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A Struggle with SOUL

Politics of Land, Housing, and Metaphysics in Ihumātao, Tāmaki Makaurau

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology, the University of Auckland, 2018.
for Morgan Jane Gibbs-Crooks

whose wild spirit called me back into Te Ao Mārama.
Abstract

There are firm grounds for a tentative optimism in Aotearoa New Zealand. Against the narcissistic nihilism of the early twenty-first century, a courage to face the harsh realities of the country’s colonial history can be seen playing a greater role in contemporary politics. Opportunities to resolve historical injustice are contingent on the hard work of committed political leaders to speak truth to power, in the process bringing to light previously marginalised histories. Since early 2015, a development of this nature – operating under the banner ‘Save Our Unique Landscape’ – has emerged from Ihumātao, Tamaki Makaurau. Despite having been cloaked to a certain degree from public consciousness in recent decades, Ihumātao is one of the earliest known sites of human arrival in Aotearoa and is home to the longest continuously occupied papakāinga in Auckland. From local and global perspectives, the landscape of the Ihumātao peninsula is of immense archaeological, geological, environmental, historical, cultural, and spiritual significance.

This thesis centres the activity of Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL); a campaign formed in opposition to the granting of building consents on sacred Māori land. The specific site in question was initially confiscated by the colonial government in 1863 during the Waikato War. It was later transferred to settler farmers in 1867 through a Crown Land Grant, and in 2014 was sold to private property developer Fletcher Residential on condition that the New Zealand Government designated it a Special Housing Area. The subsequent consent process was enacted through legislation that circumvented a number of existing protections and diminished the standing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Disregarding previous plans to include the land in the Ōtuataua
Stonefields Public Reserve, Auckland Council recommended the land be rezoned for residential housing in May 2014.

In addition to offering an account of the history of Ihumātao and the SOUL campaign, this thesis explains how a nationwide housing crisis has functioned as justification for the circumvention of established resource consent processes, critically examines the essential nature of the Fletcher conglomerate, considers to what extent the financialisation of Auckland Council poses a threat to local democracy, and speculates on the divergent metaphysics existing across Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā in Aotearoa New Zealand.
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Last but not least, I recognise my connections with the land, the sky, the oceans, the ancestors, the dead and the living, my friends and my adversaries, my family and the breath of life in this moment.

_Tihei mauri ora!_
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Introduction

Words fail to capture the wonder of the Pacific. The mind struggles to visualise even its sheer size; an immense ocean of more than 170 million square kilometres encompassing over 25,000 islands. And yet, despite the challenge posed by an expanse of water which spans close to 20,000 kilometres, the ancestors of indigenous Pacific peoples discovered and settled on ‘virtually every island which was capable of sustaining human life’ (Adds, 2012, p. 17). This feat of human exploration is all the more remarkable considering the routes to and from islands were navigated without ‘compasses, chronometers, sextants or charts’; voyagers relying instead on ‘indigenous navigational techniques developed over several millennia’ (Adds, 2012, p. 17). The Polynesian migrations to Aotearoa, the last substantial landmass in the world to be settled, marked the final reach of this wave of human exploration throughout the Pacific (Anderson, 1991).

From an archaeological perspective, there is no precise knowledge on the initial date of settlement nor the first landing place in Aotearoa (Stone, 2001). Urbanisation has destroyed most archaeological sites and ‘all but a remnant of the evidence of local Māori material culture’ (Stone, 2001, p.11). Concerning dates of arrival, various forms of evidence have led scholars to produce claims ranging from between 0 to 500 AD as well as from a little before 1000 AD to 1200 (Davidson, 2012). A review of archaeological evidence in 2004, concluded that ‘humans have been present in New Zealand since 1250-1300 AD’ (Higham & Jones, 2004, p. 232). However, Davidson (2012) notes that ‘since most or all of the sites in New Zealand dating
to this earliest period contain clear evidence of prior exploration... it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that initial settlement by a small population was a little earlier than AD 1250’ (p. 40). While archaeologists continue to make sense of the material evidence, there is no question that the discovery of Aotearoa by Polynesians stands as a crucial chapter in the history of humanity.

One of first points of human settlement in Aotearoa is at a place called Ihumātao, in Tāmaki-Makaurau (Stone, 2001). Residents in Ihumātao papakāinga speak of their ancestors settling in the area around 835 AD, significantly before the earliest recorded archaeological evidence (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). The discrepancies between the archaeological record and local oral histories has little bearing on the general historical agreement that the papakāinga in Ihumātao is the longest continuous human settlement in Auckland (Moon, 2007). Many hundreds of years ago, as they stepped onto the dry land of the Ihumātao peninsula, Polynesians became Māori, and if only for this reason it is a site of national significance, more than this, Ihumātao has been the stage for crucial episodes in the nation’s history. This thesis is concerned with the most recent saga in the history of Ihumātao.

In July 2014, it was announced that 32 hectares of land in Ihumātao, known locally as the ‘Wallace Block’ or Puketāpapa, had been designated a Special Housing Area, as part of the New Zealand Government’s strategy to increase the supply of housing in Auckland. On the 3rd of September 2014, the Overseas Investment Office approved the purchase of this land by the transnational property developer Fletcher Residential Limited (Land Information New Zealand, 2018). Since early 2015, a mana whenua led group known as Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL) has been actively campaigning to prevent the transformation of what they argue is a
site of cultural, archaeological, geological, historical and spiritual significance into residential housing.

The following research thesis speaks to a lived relationship between SOUL and the author; placing the campaign in relevant historical, political and economic contexts, and reflecting on its broader social, legal, and philosophical consequences. Chapter One is concerned with the methodological approach to the project contained in these pages; it deals with key epistemological questions, including a critical analysis of the author’s subject position, and a description of the research process itself. Chapter Two contextualises the SOUL campaign within a concise history of Ihumātao; from initial Māori encounters with Europeans, to the Waikato War, and consequent land alienation. Chapter Three introduces the SOUL campaign; explaining its central aim as the prevention of a residential housing development, as well as identifying some of its key domains of interest. Chapter Four situates the SOUL campaign in relation to a national housing crisis that has functioned as justification for the granting of consent for more than 150 residential housing developments across Auckland. Chapter Five presents an historical analysis of the transnational Fletcher conglomerate using classical economic theory to explain its primary motivational force and reoccurring patterns of behaviour. Chapter Six offers an explanation of the restructuring of Auckland Council through contemporary literature on financialisation and urban development, and how these tendencies threaten to undermine the functioning of local democracy.

