



# Te Aroha Pa - Teaming with Māori suppliers to achieve great outcomes

## Case study: Sustainable Procurement

### The Story

Te Aroha Pā (Araparera marae) is located south of the Kaipara Harbour. It belongs to Ngāti Rango of the iwi Ngāti Whātua. The wharenui is named Kia Mahara. Situated just off Kaipara Coast Highway 16, the Marae is a rural Pa site of Iwi/Rūnanga Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara.

Te Aroha Pā is one of our most recent advancement of the AT Marae upgrade project. These projects are intended to improve the driveway and parking facilities for Marae to improve the road safety around each site.

For the Marae to benefit mana whenua and the wider community, AT also worked with Auckland Council departments and CCOs to invest in positive outcomes at Te Aroha Pā. The project was awarded to Lite Civil,

a 100% Māori-owned business that continues our Sustainable Procurement approach to deliver positive social and environmental outcomes within our Marae upgrades.

### Sustainable Procurement approach

To deliver Auckland Transport's Sustainable Procurement outcomes, it was decided that AT would continue its support for supplier diversity and quality employment among its Marae Upgrades. This would help continue to improve the quality of parking for the marae as well as the socio-economic prosperity for Auckland construction businesses.

The Te Aroha Pa tender was issued only to Māori owned businesses through the collaboration with Amotai – Aoteroa's leading intermediary that connects Māori and Pasifika businesses with

procurement opportunities. Together the project manager (Susan Barakat), the AT procurement team (Samir Bhalodkar) and our Māori Responsiveness Team (Lillian Tahuri) worked with Te Aroha Pa to determine if there were any whanau businesses that might like to participate in the tender process. We also spent some time understanding their tikanga expectations which will be important to embed as the project processes. Doing this was a lesson that we took from the Makaurau Marae project.

This approach was essential to cater for the smaller size businesses that were likely to apply for the work that do not have the resources or overheads to respond to AT's large and complex tenders.



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Ariana Paul,  
Amotai Manukura



**Impacts through Sustainable Outcomes**

It was an ideal proposal with the businesses because it was Marae-based work, and the nature of the project was low risk because there was virtually no temporary traffic management involved. This also was in alignment of the Governments Broader Outcome for increasing opportunities for Maori and Pasifika businesses and, growing the NZ construction sector workforce.

Joseph ‘Jay’ Rawiri from Lite Civil describes the social outcomes that were achieved on the contract: “At the start of the Te Aroha Pa project, we set aside 2 roles specifically for mana whenua and hired 2 people from the marae who were employed for the duration. Unfortunately, one had to leave towards the end of the project due to an injury he sustained riding a motorbike. The other employee however, finished the project and continued his employment with us for another 6 months. With the training and experience he gained working with us, he was able to successfully apply for a role much closer to where he lived with Downer Construction’s northern roading division. We see this as a great success as this was a key outcome of our social objectives on this project.

The project manager we hired specifically for this project is still with us and currently working on another project at Hoani Waititi marae. and has brought with him to Lite Civil some great experience and knowledge that has helped us grow with these projects.

Our foreman (and resident kaumatua) is also still with us and has been key in all three marae projects we have been a part of. He is passionate and proud to be able to complete work that uplifts our Māori community.”

Samir from AT procurement team notes: “It’s been a really great experience working with teams across AT and the marae to design and deliver a procurement activity that is really going to benefit the community. One of the biggest realisations through both the Makaurau Marae Project and Te Aroha Pā is that there are some incredibly capable Māori owned businesses out there that can perform AT work. I’m excited to work with more of them to help them better understand AT business and our procurement process.”

Ariana Paul, Amotai Manukura, had this to say about the contract: “Auckland

Transport have been one of the early adopters of embedding supplier diversity into their procurement practices which not only creates a level playing field for Māori and Pasifika businesses, but creates significant social impact as we know the benefits will flow through from the businesses, to employees, their whānau and their communities. Amotai sees Auckland Transport as one of the flag bearers for this kaupapa, and we’re excited to be working alongside the Auckland Transport team.”

**Lessons Learnt**

This next Marae upgrade presented a continued procurement partnership of civil works exclusively through Amotai businesses. AT are keen to develop the lessons learnt from the process and provide advice to better New Zealand’s Supplier Diversity practice.

**Lesson:** Bespoke Procurement Process

Standard Request for Tender or procurement processes, typically applied in physical works tenders, may not be fit for purpose for procuring work with Amotai businesses, SME’s or Social Enterprises.

Advice:

- 1 AT staff and our T1 suppliers should consider whether there are alternative methods of procuring activities that achieve positive outcomes, without compromising the requirement to meet its own Procurement Strategy and Government Procurement Rules.
- 2 It is vital to follow up with businesses who provided non-conforming responses so that they can learn from the experience and competitively bid for future work. It is not a failure that these businesses provided a non-conforming bid. Our aim is to upskill the sector, and this is an easy way we can support Amotai businesses to develop and grow.
- 3 When attempting Supplier Diversity, It is important to understand the diverse supply market (capacity and capability) and select appropriate projects that match diverse supplier’s ability to perform.

If you would like to understand more about sustainable procurement or collaborative partnering you can contact the AT procurement team at [procurement@at.govt.nz](mailto:procurement@at.govt.nz).