether this structure will empower Northland's many different communities while enabling effective regional decision-making.



About Māori representation | Whakaahuatanga Māori

All four of Northland's councils have decided to create Māori seats as part of their representation arrangements, to better reflect the needs and aspirations of our entire community. Here is some information about Māori constituencies, how it works, and what it will mean for our region.

What is a Māori constituency?

It is where electors on the Māori electoral roll vote for candidates standing for Māori constituencies. Similarly, electors on the general electoral roll vote for candidates standing for general constituencies.

Who can stand for election in a Māori constituency?

Anyone on either electoral roll can stand in a Māori constituency. Candidates standing for election in a Māori constituency do not need to be of Māori descent, but they must be nominated by two electors from the Māori electoral roll in Northland.

Would Māori constituency councillors just represent Māori?

No. All councillors, whether elected from Māori or general constituencies, are required to represent and make decisions for the good of all Northlanders.

How many Māori constituency councillors can there be?

There's a legislative formula to work this out, based on the total number of councillors and the latest available electoral population statistics. See page 9 for more details.

Who can vote for Māori constituency candidates?

You must be on the Māori electoral roll to vote for Māori constituency candidates. If you're of Māori descent you can enrol in either the Māori or general roll; otherwise, you can only enrol on the general roll.

Is it still one vote per person?

Yes. Regardless of which electoral roll a person is on they are only able to cast one vote at local body election time (you can't vote in both Māori and general constituencies).

How else is council building partnerships with Māori?

It's widely understood that there's no single 'right' way to create mutually accepted and supported partnerships between Māori and councils – in reality there are many ways to work together effectively and a suite of approaches is needed.

Over many years we have been building relationships and sharing knowledge through things like our Māori advisory group (Te Taitokerau Māori and Council Working Party), Mana Whakahono a Rohe agreements, iwi/hapū environmental management plans, relationship agreements, involvement in co-governance arrangements and more.

Our council is committed to creating and sustaining meaningful partnerships with Māori, and see it as critical to improving the wellbeing of Northland and its people.

The creation of Māori seats is about strengthening existing partnerships between Māori and council, and enabling council to better reflect Māori values, issues, priorities and aspirations at the decision-making table.

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Key considerations | Ngā kaupapa matua

There are three key factors councils are required to look at when considering representation:

- » Regional communities of interest;
- » Effective representation; and
- » Fair representation.

Below is more detail on what these things mean.

Regional communities of interest

This is about the communities people identify with – whether it's geographical, historical or something else. It can mean different things to different people and can change over time.

It can include things like:

- » A sense of belonging to a distinct area or location
- » Distinctive topographical features such as river catchments, mountains and coastal ecosystems
- » Similar demographic, socio-economic and ethnic characteristics
- » Similar economic and social activities in an area
- » Land use and local history of an area
- » The rohe or takiwā of iwi and hapū

- » Shared facilities such as schools, marae, shops and recreational.

Effective representation

Once communities of interest have been identified, we look at how they can be grouped together into geographically distinct areas (constituencies) to represent the people who live there. We need to consider whether:

- » People will have reasonable access to their local councillor
- » Councillors will be able to easily attend meetings/events in their constituency
- » The representation arrangements facilitate the sharing of an appropriate (and ideally equal) workload amongst councillors.

Fair representation

Legally each councillor must represent roughly the same number of people. This is known as the 'plus or minus 10% rule'.

This has a strong influence on where the proposed constituencies boundaries go and also has to be considered when trying to future-proof representation arrangements. For example, in growth areas it makes sense to draw the constituency boundary at the lower end of the population scale to allow for continued growth.

