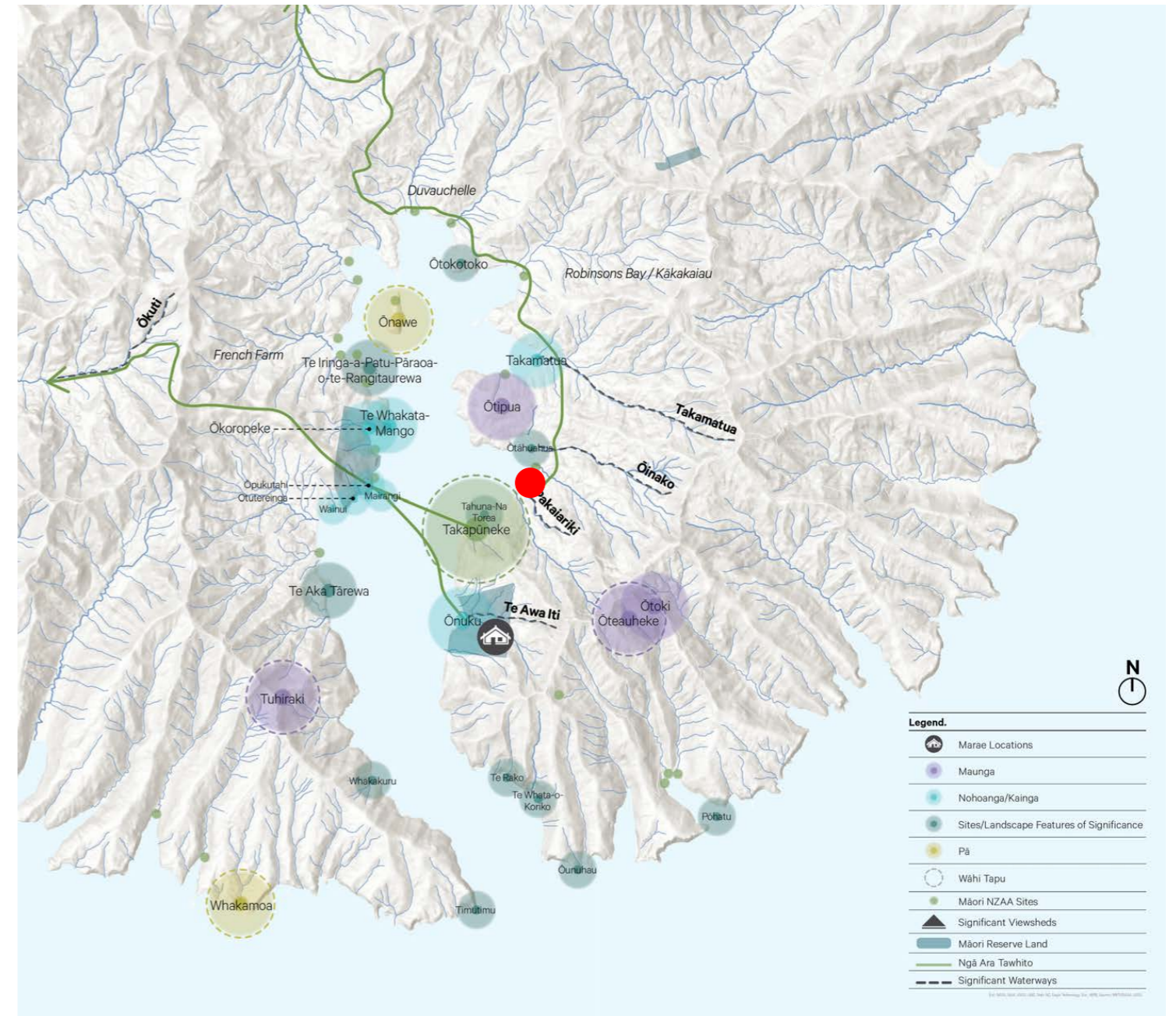


MANA WHENUA

Ōnuku Rūnanga is the modern-day representative of the hapū Ngāi Tarewa and Ngāti Irakēhu. Irakēhu was the mother of many of the hapū and pā in the Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū (Banks Peninsula).