At first impression, the SOUL campaign is quite singularly focused on preventing a market-driven residential housing development on an apparently bounded, physical piece of ground. Both outward perceptions as well as the testimonies of many of the activists themselves confirm this to be the case. However, the histories, ideas and concepts informing this resistance to
market development raise important legal and philosophical questions in their own right. The seventh, and final chapter, operates on a deeper and perhaps more abstract level of analysis; speculating on the metaphysical stakes implicit in the SOUL campaign and asking whether the constitutional reform recommended by Matike Mai Aotearoa might provide a functional legal framework to avoid similar situations emerging in the future.
Chapter 1

Methodology

The following discussion may come across as a little unorthodox, in that I consider the author’s subject position to be relevant to a description of the methodology employed in this thesis. For better or worse, this means I will have to speak about myself, first however, allow me to explain my rationale for doing so. As many today are aware, there is a highly visible form of thinking in the Western academy, including within contemporary disciplines such as sociology, which spurns the idea that the qualities of the knowing subject are relevant to the production of knowledge (Mika, 2017). From the perspective of this tendency, talking about oneself can be seen as an egotistical deviation from the matter at hand. Argentine decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo (2011) explains it thus,

Once upon a time scholars assumed that the knowing subject in the disciplines is transparent, dis-incorporated from the known, and untouched by the geopolitical configuration of the world in which people are racially ranked and regions are racially configured. From a detached and neutral point of observation, the knowing subject maps the world and its problems, classifies people, and projects what is good for them. Today that assumption is no longer tenable, although there are still many believers. At stake is indeed the question of racism and epistemology. (p. 118)
Mignolo (2011) offers a critique of epistemological styles which see themselves as thoroughly grounded in universally applicable categories of thought, thus rendering the author’s subjective position of scant interest, if not completely irrelevant. On the contrary, Mignolo (2011) claims that ‘only the European system of knowledge was built on the basic premise “I think, therefore I am”‘ (p. 81). As a consequence, he argues, there are concrete social, political and cultural implications following from the predominance of the figure of the ‘invisible knower’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. 89).

The _a priori_ metaphysical axiom of an omniscient and neutral subject, generates knowledge that operates with what Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez (2005) calls the _hubris of the zero point_. This form of knowledge invites us all to believe, following René Descartes, that we simply ‘think and therefore exist’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. 81). The assumption that knowledge can be de-coupled from the knower has been instrumental in historical processes whereby apparently ‘scientific thought positions itself as the only valid form of producing knowledge’ and ‘Europe acquires an epistemological hegemony over all the other cultures in the world’ (Castro-Gómez, 2007, p. 433). The ideological hegemony of Europe over the rest of the world would have naturally been impossible without an accompanying economic and military power. However this does not make it any less possible to push back, so to speak, in academic discourse, even if there are limitations to what can be achieved in this domain.

Zero point epistemology enjoys a certain privilege in that it is grounded neither in ‘geo-historical location nor in bio-graphical configurations of bodies’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. 80). As such it is not required to justify itself. Whereas those who exist outside of Western epistemological traditions in general, and the post-Enlightenment rationalist tendency in particular, must constantly struggle for their right to be considered thinking subjects drawing
on distinct philosophical genealogies (L. Smith, 2012; Mika, 2017). Carl Mika (2017) explains that Western philosophy likes to imagine itself as existing outside of culture, and as transcending the limitations which might accompany the acknowledgment of its culturally specific origins. Mika (2017) writes,

Western philosophy is self-sufficient because it does not declare that it is one philosophy of many. Indigenous philosophy on the other hand, must constantly reflect on itself as relational to dominant Western philosophy. This includes looking back on its own description as ‘indigenous philosophy’ and being mindful that, in calling itself that, it must also account for its local origins. It can never simply assume that it is. (p. 13)

Institutionally dominant strands of Western philosophy, continue to marginalise other bodies of knowledge, attempting to contain them within supposedly inferior categories of thought. Mignolo (2011) illuminates this point as follows,

Every way of knowing and sensing (feeling) that do not conform to the epistemology and aesthesis of the zero point are cast behind in time and/or in the order of myth, legend, folklore, local knowledge, and the like. Since the zero point is always in the present of time and the centre of space, it hides its own local knowledge universally projected. Its imperially consists precisely in hiding its locality, its geo-historical body location, and in assuming to be universal and thus managing the universality to which everyone has to submit. (p. 80)
Here in Aotearoa, there exists a wealth of literature that documents in painstaking detail the multitude of techniques that colonisers have utilised to force their ways of thinking and being onto Māori (Jackson, 1992; Smith, 2012; Mika, 2017).

In this thesis I have attempted to avoid reproducing the colonising tendencies of Western knowledge systems, and what Mignolo (2011) refers to more broadly as ‘global linear thinking’ (p. 83). However, it must be said that I am acutely aware of the high probability of failure to reach this objective for a number of reasons, not least of which is the unavoidable reality that I am a Pākehā settler literally standing on colonised Māori land and writing from within a colonial institution. Despite these material limitations, I am convinced that it is preferable to struggle to undermine colonising epistemologies and to find oneself unable to entirely escape from their gravitational pull, rather than to passively accept them as self-evidently universal from the outset.

Mignolo (2011) claims there are a number of epistemic trajectories defying global linear thinking that can loosely be understood as decolonial. Mignolo (2011) claims that decolonial thinking begins from the assumption that ‘I am where I think’ (p. 91). This is not necessarily a question of where you ‘reside’, but where you ‘dwell’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. xiii). To illustrate this point, Mignolo (2011) explains that while Franz Fanon was in Algeria when he wrote *The Wretched of the Earth*, as a black man from Martinique, he ‘dwelled in the Middle Passage, of the plantations, of slavery and of the runaway slaves’ (p. xiii). Decolonial thinking thus invites us to consider the importance of the ‘geo- and body-politics of knowledges’ (p. xxii). Or in other words, the influence which the location and subjective qualities of those producing knowledge have on the knowledge produced. In light of these arguments, I will endeavour to
refute the assumption of the ‘invisible knower’, and will seek to make myself, as both researcher and author, intermittently present in the text that follows (Mignolo, 2011, p. 89).

In saying this, I do not intend to become trapped in the limitations of identity politics. Identity politics can be defined as an ideological and political movement which argues group identity is paramount in determining how an individual thinks and acts in the world. While a careful consideration of the common experiences of various groups is no doubt part of a healthy polity, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) notes, identity politics can have a ‘paralysing’ effect on political development (p. 189). The paralysing effect of identity politics may be due to the fact that if one reduces individuals to simple representatives of antagonistic groups locked in a zero sum game, at the same time one delimits the potential for co-operation and progress towards shared goals. In my own case as a Pākehā man, to overemphasise the idea that thinking and acting are altogether curtailed by one’s group identities, might well lead to the conclusion that it is impossible for me to participate in, or contribute to, positive social change in general and to decolonial thinking in particular.

There is considerable evidence that those framed by identity politics as merely particular manifestations of oppressive groups, such as a man or a white person, are in fact entirely capable of working towards shared goals with others, including members of groups that have been historically marginalised and oppressed by people apparently just like them. In any case, to assume otherwise is unworkable for the purposes of this thesis. Moreover, here in Aotearoa, the presumption of an absolute opposition between identity groups would render any gestures towards the spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi utterly meaningless, as such discourse is based upon the premise of a reciprocal partnership between Māori and Pāheka.
As Mignolo (2011) observes ‘there is no obligation of divine deterministic forces that will push a given actor who was educated in the trajectory of Westernization to remain in it and be loyal to it’ (p. 69). Mignolo (2011) claims that ‘actors have many options’ and that subjects ‘formed and educated in Western cosmology can support Westernization… or they could become decolonial thinkers and actors’ (p. 69). In light of these arguments, I have remained open to the possibility that I might be able to untangle some of the harmful colonising tendencies inherent in Western academic discourse. To do otherwise, within the bounds of this thesis, might mean relegating whakaaro Māori to lesser categories of thought, in need of justification, translation, or apologetic explanation.