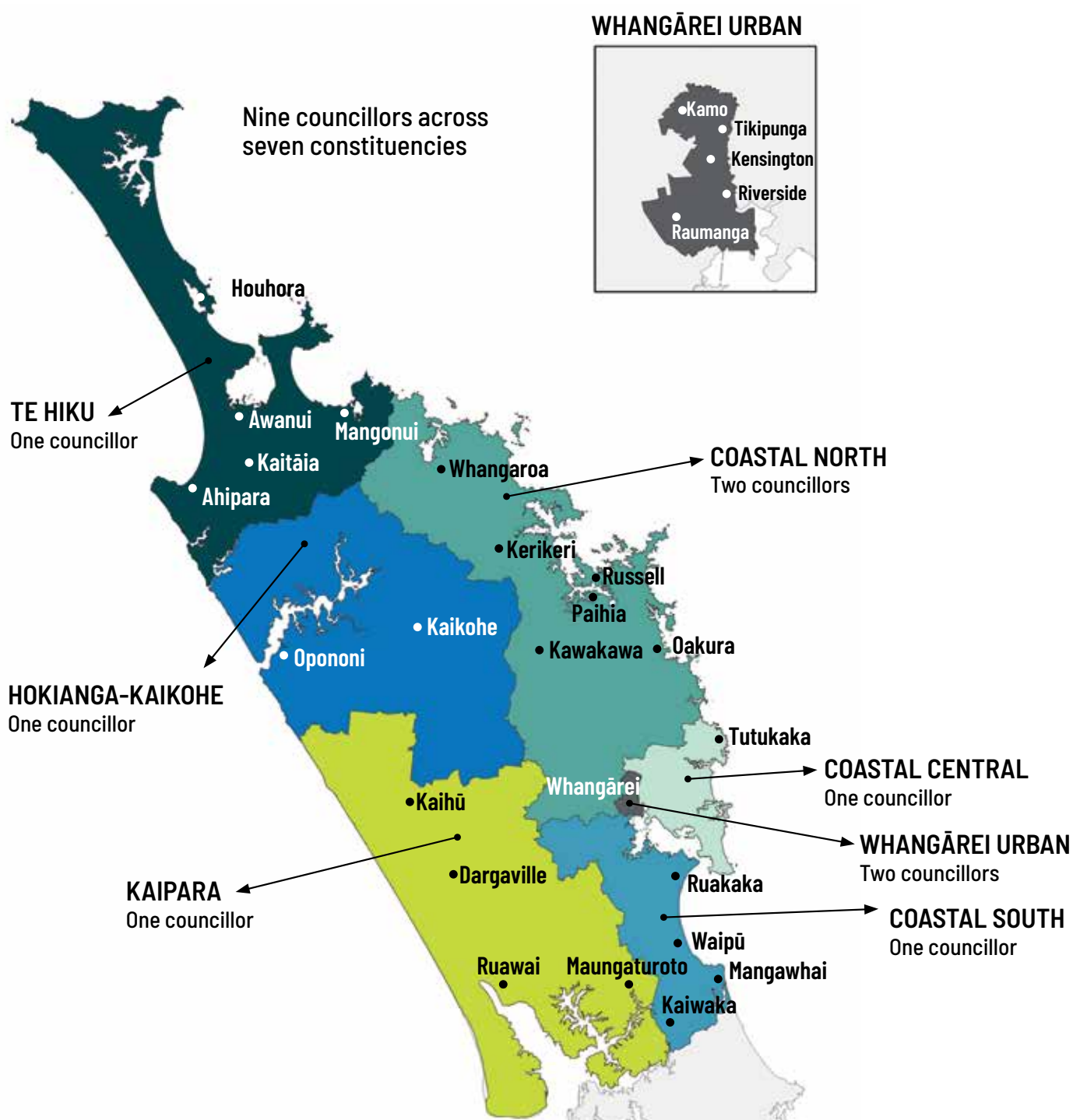
The current model | Te taura ināiane

Since 2012 Northland Regional Council has had seven constituencies represented by nine councillors (before that there were three constituencies and eight councillors).

We fine-tuned this model in the 2018 representation review, mainly to fix anomalies along constituency boundaries and accommodate the rapidly growing Coastal South constituency.

The seven current constituencies are shown below. Coastal North and Whangārei Urban constituencies each have two councillors; the other five constituencies are represented by one councillor for each.