Ōnuku is located on the eastern shores of Akaroa Harbour. The takiwā of Ōnuku Rūnanga, as defined by the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, is centred on Ōnuku and the hills and coasts of Akaroa Harbour to the adjoining takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata and Wairewa Rūnanga. Karaweko, a rangatira of the Ngāi Tarewa people of Ōnuku, set out the takiwā of Ōnuku as from the hilltop of Pōhatu to the hilltop of Te Ruahine (point at the entrance of Akaroa Harbour) then to Timutimu Head on the west - but that the roadways between the inner and outer bays should always be left open, so other hapū could come and go for mahinga kai and hui.

Ōnuku is home to generations of whānau. It is also of immense significance to Ngāi Tahu as an iwi. It was at Ōnuku, in Akaroa Harbour, that the treaty was signed by Iwikau and Piuraki Tikao (John Love) on 30th May 1840, putting Canterbury and the various hapū of Canterbury Ngāi Tahu, generally, in a unique position within the nationally significant history related to the Treaty of Waitangi, and Māori-Pākehā relations.



● Akaroa Main Wharf

Cultural Context Map

Map content sourced from: <http://www.kahurumanu.co.nz/atlas>

INTRODUCTION

This cultural design framework has been prepared to guide the design outcomes of the proposed replacement of Akaroa Main Wharf. The framework seeks to embed mana whenua values and stories of place into the design, interpretation, and function of the wharf in a cohesive and meaningful way. The central thread through this narrative focuses on the Ngāi Tahu practice of mahinga kai, which underpins the identity of mana whenua, their relationship to the moana, whenua, and their responsibility as kaitiaki of their takiwā, which is to ensure the sustainable management of Akaroa Harbour, including protection of taonga and mahinga kai for future generations.

Ngāti Irakehu and Ngāi Tārewa have clear aspirations for Akaroa, and that is for their stories and their identity to be a visible part of the fabric of the township. The landscape of Akaroa, the harbour, the surrounding Hills, streams, and every rocky outcrop, headland, and the natural resources that are at the heart of their way of life and belief systems. When the whānau of Ōnuku look across this landscape, they don't see the postcard picture qualities that others do; they see the footsteps of their ancestors. They also see and lament the degradation that has occurred over the past 180 years to their maginga kai.

Bringing the unique stories of people and place to life through art and design will add richness to the township of Akaroa and build a sense of pride and identity, not only for those who whapapapa here but for the wider community.

Māori design stems from mātauranga Māori (traditional knowledge), it both reflects and transmits Māori ideas and notions about the world. Storytelling has a very important place in Māori culture, it provides traditional information and knowledge which is passed through generations; stories tell of the past, of important events, whakapapa (genealogy), tūpuna (ancestors), the natural environment, natural resources and the importance of respecting and caring for the natural world. Storytelling was traditionally either oral (through karakia, chants, waiata and dance) or told through traditional Māori art forms (Toi Māori) which can convey a complex language of visual symbols, each pattern telling a different story.¹

“Art was the way that Māori communicated knowledge, ideas and values, rather than by written language, and together the arts constituted a vital communication system.”²

For Māori, the foundation of identity arises from the natural world; whakapapa demonstrates a continuous thread from the primordial parents - Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother). Whakapapa is embedded within the landscape through the naming of landscape features, places, waiata (songs), ancestral feats, myths and legends. Myths and legends hold fundamental knowledge and are remembered because they tell of protocols as well as practical and ethical ways to care for places and people.³

“The places, memories and stories of all our cultures are treasures to be shared, celebrated and passed on to future generations.”⁴

Integration of Te Reo Māori is also of high importance and helps to provide a uniquely Aotearoa identity. Te Reo Māori and identity are intrinsically linked. Through language, one is able to explain and interact with the world. Implicit in the use and gifting of Māori names, whakataukī (proverbs), and explanations is mauri (life force). Being a kaitiaki (guardian) of Te Reo and its associated customs is just as important as being a kaitiaki for Papatūānuku; kaitiakitanga encompasses it all.

This sense of responsibility is powerfully captured within the whakataukī by Teone Taare Tikao:

***“The sea was before the land
and the sky,
cleansing, joining.
And where the sea meets the lands,
there are obligations there
that are binding
as those of whakapapa.”⁵***

1. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/te-raranga-me-te-whatu/page-3>

2. Paama-Pengelly as cited in Witehira, Johnson Gordon Paul., 2013. Te Hononga Toi Māori Part 3. Doctor of Philosophy in Fine Arts, Massey University, NZ.

3. Kawharu, M., (n.d.), Ancestral landscapes and world heritage from a Māori viewpoint. Auckland University, unpublished paper.

