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Ngāti Paoa firm on its Auckland claim

Moves by both Waikato and Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei have disappointed another Treaty of Waitangi claimant in the wider Auckland area, Ngāti Paoa.

Ngāti Paoa co-negotiators Morehu Wilson and Hauāuru Rawiri say the iwi remains extremely confident about the remainder of its Treaty of Waitangi claim and will front in the High Court if that becomes a necessity. But they hope common sense will prevail and iwi who have rightful claims in the wider Auckland area will be able to settle any differences in a business-like and tikanga manner.

Ngāti Paoa is cash and asset rich after already receiving part of its settlement. The iwi is party to the Hauraki Collective, Tāmaki Collective and Marutūahu Collective agreements, but is in its own specific negotiations with the Crown that are expected to conclude by 2017. Some of the remaining settlement includes properties in the greater Auckland area.

Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei filed papers in the Auckland High Court on Friday and applied for a declaratory judgment relating to the Crown's negotiation process with Ngāti Paoa and its proposed transfer of land within central Auckland.

Meanwhile Waikato has also launched a claim for Auckland. The claim covers the area from the Mahurangi Peninsula, the Firth of Thames and across to the Manukau Harbour and Piha.

"It is disappointing that iwi who have already settled are resorting to the High Court to attempt to renegotiate with the Crown and ultimately delay others from reaching settlement," says Mr Wilson.

"Ngāti Paoa is very firm about its interests and role in the history of Auckland and the iwi who lived in and moved in and out of what is now known as the central Auckland area and its environs. If it takes a court appearance to emphasise our iwi's place in history then that's where we will go, but it is frustrating that we should waste valuable resources in this way. The Māori economy and social well-being could be so much stronger with people working together," says Mr Rawiri.

For more information contact:

Morehu Wilson 0274 868 241 morehuw@gmail.com
Hauāuru Rawiri 021 893 833 hauauru.rawiri@gmail.com