Current Northland Regional Council constituencies



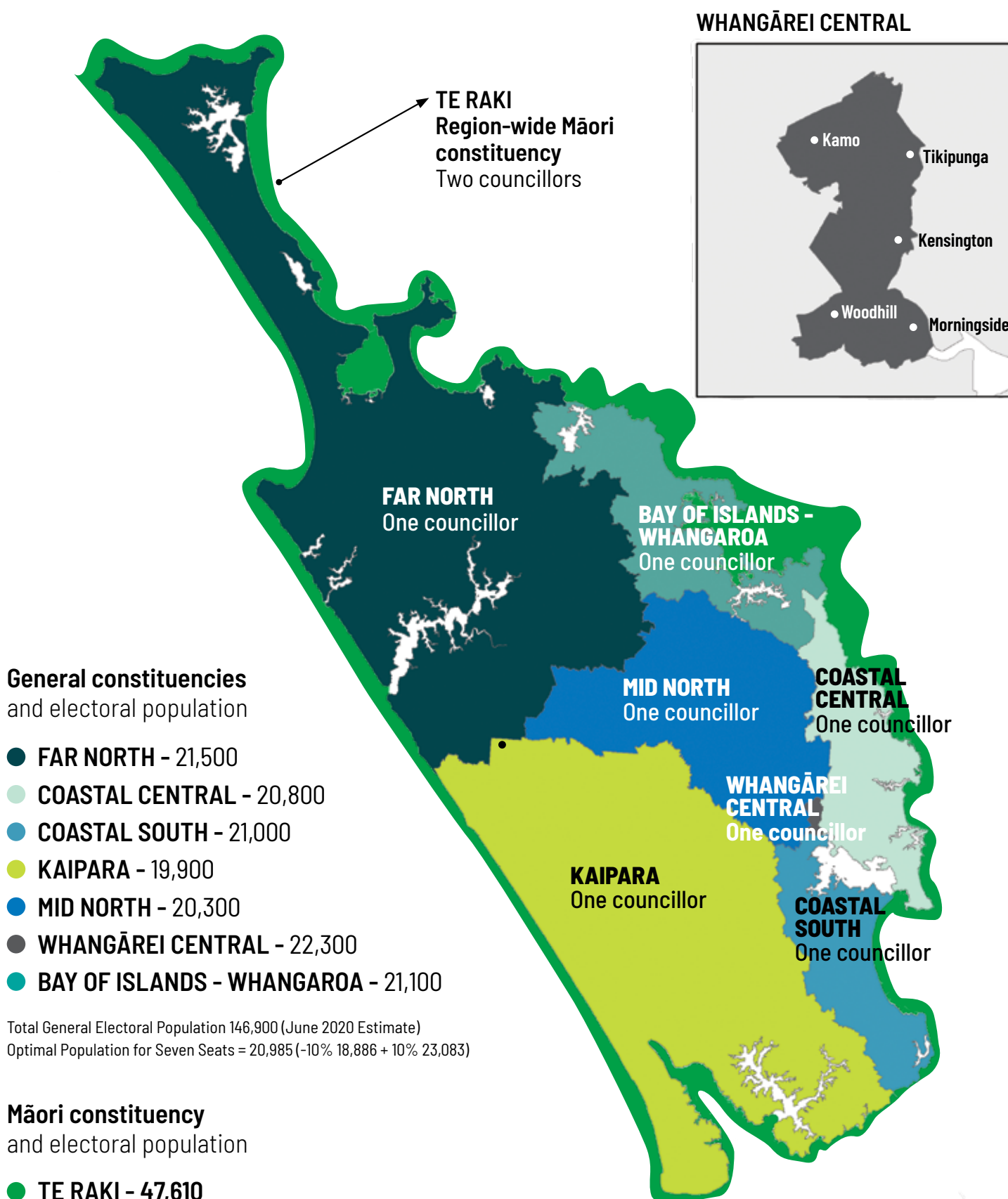
The proposed new model

Te tauira hou kia whakatakoto

This review is a fresh opportunity to look at how Northlanders are best represented at the council table moving forward. Our proposed new model of representation is outlined in the following pages.



This map is the overview of the proposed representation arrangements. There is more information on the following pages.
More detailed maps can be found in Appendix 1 or online on our council's GIS viewer: <https://bit.ly/3etsmiv>



Number of councillors | Tokohia ngā kaikaunihera

Keep total number of councillors at nine

The total number of councillors we can have (as determined by the Local Electoral Act 2001) ranges from a minimum of six to a maximum of 14.

Our council currently has nine councillors. We are proposing to stick with this number as this has been working well and has several benefits including:

- » Adequate numbers to spread workload while maintaining cohesive decision making
- » Ability to be inclusive, collaborative, agile and make decisions quickly
- » Ability to build a tight-knit team with strong working relationships
- » Ensuring remuneration is at a sufficient level to make it a viable career option, attract younger age groups and people from all backgrounds (the Remuneration Authority decides the total amount that can be paid in remuneration to councillors in each individual council)
- » Enabling voting by majority if needed (by having an odd number of councillors).

After the next elections (2022) the new council will have the ability to review the total number of councillors.

Seven general councillors and two Māori councillors

The number of general and Māori councillors is determined by legislation. It depends on the total number of councillors to be elected for the region, and the latest available general electoral population and Māori electoral population statistics.

This table shows the options for Northland based on the formula. For the proposed council size of nine, we would have seven general and two Māori councillors.

Total council size	Māori councillors	General councillors
6	1	5
7	2	5
8	2	6
9	2	7
10	2	8
11	3	8
12	3	9
13	3	10
14	3	11



Constituencies and boundaries

Ngā Whakaahuatanga o ngā Takiwā

A constituency is an area from which voters elect their representative. As part of this review we need to look at how many constituencies we should have, and where the boundaries are, to best represent the people of Northland.

We are proposing that the two Māori councillors be elected from the region at large, rather than breaking it into two separate constituencies.

One region-wide Māori constituency (with two councillors)

While we would eventually like to establish individual Māori constituencies, we recognise this is a complex matter that needs time to get it right. We're therefore proposing to start with one region-wide constituency, to be reviewed in the next term of council when we have a better understanding of how Māori representation is working in practice.

Seven general constituencies, different boundaries

We are proposing that the seven general councillors be elected from seven different general constituencies, to keep a good spread of representation across Northland's many different communities of interest.

The map on page 8 shows the proposed boundaries. For more detail, see the maps in Appendix 1 or head online to our council's GIS viewer: <https://bit.ly/3etsmiv>

The boundaries for these proposed seven general constituencies are different from our current model, with key changes including:

- » The proposed Whangārei Central Constituency is smaller, and is confined to the city centre. There would be one councillor representing this constituency (instead of two currently), recognising that people living in

Whangārei have easy access to the Northland Regional Council's main office, its services and its councillors, whereas this is not typically the case in more remote areas of the region. A greater spread of councillors across the region would ideally make our governance arrangements more effective.