4. Christchurch City Council., (2019), Heritage Strategy. Pp12

5. Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan (2013), Teone Taare Tikao

AKAROA WHARF - CULTURAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Akaroa Harbour is the largest harbour on the southern coast of Te Pātaka-a-Rākaihautū. Whakaroa is another spelling of Akaroa, which means long harbour. The harbour provided an abundance of kaimoana, such as pāua, kūtai, pipi, tuaki, tio, kina, shark, pātiki, hāpuka, mākā, pākirikiri, hoka, kōura, and many other fish species. The surrounding bush provided a variety of native birds; building, weaving, and rongoā resources; and the plentiful streams provided īnaka, tuna, freshwater mussels, and kōura, to name but a few.

Akaroa Main Wharf extends into the heart of Ngāi Tārewa and Ngāti Irakehu identity and way of life, which was centered around mahinga kai. The abutment to Akaroa Main Wharf also interfaces with Britomart Reserve, an area which for Ngāi Tahu holds significance as the place where approximately 500 Ngāi Tahu gathered in 1848 to discuss the sale of land which would later be known as Kems Deed. This event also marked the beginning of land alienation and a multi-generational battle to have the principles of Kems Deed honored.

There are two main cultural design elements proposed for Akaroa Main Wharf:

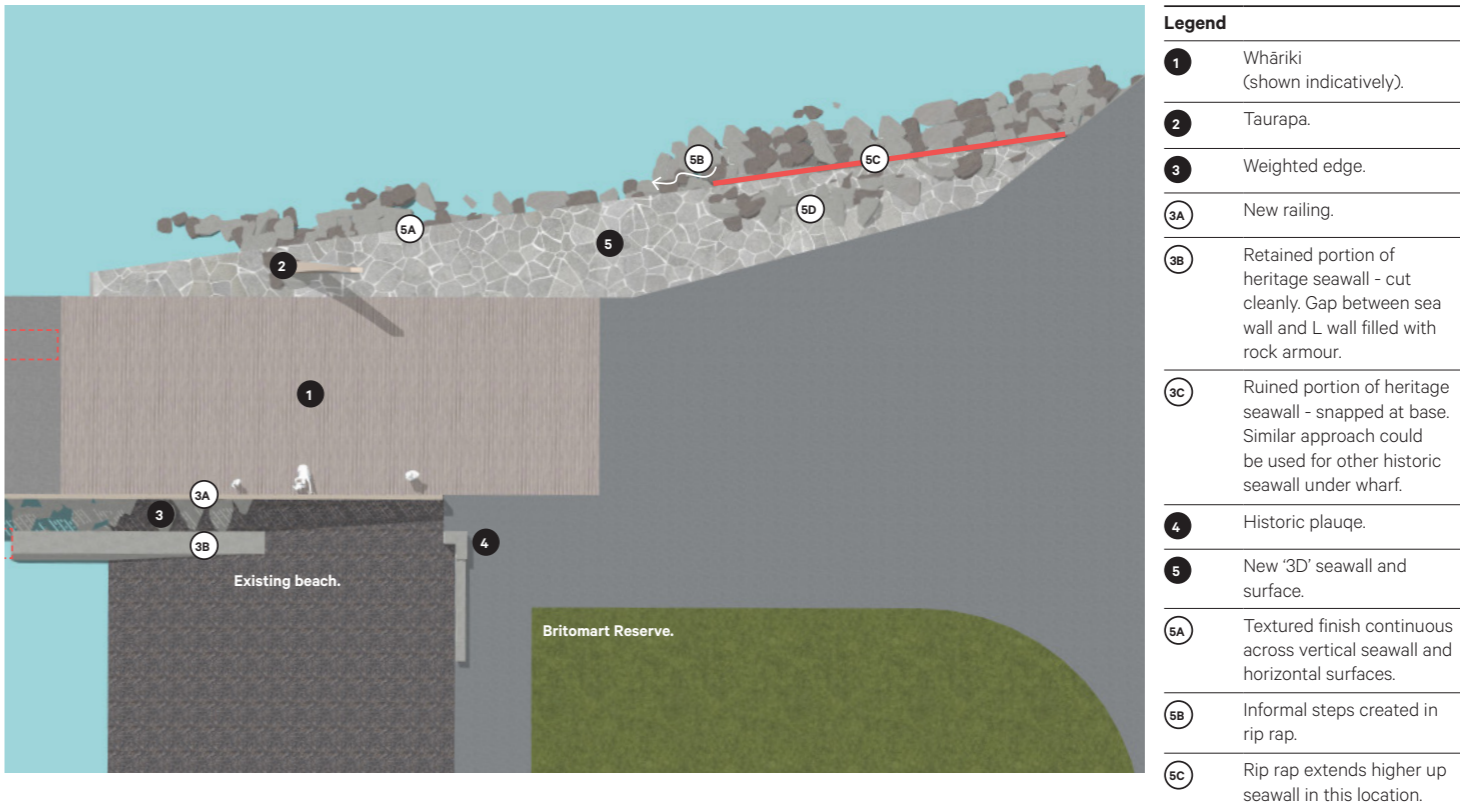
- 1. **Whāriki** (woven mat) to provide a welcoming entrance.
- 2. **Taurapa** (a stern post of waka) to act as a sculptural gateway and wayfinding element.