On the other hand, there is the risk of falling into an essentialist and homogenous conception of an indigenous Other. An approach which might deny people their full expression of being through ignoring or covering over the epistemic diversity to be found amongst those considered non-Western. As Mignolo (2011) notes, there is no guarantee that those born and educated in non-Western cosmologies and histories will remain within those either. On this point, Mignolo (2011) argues,

There is no one-to-one relation between actors and trajectories, although actors make their options at the intersections of their biography, their desires, and the available option… Trajectories are not essentially linked to actors, and actors could move from one trajectory to the other during their life, although they are marked, in a sense, with collective and individual identities by their imperial and colonial differences. However, because trajectories are options and not essential forces, we are here moving toward the terrain of identity in politics, rather than identity politics (which, of course, is another option). (pp. 69-70)
The ideal path seems, at least in my particular case, to strike something of a balance while navigating the creative tensions between the total disregard for one’s identity on the side of zero point epistemology, and an excessive, potentially paralysing obsession with one’s self on the side of identity politics.

At the same time, there is a need to both situate this text within Western academic discourse while maintaining a somewhat critical stance. Mignolo (2011) is again of some assistance here. While remaining acutely aware of the limitations of the intellectual traditions he is critiquing, Mignolo (2011) sidesteps the pitfall of a simple negation which would dismiss all Western knowledge systems. Affirming instead that ‘while zero point epistemology is and shall be recognised in its splendors, it shall also be recognized in its miseries and arrogance’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. 81). I would like to present this thesis in a similar spirit. It is written by an ostensibly Western subject, and draws heavily on Western knowledge systems, yet I have sought to be cautiously aware of both of my own subject position as well as the theorists whose work I have drawn on. My guiding ethic has been to acknowledge the equal, and given the context, more thoroughly grounded standing of Māori knowledge in relation to Western theory. This principle will, I hope, serve to avoid imposing Western understandings of everyday concepts such as land, over the top of the meaning being shared by research participants drawing on whakaaro Māori.

Origins

At the beginning of this research project I imagined I would write an economic critique of housing markets in Aotearoa. A housing crisis had been dominating the political landscape in Aotearoa for a number of years and this topic appeared to be a productive line of investigation for a Masters thesis. A few months into the project I was advised by my supervisor that I should
find an empirical site around which to frame my discussions. I scanned the horizon for political activity in relation to housing. I had been aware of a group going by the name SOUL (Save Our Unique Landscape), through my engagement with the Stop Niki’s Eviction campaign led by the Tāmaki Housing Group. I knew that the SOUL campaign involved a contested piece of land which had been allocated for a housing development, beyond this however, I was in the dark.

During this period while I was still wondering what might constitute an appropriate empirical site for my research, I caught up with my friend Matthew Theunissen, who was working as a journalist at the time. As I was chatting with him about my search to find an empirical focus for my thesis, quite to my surprise, he began telling me about SOUL, and managed to convince me that it was a critically important campaign. On reflection, the SOUL campaign did seem like a good fit, my reading over the past few months had been split into two relatively succinct areas of housing/economics/politics and more philosophical texts concerning the different intellectual currents in Aotearoa. Specifically on the question of the relationship between Māori philosophy and the more recent arrival of Western thought. Something which at the time I had thought was more of a personal interest without much direct applicability to my formal academic work.

As a Pākehā man with British and Italian whakapapa, the geo-political and bio-graphic politics of knowledge often lead me to the conclusion that I am a most unsuitable candidate for research which requires a radical questioning of deeply held assumptions of Western thought. Yet the tensions between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā seem to repeatedly call me back in one way or another. Even as I attempt to escape into the apparent safety of Eurocentric critiques of political economy, to study something as commonplace as housing, I find myself thrown back into the intense relationships between politically and emotionally charged domains of colonial
history, epistemological decolonisation, and the war between Enlightenment thought and its Others (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2002). These tensions would arise around the SOUL campaign because Ihumātao is a Māori place, and the SOUL campaign is led by mana whenua.

My friend Vanessa Cole had already informed me that Pania Newton was a good person to get in touch with about the SOUL campaign. When I contacted Pania, and told her about my research project, she invited me out to Kaitiaki Village in Ihumātao. As I drove into Ihumātao, I was immediately struck by the landscape, in a way which I struggle to put into words. I had never been past Villa Maria winery, where I had done some hospitality work as a teenager. At the risk of undermining the academic tone of this text, Ihumātao spoke to my heart, it moved me deeply. On an affective and intuitive level, I knew there was something special about this place.

While chatting to Pania about my project, I asked if it would be acceptable for me to participate in the campaign while using it as the empirical site for my research thesis. She was receptive and encouraging about the idea, and I think it is fair to say that without this initial support and invitation to become part of the SOUL group, I would never have focused this thesis on the land struggle in Ihumātao. Naturally, this is in no way to suggest that Pania Newton is responsible for what I have written. Simply to say that in some sense she removed the restrictions preventing me from writing about Ihumātao, and made me feel welcome in the SOUL whānau. I am humbled and grateful for the trust and support I have been given along the way.

I began attending weekly SOUL meetings at Ambury Farm in Mangere Bridge. Almost immediately I was unsettled by the discovery that while the situation in Ihumātao was very
much being driven by the economics of housing development from the perspective of the Fletchers companies, Auckland Council and the New Zealand Government. The SOUL activists themselves had a much broader and deeper understanding of what was happening in Ihumātao which not only included social, environmental, cultural, geological, historical, archaeological and aesthetic concerns, but was much more centred around notions of justice and human wellbeing, than it was embedded in critiques of political economy. I started questioning whether the campaign was even particularly concerned with the dynamics of housing markets.

**Doing something useful**

My great fear throughout the whole process was that I would write something entirely self-serving and of no value other than as an intellectual curiosity, in particular something with absolutely no utility to the SOUL campaigners, adding nothing to either their knowledge base or political endeavours. These concerns were compounded by the fact that SOUL is deeply embedded Te Ao Māori and I am a researcher primarily educated in Te Ao Pākehā who is cognisant of the tendency of academic studies involving indigenous peoples to merely reinforce colonial hegemony.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains in *Decolonizing Methodologies* that indigenous communities are familiar with Western trained researchers who break cultural protocols, negate values, fail small tests and ignore key people (2012, p. 3). I would sincerely like to think that I have avoided all such failures, but it is unlikely. To my frustration, I have repeatedly been confronted with the boundaries of my own knowledge and unsettled by my institutional location as a research student in a predominantly Western academy in Aotearoa. Smith (2012) warns that from the perspective of indigenous communities,
The power of research was not in the visits made by researchers to our communities, nor in the fieldwork and the rude questions they often asked. In fact, many individual non-indigenous researchers remain highly respected and well liked… at a common sense level research was talked about both in terms of its absolute worthlessness to us, the indigenous world, and its absolute usefulness to those who welded it as an instrument. It told us things already known, suggested things that would not work, and made careers for people who already had jobs. (p. 3)

It is not difficult for me to see how easy it would be for this thesis to fit the description put forward by Smith (2012) above, irrespective of my efforts to the contrary. In spite of this, I have endeavoured to produce something that has value for the SOUL whānau who so generously welcomed me into their midst.