- » The outer fringes/suburbs of Whangārei are shifted into the surrounding constituencies.
- » The introduction of a new Mid North Constituency incorporating the townships of Hikurangi, Towai, Kawakawa and Morewa to ensure these communities are well represented.
- » A new constituency specific to the Bay of Islands-Whangaroa area which has been identified as a clear community of interest and experiencing considerable growth.

There are legal requirements that affect where the boundaries can go.

Each constituency must have roughly the same number of constituents, plus or minus 10% (that's 'fair representation'). Northland's general electoral population was 146,900 at June 30 2020, so each of the seven councillors must represent between 18,886 and 23,083 residents. For more detail on population estimates for the proposed constituencies see Appendix 2 on page 24.

Constituency boundaries must always coincide with Department of Statistics meshblock boundaries and match district council ward boundaries where possible.

A constituency is an area from which voters elect their representative. As part of this review we need to look at how many constituencies we should have, and where the boundaries are, to best represent the people of Northland.

Constituency names | Ngā ingoa o ngā Takiwā

To keep things consistent for our communities, we are proposing to keep the same constituency names for the general constituencies where possible. Māori names were considered for the general constituencies, but we recognise it could cause confusion between a Māori and general constituency.



The following constituency names (also shown in the earlier map) are proposed:

- » **Far North General:** Extending from Cape Reinga and down the west coast to Waipoua. Includes the service centre of Kaikohe.
- » **Bay of Islands – Whangaroa General:** Includes the Whangaroa Harbour, the Bay of Islands and the surrounding settlements (including Kerikeri, Waipapa, Russell and Paihia).
- » **Kaipara General:** Very similar to the current constituency; extending from Waipoua down to the southern boundary of the Northland region. Includes the service centres of Dargaville and Kaiwaka
- » **Mid North General:** The inland region stretching from Pakaraka down to the northern and western suburbs of Whangārei. Includes the townships of Hikurangi, Towai, Kawakawa and Moerewa.
- » **Coastal Central General:** The coastal fringe to the north and east of Whangārei – extending from Taupiri Bay down to Bream Head.
- » **Whangārei Central General:** Focussed on the Whangārei central business district.
- » **Coastal South General:** Incorporates the coastal fringe south of Whangārei and includes the service centres of Waipū, Ruakaka and Mangawhai.
- » **Te Raki Māori:** All of the region.

More detailed maps can be found in Appendix 1 or online on our council's GIS viewer: <https://bit.ly/3etsmiv>



What do you think?

He aha ōu whakaaro?



Have your say | Tukua mai ō kōrero

Before we go any further, we're keen to hear from you. What do you think about our proposed representation arrangements for Northland Regional Council?

We need your feedback by 4pm Friday 10 September 2021

You can have your say:

Online

Fill in the online submission form at www.nrc.govt.nz/representationmatters

By email

Send your submission to submissions@nrc.govt.nz

By post

Fill in the submission form at the back of this document and return it by post (it's free) or drop it at one of our offices around the region.

Your feedback matters. The more people who have their say, the more chance that we get representation that will deliver real benefits to the people who live in this very special region of New Zealand.

Please note that all submissions received will be publicly available and any submissions heard by council will be open to the public.

Key dates | Ngā rā matua

10 August to 10 September 2021: Submission period

This is where you have the opportunity to make a formal submission on our Initial Proposal (this document).

28 September 2021 (and 27 September if required): Hearings

Council will hear from members of the public who want to speak to their formal submissions.

5 October 2021: Deliberations

Council will meet to consider all the information it has received and look at whether the Initial Proposal needs to be amended. This meeting is open to the public (unless by exception there are sensitive matters that require council to deliberate in private).

19 October 2021: Final Proposal

Council will develop and adopt a Final Proposal for representation for Northland Regional Council.

22 October to 26 November: Objection/appeal period

This is where earlier submitters can lodge an appeal against the Final Proposal if they wish. If the Final Proposal differs from the Initial Proposal, any member of the public can also lodge a formal objection.

April 2022: Determination by the Local Government Commission

If there are any appeals or objections, it all gets passed to the Local Government Commission to make the final decision. The final determination is required by 10 April and the decision is final (other than an appeal to the High Court on a point of law).