Both design features work together to mark the entrance to the wharf as expressions of:

- **Mana motuhake** – Being able to act with independence and autonomy - being ourselves in our places.
- **Manaakitanga** – care for others, welcoming, reciprocity, and hospitality.
- **Whakapapa** – stories of this ancestral landscape, and the deep spiritual connection between mana whenua and Akaroa Harbour.
- **Kaitiakitanga** – the inherent responsibility that comes from whakapapa and the act of safeguarding the mauri of the environment.

The image below shows the location of the proposed whāriki and taurapa at the entrance to Akaroa Wharf.

The image been sourced from the Isthmus Group Akaroa Wharf Revised Abutment Concept 04/06/2025.



CULTURAL DESIGN ELEMENTS - whāriki

Whāriki are traditional woven mats for the floor of a whare, made from natural resources such as kuta and harakeke. Whāriki are often designed to create intricate patterns derived from mātauranga passed down from weaver to weaver. Whāriki provide warmth and comfort for those inside the whare and are highly prized taonga. 'Manaaki' is a core Māori value that relates to hospitality, reciprocity, responsibility and care for others.

Design meaning:

The Pātiki design has been chosen for the whāriki. The Pātiki design replicates the Pātikitiki design within the wharenuī of Ōnuku Marae. The meaning of the design is as follows:

"Pātikitiki was chosen as the overall pattern for the tukutuku panels within the wharenuī.

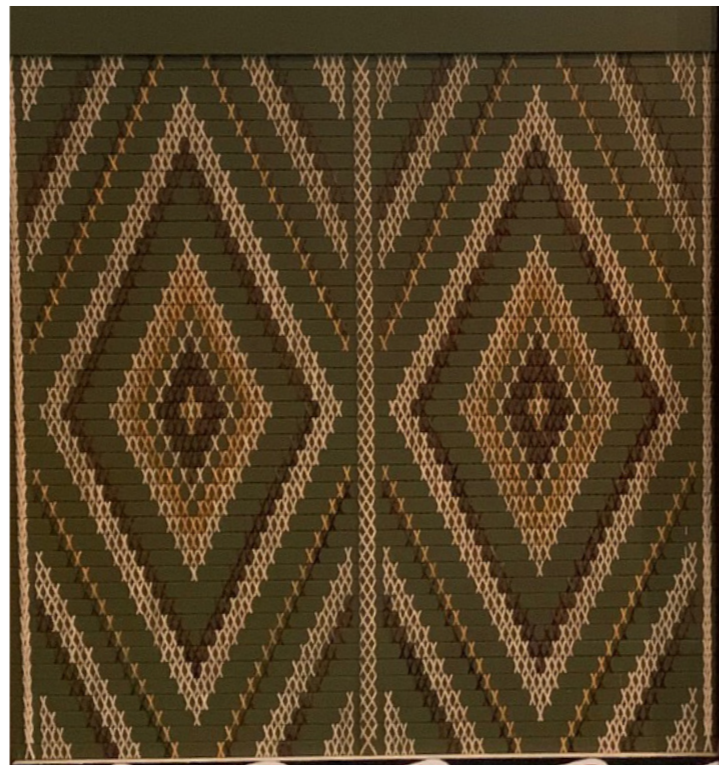
Pātiki is the flounder and is also the name of a group of stars next to the Milky Way. When this constellation lies parallel with the Milky Way, it means settled weather, that is, good fishing weather. As most Ngāi Tahu kaika are located by bodies of water with abundant fish life, pātiki at this time where most abundant.