As it has turned out, my initial motivation to perform a study focused on resistance to market housing developments led me to find myself working among a campaign opposing a housing development on stolen Māori land, which is directly affecting the local Māori community. It is no coincidence that the people leading the SOUL campaign against a market driven housing development – as in many other fields concerned with human and ecological wellbeing – are Māori people. Needless to say, it has been something of a relief to me that I am by no means the only member of the SOUL group navigating the complex tensions that can characterise Māori-Pākehā relations in Aotearoa.

Frances Hancock, an Irish Pākehā member of the SOUL group expressed the relational aspect of her experience in the campaign in a way that I could identify with. She said,
Just negotiating relationships, and negotiating that hyphen, the Māori-Pākehā hyphen, and the possibility that as a Pākehā I could do something that was offensive. The possibility of that is actually extremely high, because I don’t really consider myself a bicultural person as much as I would like to be. I think I have a huge amount to learn… there have been moments where I kind of screwed up with that one, or I didn’t do that in the way I should, those have been challenging moments, and I’ve done a lot of reflection on those, and sometimes you can get destabilised, that can stop you going on. You’ve got to somehow counter that with self-forgiveness when you screw up, or forgiveness of others. But people are incredibly generous in this campaign, the people at the core are incredibly generous, grateful, reliable, loyal, funny, kind, they sort of understand something about the value of life in its different forms and that means there is a whole lot of respect that is permeating everything. (Frances Hancock, 5 December 2017)

**Kaupapa Māori?**

As a non-indigenous person it is highly dubious for me to claim that the research I have carried out has followed a Kaupapa Māori methodology (L. Smith, 2012). Linda Tuhiwai Smith suggests that a perfectly valid response to whether a non-indigenous researcher can carry out Kaupapa Māori research might be along the lines of: ‘By definition, no: Kaupapa Māori research is Māori research exclusively’ (2012, p. 186). In my personal case this seems an appropriate and justifiable position to take.

I was born and raised in London, England, the historic centre of British colonial power. I have been educated in the imperial languages of English, French and Spanish. I was encouraged to admire the Greek and Roman empires throughout my schooling, and at the annual prizegiving
ceremony at my primary school in north London the administration even considered it appropriate to have us sing the genocidal anthem ‘Rule, Britannia’. Short of carrying out an extensive auto ethnographic study of my early socialisation and education, it is fair to say that as a child, I was led to believe that London was the centre of the universe. While this orientation to the world has certainly changed as a consequence of my re-location to Aotearoa, it has required an openness and a willingness on my part to unlearn these kinds of assumptions, in order to begin to dwell more deeply in Aotearoa.

My interactions with Māori people, language, history and culture began when I arrived in Aotearoa in 2005. These engagements were strengthened considerably through my studies at both the University of Auckland and the Auckland University of Technology. I have had the opportunity to benefit from tertiary courses in Te Reo Māori, Tikanga Māori, and (de)colonial histories. All of this has contributed to my intellectual and personal development, and introduced me to a wealth of knowledge which I continue to explore.

As an individual I may be technically unable to use a Kaupapa Māori methodology, in so far as it relates to being Māori (G. Smith, 1992), however this thesis is not solely the product of one person. It has developed through a relational process that has involved a number of people, some of whom are Māori. If I have been able to do some measure of justice to the histories, knowledge, activity and spirit of the Māori research participants in the text as it now stands. If I have been able to co-produce knowledge without suffocating Māori thought and practice with Eurocentric assumptions, then perhaps there is some weight to the idea that a type of Kaupapa Māori methodology is in play here.
Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) claims that ‘a non-indigenous, non-Māori person can be involved in Kaupapa Māori research, but not on their own; and if they were involved in such research, they would have ways of positioning themselves as a non-indigenous person’ (p. 186). I have attempted to practice this approach; by making visible my subject position, not merely in a physical sense as located in a Western academy, but also in a bio-graphic and epistemological sense. I have endeavoured to exceed the limitations imposed by what has traditionally been considered valid knowledge in the Western academy to obstruct the ability of the Māori thinkers I have worked with to express themselves through this research. While perhaps not completely impossible, this has proved to be a difficult target to achieve.

**Taking Māori knowledge seriously**

Graham Smith (1992) explains that amongst other things, Kaupapa Māori research takes the ‘validity and legitimacy of Māori’ for granted and highly values the ‘survival and revival’ of Māori language and culture (pp. 2-3). It also considers the ‘struggle for autonomy’ over ‘cultural wellbeing’ and life in general as ‘vital to Māori survival’ (Smith, 1992, p. 3). In this sense I have sought to carry out Kaupapa Māori research. I have also taken inspiration from Māori philosopher Carl Mika (2014), who rejects the notion that Māori thought requires substantiation from within the Western canon in order to be taken seriously, while simultaneously being unafraid to think with dead white males where it appears constructive.

Situated within the epistemological approach described to this point, I carried out a specific set of actions to produce this thesis. I applied for ethics to participate in and observe political campaigns, land occupations, and to conduct interviews in relation to housing; the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee approved my application on the 28th of August 2017. I have regularly attended weekly SOUL meetings held at Ambury Farm from
August 2017 until the present day (in the summer months these were moved to Kaitiaki Village, Ihumātao). On the 17th of August I attended the St Paul Street Symposium 2017 ‘Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai’ at the Auckland University of Technology featuring a keynote lecture given by Carl Te Hira Mika. After this I participated in a two day wānanga at Makaurau Marae from the 18th to the 19th of August during which we walked the Ōtuataua Stonefields and were educated on local history, culture, as well as contemporary environmental, health and social issues in Ihumātao. Additionally, I have participated in political actions organised by SOUL, including Te Karanga a Hape Hīkoi on the 27th of November 2017, co-ordinated by Rebecca Ann Hobbs, and a ‘Stand on the Land’ event on the 26th of May 2018.

I arranged semi-structured interviews with eleven participants in the SOUL campaign from October to December 2017, including Roger Gummer, Pania Newton, Cathy Casey, Betty King aka. Bebi Wehi, David Fraser, Nikki Elder, Frances Hancock, Tim McCreanor, Beverly Knowles, Brendan Corbett and Waimārie Rakana. These were productive conversations that contributed significantly to the research process. We spoke about a range of topics, some of which I was conscious of prior to engaging in the campaign, in particular relating to housing, and others that developed along the way as I became more attuned to the priorities of the SOUL group. I am confident that the people I spoke to represent a range of positions within SOUL. Some of the knowledge shared by research participants appears as quotes in the text while the vast remainder that is formally unattributed helped immensely to shape further research and inform the general direction of the project.

It is worth mentioning that there are some limitations and well as strengths to the interview process itself. First of all, the formal research participant interviews were limited to eleven people when there are a great deal more consistently involved in the SOUL campaign. I would
have very much liked to carry out more interviews but I eventually decided to stop at eleven out of fear that if I did not I would run out of time to complete the project. I only managed to interview two out of six of the founding members of SOUL: Pania and Waimārie. Additionally, I was unable to include a representative of Fletcher Building in the project as multiple requests for interviews were ignored.