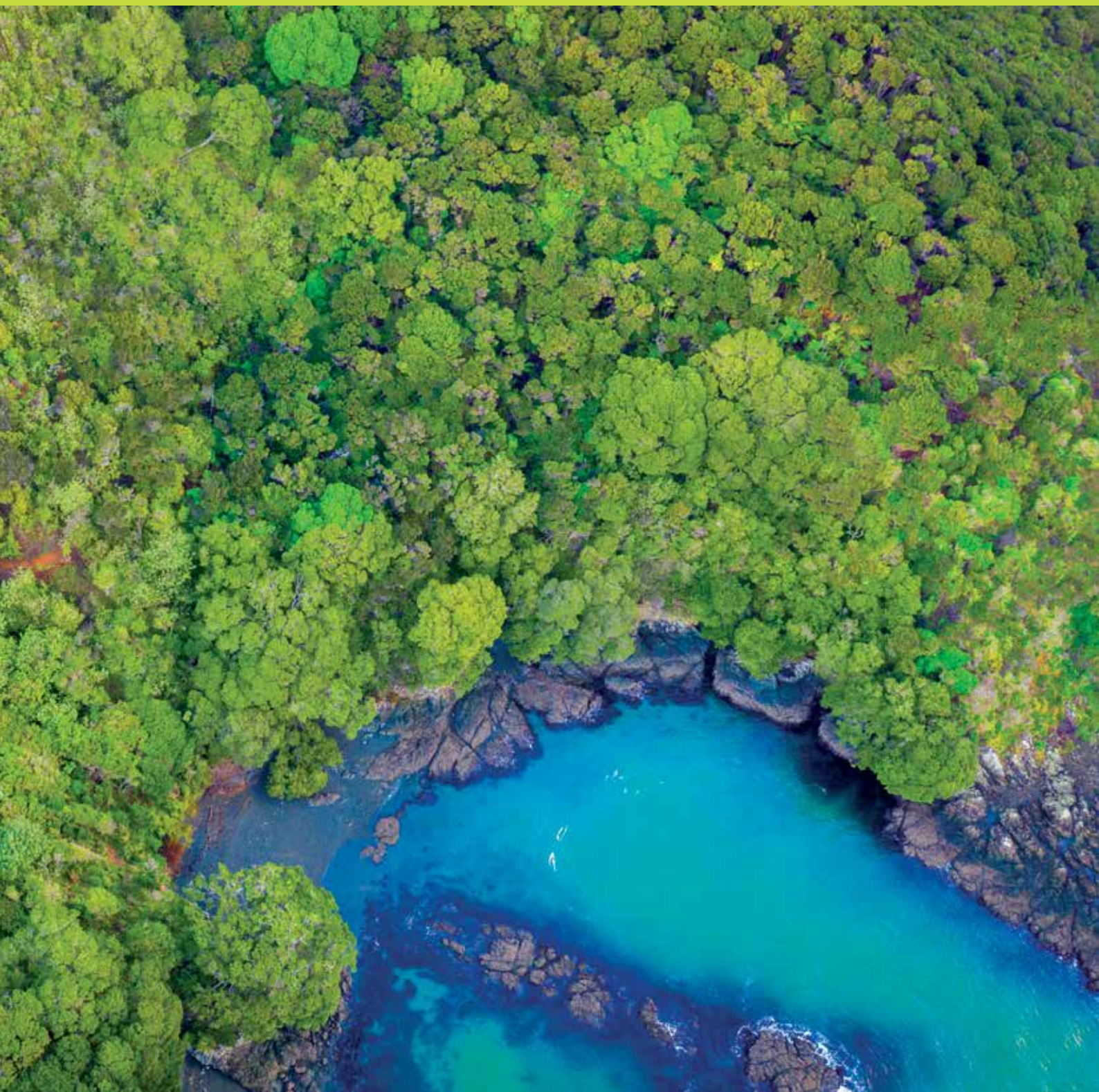
8 October 2022: Local government elections

The representation arrangements decided through this process will apply at the 2022 elections for Northland Regional Council.

Your feedback matters. The more people who have their say, the more chance that we get representation that will deliver real benefits to the people who live in this very special region of New Zealand.