The pattern is used to signify a plentiful supply of fish, food, people and aroha.⁶

Within the wharenuī, the Ōnuku Pātikitiki tukutuku panel connects to the pou which represents Piuraki Tikao.

The photo to the right is the Ōnuku tukutuku located inside the wharenuī at Ōnuku Marae.

6. Tainui, P. Ōnuku Rūnanga, Karaweko, whare tipuna booklet.



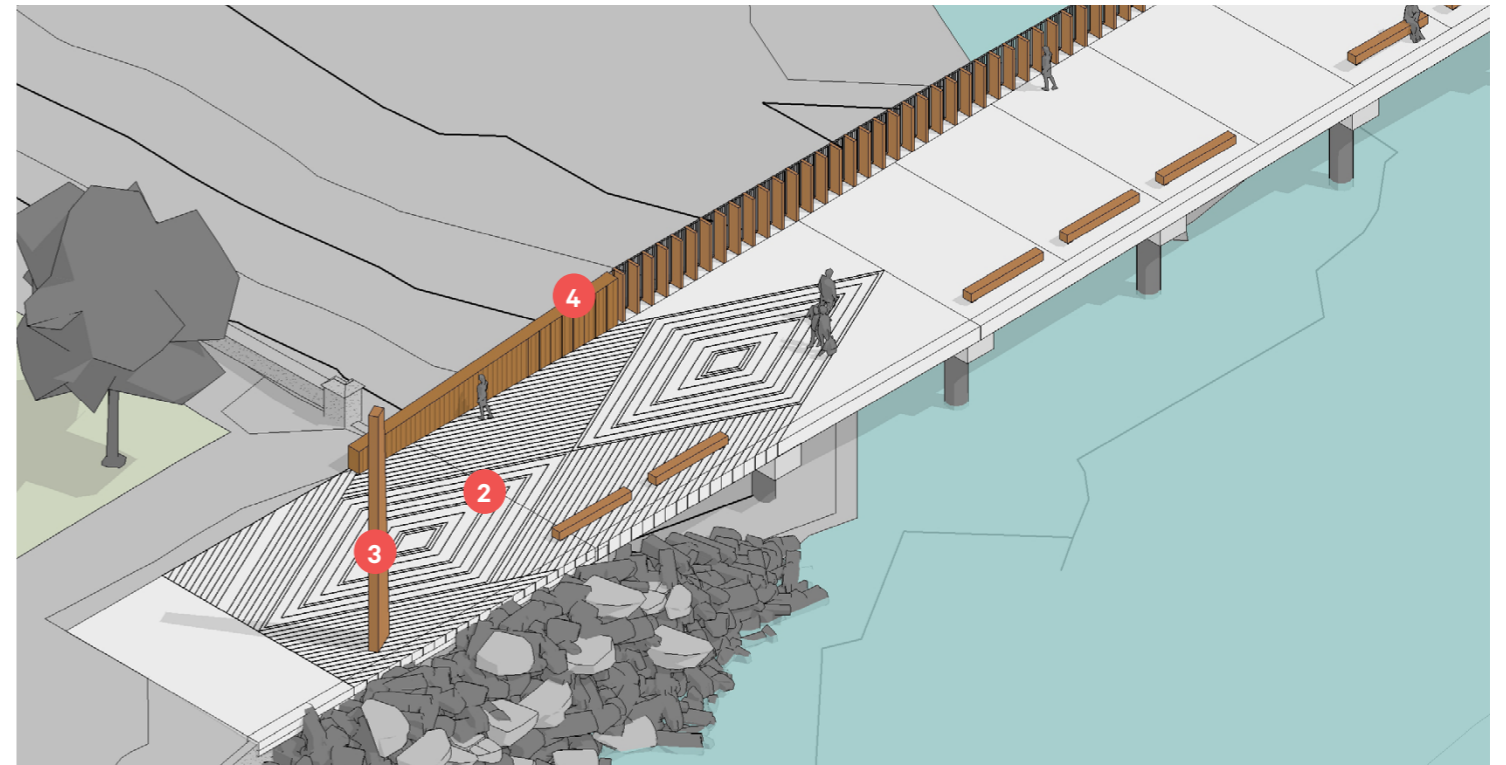
Materiality:

It is proposed that the whāriki be made using repurposed timber from the old wharf. Inscribed into the timber will be finer grain designs and whakataukī.