The recorded conversations with my research participants were transcribed and analysed for general themes, relevant information, illustrative anecdotes and avenues for further exploration. The themes which emerged from this analysis, along with knowledge of the situation from other sources, informed the production of the various chapters of the thesis. I took inspiration from the whakaaro Māori style of research advanced by Mika and Southey (2018) that values speculative thinking, the relatively autonomous interplay between researcher and participants, and stresses that the meaning flowing from the utterances of others is not exhausted by any particular interpretation. In this sense, working with the words of others is an infinite and ultimately mysterious engagement. I have made extensive use of quotations, both to allow the authentic voices of my research participants and other authors to manifest in the text, and to avoid the trap of thinking my interpretation fully captures the meaning of the speech of others. I have not conformed to the convention of enclosing all quotations within my own words, choosing instead to sometimes allow others to have the last say in a paragraph, section or chapter.

Other than this I have made use of archives, databases, and publicly available documents from both Auckland Council and the former Manukau City Council. I made five separate Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) requests for documents and information from Auckland Council, on the 11\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} of January 2018, 13\textsuperscript{th} of February
2018, 2nd and 5th of March 2018. These information requests concerned the designation of Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao, the position of the Independent Māori Statutory Board (IMSB) on the designation of Special Housing Area 62, information about bonds and financial instruments used by Auckland Council, and details surrounding the rezoning of land through the Special Housing Areas. I have utilised all of these sources to write an overall argument which has been generated through my ongoing relationship with the SOUL campaign. Reflecting the multifaceted and holistic nature of SOUL, the thesis concerns a broad range of themes including economics, political activism, housing, land, colonisation, financialisation, democracy, constitutional transformation, as well as implicitly (and in parts explicitly) dealing with philosophical domains of ontology, epistemology and metaphysics.

In terms of structure I have found it difficult to conform to a singular and linear narrative of events. Moving through each aspect of the story of SOUL and its dynamic relations with the history of Ihumātao as well as other entities such as Fletchers and Auckland Council one at a time, seemed to my mind at least, rather restrictive. While I have endeavoured to order chapters and sections in a logical sequence, I have also returned to topics previously covered when they clearly come to bear on what is being discussed, both to highlight the complex networks and layers of events, beings and meanings, and also to interrogate different parts of the situation from multiple angles and in relation to things which were not as clearly present in former instances. As Mignolo (2011) explains, ‘a linear argument cannot capture the nuances, since once a name or a paragraph is mentioned or quoted in a linear flow, it does not return: repetitions are not good in English composition but are important in decolonial thinking’ (p. xxiii). I hope that the narrative moves not only in a line from beginning to end, which would be a quintessentially modernist framing of events, from genesis to final judgement. I have attempted
to move through content in spirals; with a focus on layering; thinking not only through time; but equally through space; and with a particular emphasis on the relations between entities.

In dealing with theoretical and philosophical material I have drawn on a mode of thought that François Laruelle has termed ‘Non-Philosophy’; whereby one is not confined to working through a singular system of thought. Non-philosophy as a way of thinking allows one to remain free to work with theoretical concepts where it is beneficial to the subject matter without falling into the trap of mistaking a text (as a conceptual map of the world) for the world itself, and the subsequent limitations of such an approach (Laruelle, 2013). Non-philosophy is compatible, I believe, with the whakaaro Māori way of conducting research advocated by Mika and Southey (2018).

Additionally, I have been influenced by Laruelle’s political orientation to knowledge, in the hope of avoiding the pitfalls of two distinct types of academic writing. The first of which Laruelle (2015) refers to as the ‘disengaged intellectual’, a figure who ‘believes in a truth that is itself neoliberal’ (p. 138). The limitations of the disengaged intellectual are that one ends up simply describing the ‘appearances of an operation or an event’ explaining what the ‘politics of capitalism and globalization constantly do’, while simply adding some ‘moral considerations about the victims’ (Laruelle, 2015, p. 138). The second approach Laruelle (2015) refers to as the ‘old way’, whereby one decides in advance the meaning of events based on ‘some ideology’ while believing that this meaning is able to ‘provide assistance to the victims’ (p. 138). Generally speaking the first is the mistake of the academic and the second is the mistake of the political militant; one approach remains stuck in an apolitical empiricism, while the other decides the truth in advance and ‘twists events all the way to failure’ (Laruelle, 2015, p. 139).
As something of a remedy to the two approaches described above, Laruelle (2015) argues that a viable strategy is to centre a ‘victim-in-person’; this is not strictly speaking a real person but rather a ‘concentrated axiom’ which allows writers to move through historical, artistic, scientific and philosophical material, making arguments that are neither impotent, arbitrary nor dogmatic, instead working on the basis that living people are affected by the world and that what one writes can speak from and to this experience while opening towards the prospect of transformation and justice (Laruelle, 2015). While finding merit in Laruelle’s non-prescriptive approach to thinking, I question his preoccupation with the term ‘victim’. The research participants in this project have certainly not struck me as victims, but rather people who have something valuable to contribute to the world; a quality which to my mind is not captured by the typical notion of victim.

In closing this chapter I would like to emphasise that the SOUL campaign as well as the history of Ihumātao are dynamic, highly complex, immensely deep, and constantly unfolding. There is infinitely more that can be said about both than could ever fit into a single thesis. In light of this, I must stress that this is merely one thesis concerning SOUL and Ihumātao, it is by no means the complete picture nor last word on either. Nevertheless, I sincerely hope that the text produced as a result of the path I have traversed is of some value to others. To those who may attempt similar journeys in the future I leave you a Māori whakatauki and the words of Irish poet Samuel Beckett.

Whāia e koe te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei
Seek that which is most precious, if you should bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.

Chapter 2

Ihumātao

He kura kainga e hokia – he kura tangata e kore e hokia

*The treasure of the land will persist – human possessions will not*

We are frankly appalled by the events of the past and by
the effect that they have had on the Manukau tribes.

*(Waitangi Tribunal, 1985, p. 1).*

The word Ihumātao unfolds into its expanded form *Te Ihu o Mata’oho*, which translates into English as *The Nose of Mata’oho*. The name Mata’oho belongs to the Atua of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, physically embodied in the landscapes of Tāmaki Makaurau (Graham, 1922; Jesson, 2010). Bearing some resemblance to the Atua from which it takes its name, the history of Ihumātao has been characterised by periods of stability, peace and prosperity interrupted by devastating forces beyond the control of its inhabitants. A detailed history of Ihumātao is beyond the scope of this thesis; I can only touch on aspects of the rich tapestry of the past insofar as it relates to the immediate activity of the SOUL campaign.
This chapter contains four sections. The first holds a brief commentary of early contact between Māori and Pākehā. The second section describes the ongoing consequences of the Waikato War on people living in the region. The third section explains the Crown’s attempts to formally make amends for some of its past actions. The fourth and final section claims that the ability of SOUL to unearth historic trauma has been attractive to mana whenua participants in the campaign.