Appendices

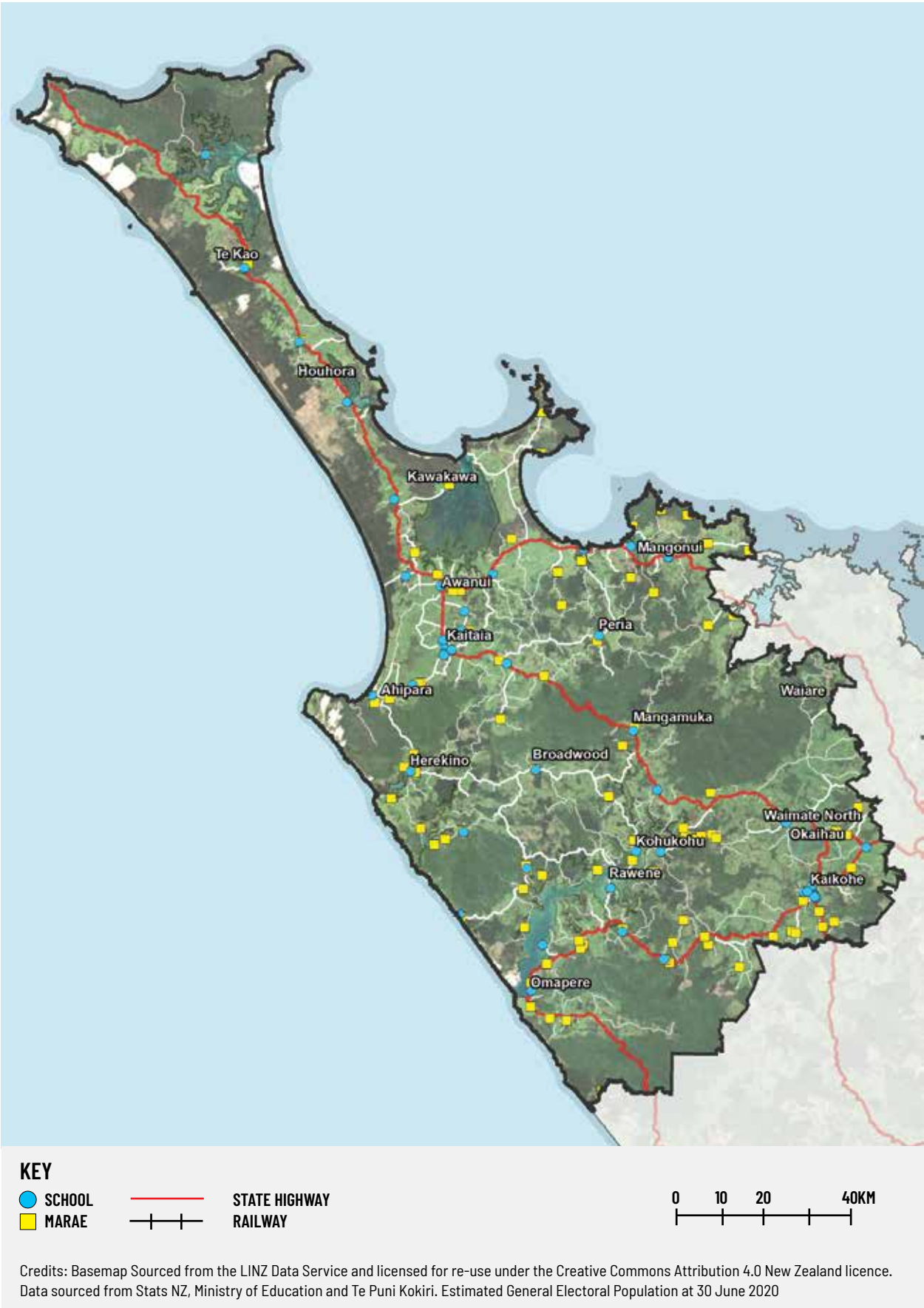
Ngā Tapirihanga



Appendix 1: Proposed constituencies

Proposed Far North General Constituency

General electoral population 21,500



Proposed Bay of Islands – Whangaroa General Constituency

General electoral population 21,100



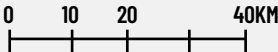
Proposed Kaipara General Constituency

General electoral population 19,900



KEY

- SCHOOL
- MARAE
- STATE HIGHWAY
- +— RAILWAY





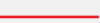

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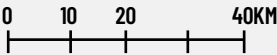
Proposed Mid North General Constituency