The whakataukī could potentially be illuminated using fine strip lighting that would enhance the experience of the wharf at night.

The image below shows the indicative location of the proposed whāriki at the entrance to Akaroa Wharf.

The image has been sourced from the Isthmus Group Akaroa Wharf Whāriki Concept 14/02/2025.



CULTURAL DESIGN ELEMENTS - taurapa

A 6m to 7m tall carved sculptural form, representing a taurapa, is proposed to mark the entrance to the wharf.

Taurapa are the stern posts of waka. They provided a stabilising role and were often ornately carved. The taurapa form has been chosen as it represents exploration, passage, navigation, and the connection between the cosmos and activities on earth.

The taurapa will provide a Ngutu or gateway and wayfinding function. Ngutu are thresholds “that mark the spiritual boundary to culturally significant sites typically expressed as a covered shelter or gateway for visitors to gather at, and enter through, during formal cultural ceremonies.”⁷

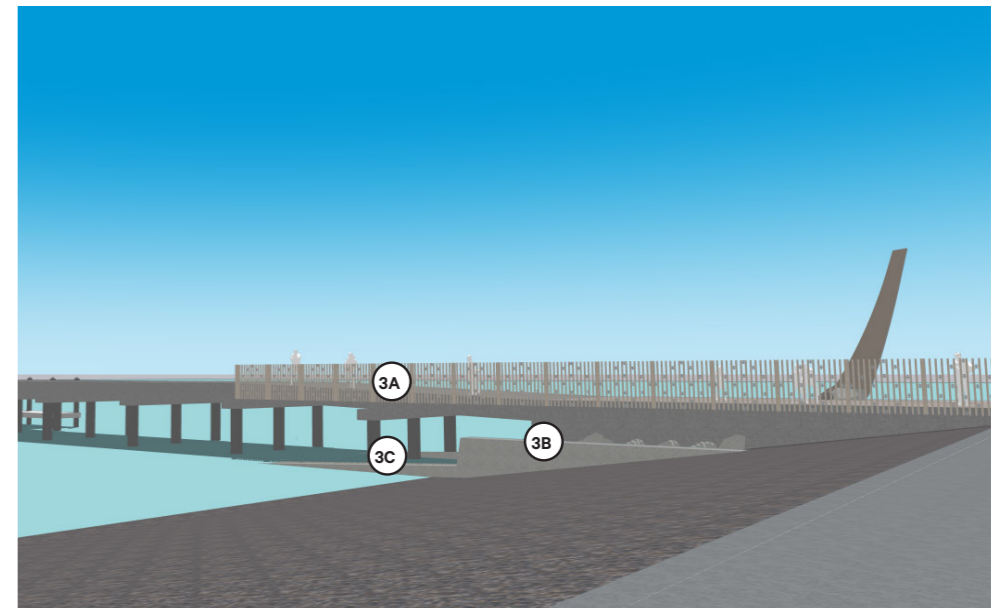
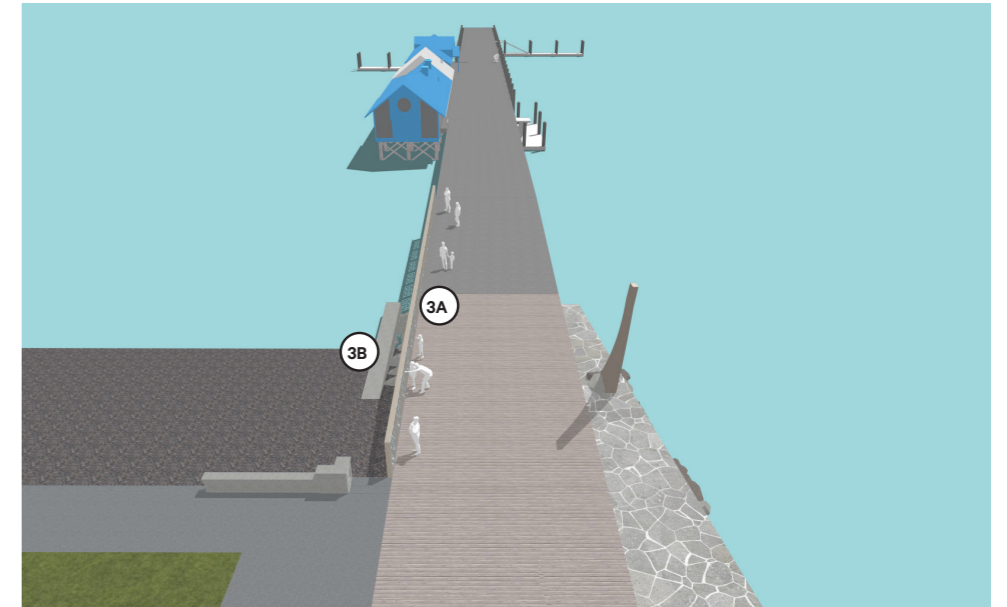
Within the urban context of Akaroa Township, the taurapa will provide a stunning sculptural element that will enhance the visitor experience and be enjoyed by all. The taurapa will showcase the identity of mana whenua and will add richness and meaning to the relationship between land and sea.