**Early relationships between Pākehā settlers and Māori**

As is typical of human relationships in general, the complexity of the interactions between Māori and Pākehā settlers in Tāmaki Makaurau resists easy categorisation. Pākehā settlers in Auckland from the 1830s to the 1850s were heavily dependent on Māori for support. Many of these settlers were ‘poor, working class people’ who arrived without means for barter or exchange, and needed ‘food, fuel and housing’ (Petrie, 2006, p. 35). Māori provided food, transport and labour for the settlers (Petrie, 2006). The immigration of British workers and artisans at this time prompted the movement of Māori from other regions to Auckland to meet the growing demand for production (Petrie, 2006). During this period Māori arriving in the region received rights to ‘reside and cultivate in the Auckland area under the mana of local iwi’ (Petrie, 2006, p. 35).

The economic needs of the quickly growing settler population led to a dramatic increase in productivity in the surrounding areas as well as considerable volumes of produce coming to Auckland on foot or by waka (Petrie, 2006). There was a significant volume of trade between Māori and British settlers at this time, as well as between Māori and traders bound for other countries including China, America, Australia, France, Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, Tahiti and Brazil (Petrie, 2006). The economic contributions made by Māori were well understood by Pākehā settlers at the time. In 1847, an article in the *New Zealander* remarked,
in New Zealand, for the first time, British Settlers came into contact with... men skilled in agriculture, patient of labour, and ready and able to assist the Settlers in all their operations... The Settlers were supplied by the Natives with all the necessaries of life at cheap rates, and the price of native labour was exceedingly moderate. (New Zealander, 1847, p. 2)

The contribution of Māori living in Tāmaki Makaurau in the form of labour and goods, facilitated by the fact that Māori had access to their own means of subsistence, helped to minimise living costs and enabled those of means to invest a greater sum of wealth into the nascent capitalist economy. Māori labour, land, knowledge, transport, political connections, military protections, and other social and economic resources, or in other words, the manaakitanga iwi Māori showed towards Pākehā effectively subsidised the establishment of the colonial economy. The same article in the New Zealander concludes,

All the preliminary difficulties of colonization were avoided, and the capital of the Settlers was employed in house-building, and in commercial and land speculations... the people of Auckland have become one of the wealthiest colonial communities in the world, and a taste for luxury and gaiety has long prevailed in it… (New Zealander, 1847, p. 2)

This was no less true in Ihumātao, which, with its rich volcanic soil, was crucial in supplying Māori and Pākehā with food during this period. Moon (2007) notes that the Ōtuataua Stonefields in Ihumātao ‘covered up to a thousand hectares of land’ and ‘included housing, shelters, walls, defences, storage pits, trenches, and even irrigation channels, all in the aid of cultivating huge quantities of kumara, taro, yams, and gourds’ (p. 58).
Knowledge of a period of Māori prosperity prior to the Waikato War informs the orientation of some of the activists in the SOUL campaign. One of the leading figures in the SOUL campaign, a young lawyer from Ihumātao, Pania Newton (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Waikato, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Maniapoto), reflected on a period prior to urbanisation and agricultural farming,

When they came here and urbanised us, we had an economic base here already, my tūpuna used to grow maara kai, Waikato was rich, they had 17 mills across the Waikato region, we were thriving, we were feeding the convicts in Australia, we were feeding the Irish during the famine, and they came here and destroyed it, they destroyed the planting down here and they replaced it with agriculture, our people had been living off maara kai for hundreds of years, when they came back that was all destroyed, their economic base, their survival was compromised, furthermore when this moana was polluted they couldn’t get kai from there anymore so we turned to unhealthy kai which has tainted our people… (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).

Pania explained that histories of Māori prosperity prior to colonisation directly motivate her political activism: ‘everytime I see our people suffering; they’re in poverty, they’re unhealthy, and I just think that, man our people were thriving, and that’s what drives me, getting back to that. Reclaiming our tikanga, reclaiming what was once ours: Tino Rangatiratanga, Mana Motuhake’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).
Figure 1: Pania Newton on the Ōtuataua Stonefields, Ihumātao. Photograph by Chris McKeen.
The Waikato War

More than providing the fledgling settler city of Auckland with food and other necessities, Ihumātao has been historically significant in other respects. On the 22nd May 1857, a large hui assembled at Ihumātao pā drawing Māori people from all over Te Ika a Maui to discuss the formation of the Kīngitanga in response to British claims of absolute sovereignty (Tonson, 1966). Despite protestations from local Pākehā that a sovereignty movement would lead to conflict, one of the first meetings where it was decided to appoint a Māori king was made at Ihumātao (Tonson, 1966). Te Wherowhero was later inaugurated as head of the Kīngitanga movement in June 1858 at Ngāruawāhia, with the title Kingi Pōtatau, and in March 1860 Kīngi Pōtatau travelled south from Mangere where he had been residing (Tonson, 1966, p. 103). On the 9th July 1863, a proclamation demanding that Māori swear allegiance to the Crown was signed by Governor Grey (see Figure 2 on page 30). Two days later the same notice was published in newspapers across the country and three days later, on the 12th July 1863, the Crown invasion of the Waikato began. Ihumātao is one of the regions that Māori were forced to leave as a consequence of this sequence of events.

New Zealand historian Vincent O’Malley argues that in a certain sense the Waikato War is difficult to understand. Prior to the war, there had been strong relationships between Waikato Māori and Pākehā settlers in the Mangere region. Many Waikato Māori had even relocated from other places in order to ‘protect the settlers there from possible attack by other iwi’ (O’Malley, 2016, p. 9). Waikato Māori had been considered some of the ‘most loyal and progressive in the country’ and held valuable economic power, growing not only food, but driving a veritable hub of commercial activity including a considerable number of flour mills in the region (O’Malley, 2016).
NOTICE
To the Natives of Mangere, Pukaki, Ihumatao, Te Kirikiri, Patumahoe, Pokeno, and Tuakau.

ALL Persons of the Native Race living in the Manukau District, and the Waikato frontier, are hereby required immediately to take the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, and to give up their Arms to an Officer appointed by Government for that purpose. Natives who comply with this order will be protected.

Natives refusing to do so are hereby warned forthwith to leave the District aforesaid, and retire to Waikato, beyond Mangatawhiria.

In case of their not complying with this Order, they will be ejected.

By His Excellency's Order.

Auckland,
July 9th, 1863.

PANUITANGA
Ki nga tangata Maori o Mangere, o Pukaki, o Ihumatao, o Te Kirikiri, o Patumahoe, o Pokeno, o Tuakau.

KO nga Tangata Maori katoa e noho ana ki te Takiwa ki Manukau, ki nga wahi e tata ana ki Waikato, me whakakua, me tuhituhiti o ratou ingoa ki te Oati piri ki Te Kuini inaianei ano; a me tuku mai a ratou patu ki te Apiha ka whakaritea e te Kawanatanga mo taura mea. Ko nga tangata Maori e rongo ana ki tenei kupu ka tiakina paitia.

KO nga tangata e whakakahore ana, kaore e whakaee ki tenei, me haere atu i aua Takiwa, me hoki atu ki Waikato, ki tere taha o Mangatawhiria. Ki te kore ratou e rongo ki tenei, ka tonaat ratou kia haere.