General electoral population 20,300



KEY

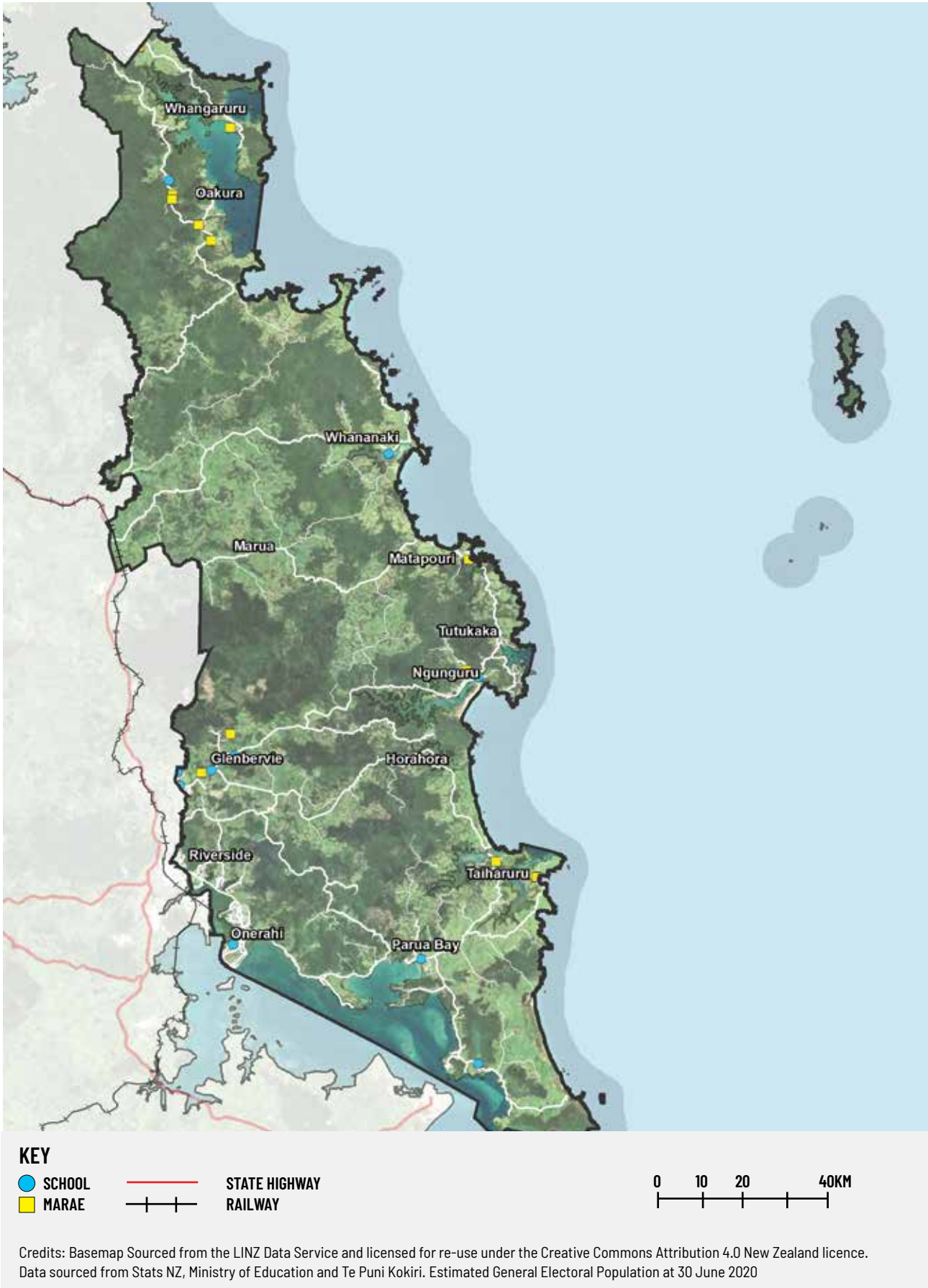
-  SCHOOL
-  MARAE
-  STATE HIGHWAY
-  RAILWAY



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Proposed Coastal Central General Constituency

General electoral population 20,800



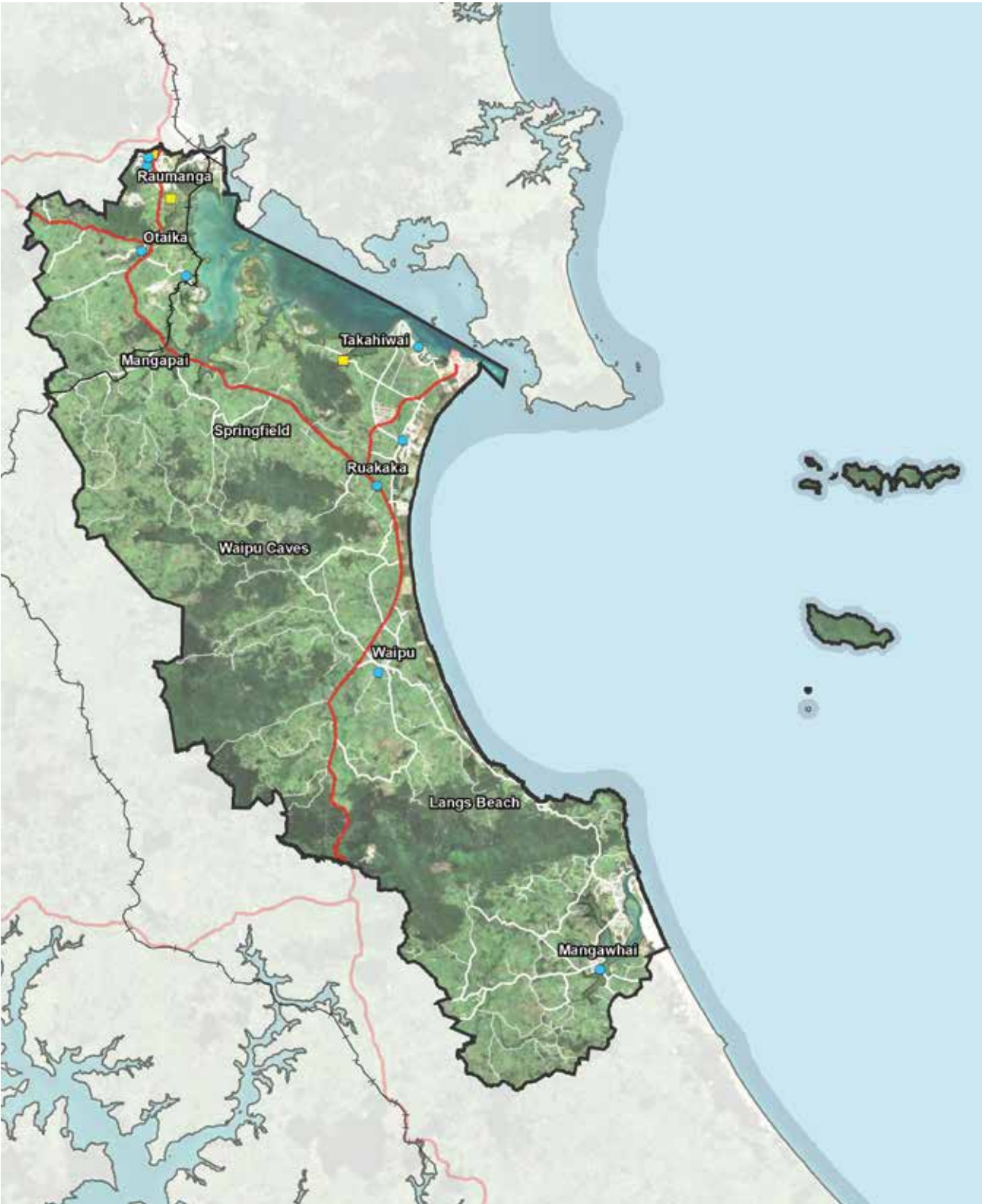
Proposed Whangārei Central General Constituency