Materiality:

The taurapa will be a combination of carved totara and steel. It will integrate lighting to enhance the evening experience (potentially both up lighting and fine strip LED lighting to highlight the intricate patterns).

Weaving together two stories:

The designs within the taurapa will weave together and celebrate two stories – the first is the Uruao. The Uruao is the name of waka that brought the famed Waitaha ancestor, Rākaihautū to Te Waipounamu and Akaroa Harbour. The second story is that of the highly respected Tikao tipuna and Rangatira, Piuraki Tikao, who signed Te Tiriti at Ōnuku in 1840, and was the key Ngāi Tahu negotiator for Kamps Deed. This story draws our attention to the small reserve next to the wharf, where in Ngāi Tahu gathered on mass in 1848.



The images above shows the location and scale of the proposed taurapa.

The images have been sourced from the Isthmus Group Akaroa Wharf Revised Abutment Concept 04/06/2025.

7. Matapopore, Te Pae artists brief – Nga Ngutu. 2019.

CULTURAL DESIGN ELEMENTS - taurapa

Piuraki Tikao (John Love)

Piuraki Tikao was son of Taupori and Hakeke, brother to Tamati Tikao and uncle to Teone Taare Tikao. He was born around 1800 and died in 1852. Tikao, along with his immediate family, was captured by Te Rauparaha (chief of Ngāti Toa) after the 1831 raid on Kaiapoi Pa (fortified village) and taken to Kapiti Island. After their release, he joined a whaling ship and spent a number of years traveling the world, during which time he learnt to speak several languages. When he returned home, he gathered the remnants of his hapū, Ngāti Irakehu and settled at Pigeon Bay on Te Pātaka a Rākaihautū. Due to his ability to speak English and his experience in world commerce, Tikao was the acknowledged expert in affairs of business among the northern Ngāi Tahu. He was a key figure in the Canterbury land purchase, of which he tried to negotiate a much greater sum than what was finally agreed upon.

Piuraki, using his chosen name of John Love was one of two signatories on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, alongside Iwikau, the Rangatira of Ngāti Rangiamoa. Piuraki was described by Major Bunbury as 'a very intelligent, well-dressed native who spoke English better than any I have yet met within this colony'.⁸

Uruao

The story of Rākaihautū starts with Uruao, the primary waka of Waitaha. There are numerous accounts of this ancestral waka and the exploits of the founding ancestor of Waitaha, Rākaihautū. The legends tell of how the Uruao was guided by the tail of the summer constellation Scorpio and that the Uruao then became the stars that guided the waka. After the Uruao beached at Whakatū in Nelson, Rākaihautū headed inland with his party, carving out all the major lakes with his kō (digging stick). On reaching the Canterbury area he dug out Te Roto o Wairewa and Te Waihora. Te Waihora was named Te Kete Ika a Rākaihautū (the fishing basket of Rākaihautū), and claimed the Banks Peninsula as Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū (the great food storage house of Rākaihautū). Directly across the harbour from Ōnuku Marae stands the distinctive Tuhiraki (Mt Bossu). This peak is said to have been formed when Rākaihautū thrust his kō (digging stick) into Tuhiraki (pictured to the right).⁹

8. Tainui, P. Ōnuku Rūnanga, Karaweko, where tipuna booklet.

9. Prendergast-Tarena, E. R., He Atua, He Tipua, He Takata Ranei: The Dynamics of Change in South Island Māori oral Traditions. University of Canterbury, Unpublished Thesis, 2008.

10. Meryon, Charles(1845), Charcoal Drawing of John Love - National Library of Australia.

Charcoal sketch of Piuraki Tikao (John Love) 1845. 10.