Na Te Kawana i mea.

Akarana,
Hurame 9, 1863.

Figure 2: ProclamationDemanding Oath of Allegiance

(Archives New Zealand, 1863)
By the end of the Waikato War from July 1863 to April 1864, ‘the once flourishing Waikato Māori economy stood in ruins – with villages destroyed, crops raised and livestock looted’ (O’Malley, 2016, p. 9). What had been a site of economic prosperity and international trade to places as far flung as California was destroyed, leaving hundreds of Waikato Māori killed, crippled or wounded (O’Malley, 2016). Survivors of the War were forced to move south of the Pūniu River to ‘seek refuge with their Ngāti Maniapoto relatives’ (p. 10). The most desirable lands were seized by the Crown to be transferred to settlers (O’Malley, 2016). In Ihumātao, 1000 acres belonging to Te Wai-o-Hua were confiscated and processed through the Waste Lands Office. On the 28th of December 1867 a section of this land was granted to Scottish settler farmer Gavin Struthers Wallace, the transfer included the 32 hectares currently designated as Special Housing Area 62 (Archives New Zealand, 1867). On the 20th March 2014, Fletcher Residential Limited entered into a conditional purchase agreement for 32 hectares colloquially known as the Wallace Block, named after Gavin S. Wallace and his descendants who had farmed the land up until that point. The New Zealand Government recognise this land claim as legitimate under the law.

A respected elder in the SOUL campaign, Kuia Betty King aka. Aunty Betty (Ngāti Taua, Ngāti Mahuta, Waikato-Tainui), who was born and raised in Ihumātao and lived there most of her life, shared with me her grandmother’s stories of the confiscations,

My grandmother used to sit us down, she used to talk to us, she was the one that sat on our balcony and cried looking over the Stonefields. She lived to 105, she was here as a child suffering when the land was confiscated and things like that, she was actually here and I would listen to her stories and I would think it’s alright nana, he
pata ana nana, I would kiss her and hug her, you’re alright nana, but I never realised until I grew up… (Betty King, 7 November 2017).

One of the justifications for the Waikato invasion was that Māori had elevated a King in June 1858 in direct defiance of British sovereignty (O’Malley, 2016). Another claim was that in 1860, Kīngatanga supporters had attacked British troops in Taranaki which the Crown considered a rebellious interference in a conflict that did not concern them. Above all the Crown argued that Waikato Māori had been plotting to attack settlers closer to Auckland and therefore had forced their hand in order to avoid a ‘bloody uprising’ (O’Malley, 2016, p. 10). Pania Newton spoke to me about the Waikato War,

Our people were murdered, our people were evicted off their lands, their economic base was lost, there was pillaging, there was... you know... it’s shocking to even think about it, but just a huge injustice: immoral, unethical, everything. How can you just do that? Go in and destroy a community because they pose a threat to your perceived power? It’s crazy what they did. Because they saw them as a threat to their government, they wanted the land, it was prime land. They wanted the Maoris out of Auckland. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).

Making amends

Māori living in the Manukau ‘never rebelled against the authority of the Queen’ during the Land Wars, and yet were punished by the Crown through the loss of the majority of their land encompassing more than 146,000 acres (Waitangi Tribunal, 1985, p. 14). Towards the end of the twentieth century, nations around the world began attempting to make amends for past crimes (Celemajer, 2009). On the 22nd May 1995, New Zealand’s head of state Queen Elizabeth
II signed a formal apology to Waikato-Tainui into law which stated ‘the Crown acknowledges that its representatives and advisers acted unjustly and in breach of the Treaty of Waitangi in its dealings with the Kīngitanga and Waikato in sending its forces across Mangataawhiri in July 1863 and in unfairly labelling Waikato as rebels’ (Bennion, 1995). Futhermore, Article 3 of the Deed of Settlement between Her Majesty and Waikato-Tainui states,

The Crown acknowledges that the subsequent confiscations of land and resources under the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863 of the New Zealand Parliament were wrongful, have caused Waikato to the present time to suffer feelings in relation to their lost lands akin to those of orphans, and have had a crippling impact on the welfare, economy and development of Waikato (Bennion, 1995, p. 1).

The Crown has officially abandoned the narrative that Waikato Māori essentially ‘brought it upon themselves’ (O’Malley, 2016, p. 10), however the descendants of those affected by the Waikato War still express outrage at the events of the past. This sentiment was evident as Pania Newton explained the fallacious allegations that Governor Grey made against her people,

He accused them of being rebellious. But they weren’t, there’s no evidence actually that Māori were acting in rebellion here in Ihumātao, there’s absolutely no evidence, so that’s why his proclamation that he issued here is totally fraudulent, it’s illegal. And then they can tell us that it was legitimised 30 years later with another piece of law that they passed. I thought they came here on a partnership? The New Zealand Settlements Act, the Native Reserves Act… it’s fucking bullshit. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).
O’Malley (2016) affirms that the debate is finished concerning who is responsible for the Waikato War; the Crown has already conceded that ‘government had unfairly branded the Waikato tribes as rebels and had unjustly invaded their district’ (p. 11). Furthermore, the government has expressed ‘profound regret’ and apologised ‘unreservedly for the loss of lives because of the hostilities arising from its invasion, and at the devastation of property and social life which resulted’ (Bennion, 1995, p. 1).

O’Malley notes that while the Crown has taken responsibility for the conflict, the Waikato War was not in the interest of many Pākehā; imperial soldiers resented fighting for the sole benefit of New Zealand colonists, British taxpayers were unhappy having to provide funding for the war, the conflict created a vast amount of debt for the New Zealand government and the wider economy went into recession for many years (O’Malley, 2016). Furthermore, many of the settlers granted confiscated land lacked adequate capital, agricultural skills, and the ability to defend themselves, resulting in a great number of them selling their newly obtained land at ‘rock bottom prices’ (O’Malley, 2016, p. 12). O’Malley concludes,

In the short term at least, the only group to do well out of the war were the Auckland speculators who bought up the confiscated lands at nominal rates and sat on their investments, waiting for the inevitable recovery in land values. Men like Frederick Whitaker and Thomas Russell were not only the architects of confiscation but also its chief beneficiaries. (2016, p. 12)

It may be a point of interest to note that Fletcher companies are clients of the prominent law firm Russell McVeagh; an organisation founded in 1863 by John Benjamin Russell, brother of Thomas Russell. Anecdotal facts of this nature circulate in conversations within the SOUL
campaign as evidence of the continuity of settler colonial power coming to bear on the history of Ihumātao.

Figure 3: Artist Rebecca Hobbs and Kuia Betty King at Kaitiaki Village in Ihumātao.
Photograph by Qiane Matata-Sipu.