General electoral population 22,300



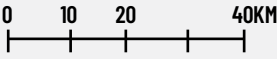
Proposed Coastal South General Constituency

General electoral population 21,000



KEY

- SCHOOL
- MARAE
- STATE HIGHWAY
- + + RAILWAY



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Proposed Te Raki Māori Constituency

Māori electoral population 47,610



Appendix 2: Population estimates

The table below shows the latest 2020 population estimates for each proposed constituency. You can see that all of the general constituencies comply with the 'Plus or minus 10% rule' with the general population falling between 18,886 and 23,083. The table also shows the population growth since 2018.

Population breakdown by constituency

Constituency	2020 General electoral population estimate	2020 Māori electoral population estimate	General population growth since 2018	Annual general population growth rate	Number of councillors	Fits +/- 10% rule?
FAR NORTH GENERAL	21,500		1,100	2.6%	1	YES
BAY OF ISLANDS – WHANGAROA GENERAL	21,100		1,150	2.7%	1	YES
KAIPARA GENERAL	19,900		600	1.5%	1	YES
MID NORTH GENERAL	20,300		850	2.1%	1	YES
COASTAL CENTRAL GENERAL	20,800		900	2.2%	1	YES
WHANGĀREI CENTRAL GENERAL	22,300		600	1.3%	1	YES
COASTAL SOUTH GENERAL	21,000		2,200	5.2%	1	YES
TE RAKI MĀORI		47,610			2	N/A
Total	146,900	47,610				



Submission form

Representation Review 2021 – Initial Proposal

The closing date for submissions is 4pm Friday, 10 September 2021

Giving your feedback

We encourage online feedback, as it helps keep costs down and reduce our impacts on the environment:
www.nrc.govt.nz/representationmatters

Otherwise, complete this form and return it:

- » **By mail** Freepost 139690, Northland Regional Council, Private Bag 9021, Whangārei Mail Centre, Whangārei 0148
- » **By email** submissions@nrc.govt.nz
- » **In person** to our main office at 36 Water Street, Whangārei; or to any of our regional offices.

What you can submit on

To help us determine our final representation arrangements and the make-up of the constituencies, you can make a submission on:

- » The total number of councillors;
- » The number and boundaries of general and Māori constituencies (this includes whether the Māori councillors should be elected from one or more Māori constituencies);
- » The names of general and Māori constituencies.

We can't consider feedback on whether Māori constituencies should be established – that decision has already been made and can't be reversed through this representation review process.

Your name and contact details

Please provide your name and at least one other piece of contact information

Full name

Organisation (if giving feedback on behalf)

Mailing address

Email

Phone/Mobile

Privacy statement:

Please be aware that submissions are part of a public consultation process. All information provided will be made publicly available, including submitters' names and contact details. Please see our Submissions Policy: www.nrc.govt.nz/submissionspolicy

Do you support or oppose the proposed representation arrangements?

☐ **I SUPPORT** the council's proposed representation arrangements for the 2022 elections

☐ **I OPPOSE** the council's proposed representation arrangements for the 2022 elections

Please tell us why (and include any alternative you think could work better)

If you have more to say, feel free to attach more pages to this feedback form.

Hearings

You are welcome to speak to the hearings panel about your submission – please indicate below whether you wish to do so. Hearings are scheduled for **28 September 2021**.

☐ **Yes**, I do wish to be heard in support of my submission

☐ **No**, I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission

Please tell us how you found out about this consultation

☐ Community group

☐ Facebook

☐ Email invite from us

☐ Letter from us

☐ Newspaper

☐ Word of mouth

☐ Website alerts service

☐ Other

Please tell us any other ways you found out about this consultation:



P 0800 002 004

E info@nrc.govt.nz

W www.nrc.govt.nz/representationmatters