The healing is in the pain

The ability to articulate historic trauma has been attractive to some of those involved in the SOUL campaign. Betty King spoke to me about the importance of SOUL articulating the painful and, paradoxically, potentially healing histories of colonial violence and confiscation in Ihumātao,
SOUL has highlighted a part of the history of what took place in Ihumātao. To be honest, I thought my grandmother was lying, I thought she was being pathetic at the time… I didn’t quite understand, but I can understand now, even my heart cries for her, because she was trying to tell us, as she sat on our balcony, rocking like this, crying to the land, calling to the land, about the hurt to her, her whānau… some of them were annihilated, the history is important and so I need to make them understand, my children, grandchildren, that they have a connection to it, whether they like it or not. Yes we can get on with our lives, we can deny it ever happened, we can say urgh, but the inequity of it all is that unless we deal with it, we’re not going to be able to get on with our lives. That’s how I see it, and hence the reasons why things like writing in my diary was important to make me aware of it, because sometimes the bitterness would come out. It would surface to the top in the most unexpected ways, and it would come out in anger towards people that I didn’t even understand, trying not to get involved with other cultures, that was one way, the only reason why I got involved was because I was a nurse but literally to be honest if I didn’t have to I wouldn’t have. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)

Lawson-Te Aho (2014) explains that the historical events of colonisation impact on the contemporary well-being of Māori and that by sharing trauma narratives with others, individuals and groups are able to heal from the wounds inflicted by past injustices. Lawson-Te Aho (2014) writes,

The resurgence of storytelling and narrative as healing methodology is yet another form of indigenous resistance and an extremely powerful way of correcting
erroneous histories and colonial mythologies, thereby setting the record straight through amplifying the ‘other’ less publicly known side of the story. (p. 188)

In our conversation, Betty King explained the ongoing influence of the history of Ihumātao, in relation to the tendency for people to repress or delay addressing painful past events,

The history of Ihumātao is Ihumātao. It’s just that there are different generations that live there today, the effects of it are that our whanau don’t try to talk about it, they try to push it aside, get on with their lives and do something. They try to accept what’s happening around them, but there’s a hatred there for the history of what happened… It’s just not fair, and our whānau know it, but we sit there and wait, hoping, being good little soldiers and doing nothing, and this is why SOUL is so important, we’ve got to stop sitting on our arses and do something, stick together and do something, but it’s trying to get through the hurt, and the history of things, so deeply, that we just don’t want to be hurt again, it’s amazing, the hurt has been so deep that our whanau just say, it’s alright, they’ll do whatever they have to. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)

Betty King gave the impression that the ability of the campaign to unearth traumatic histories of Ihumātao and to circulate them in the public domain was one of the primary reasons that she joined SOUL,

The history of Ihumātao has so many complexities and that’s why I joined SOUL: because I felt there is an injustice and it’s not been dealt with, not in a way that’s
helpful. The history of Ihumātao hasn’t been addressed, it’s just been buried, and SOUL has brought it out. SOUL has unravelled it and is saying, no you can’t keep on doing this all the time, this is not acceptable, we are a community, we have a voice in this world just as important as you and everybody else… Too long Ihumātao has laid buried under the history and under all the shit that’s gone on, too long, and it needs to come out, because if my generation didn’t understand it how are my grandchildren going to understand it? How are they going to understand the world if they don’t know what the hell is going on? And so I for one believe that SOUL has unravelled something that has always been there and I’m in full support of it. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)

Conclusion

The SOUL campaign holds to a clearly stated political agenda: to prevent a planned residential housing development on the Wallace Block in Ihumātao. At the same time it draws on a long history which predates European settlement in Aotearoa, and as I will try to show has important resonance beyond Ihumātao. Early relationships between Pākehā settlers and Māori were at times reciprocal, harmonious and productive (O’Malley, 2013). Nevertheless the Waikato War had devastating and lasting impacts, not only on the economic strength of Waikato Māori, but also on the historical memory of people in Ihumātao.

The Crown may have formally attempted to make amends for its past aggression, yet many of the wounds remain deeply felt by people living today. It is the ability of the SOUL campaign to connect with and elevate some of this history into public political discourse that has drawn in notable elders and impassioned young legal minds including Kuia Betty King and Pania Newton. It is no exaggeration to say that the crimes committed by the Crown against Māori in
places such as Ihumātao continue to animate their living descendants to challenge what they perceive as an ongoing and unjust colonial intrusion into community life. For many activists in the SOUL campaign the designation of Special Housing Area 62 is the most recent incident in a series of violations of Māori legal and political rights.
Chapter 3

Save Our Unique Landscape

United by a common cause, the diverse collection of people who comprise the SOUL campaign draw on a remarkable range of knowledge, have driven a number of creative initiatives and employ a multiplicity of political strategies. From archaeologists, to lawyers, historians, geologists, heritage conservationists, artists, trade unionists, environmentalists, social activists, treaty workers, school teachers, concerned local residents and university students; the people who have participated in SOUL bring with them unique perspectives and specialised resources.

The structure of this chapter, much like the SOUL group, is somewhat eclectic, and does not constitute a closed argument in and of itself. Its function is partially to lay the groundwork for subsequent chapters and additionally, to give an insight into some of the elements at play in the SOUL campaign. In order to paint a picture of SOUL in broad strokes it was necessary to jump around to a certain extent. There is no obvious central argument or key point around which to pivot; it is in some sense unhinged and disobedient. The content resisted my numerous attempts to force it into a more coherent shape, simply morphing into equally unruly forms. The more linear stricture I attempted to impose, the less I felt it reflected the nature of what I was trying to convey. Eventually I settled on the idea that I was unsuccessfully trying to enforce what Mika (2017) calls a ‘metaphysics of presence’ onto the organic layering of the SOUL campaign itself.
This chapter has five sections. It begins with a story of the founding of the Save Our Unique Landscape campaign through the words of Waimārie Rakena, accompanied by a general description of the activities that SOUL has engaged in. The second section offers geological and archaeological perspectives on the land itself, as well as an overview of the broader landscape including within the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve. The third section details the unfolding political drama of how Special Housing Area 62 came to be established through Auckland Council and signed off by the New Zealand Government. The fourth section considers some of the motivating forces driving SOUL activists to continue their work to protect Ihumātao. The fifth section draws on contemporary continental philosophy to argue that SOUL is a site of truth.

**Inception**

The Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL) campaign describes itself as a ‘mana whenua led, community supported, social action campaign’ which opposes a residential housing development at Ihumātao, Tāmaki Makaurau (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). According to the SOUL Campaign Working Group (2018) the term mana whenua refers to Māori with ‘long associations and rights to particular areas of land’; in Ihumātao this includes (in no particular order) Ngāti Whātua, Te Wai-o-Hua, Te Kawerau a Maki, and Waikato Tainui, as well as the hapū of Te Ākitai and Te Ahiwaru. The piece of land in question is known as Puketāpapa to mana whenua, as well as 545-561 Oruarangi Road, The Wallace Block and, more recently, Special Housing Area 62.

The SOUL campaign was founded in early 2015 by six cousins with strong connections to Ihumātao and Makaurau Marae. One of the founding members, Waimārie Rakena (Ngāti
Tahinga, Te Wai-o-Hua, Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Whatua) described the inception of the SOUL campaign to me as follows,

How I got involved and how the SOUL campaign actually started was with six cousins. There was myself, Pania Newton, Qiane Matata-Sipu, Moana Waa, Haki Wilson and Bobby Jo Pihama. We had received a Facebook message from one of our cousins Qiane Matata-Sipu to basically bring to our attention that there was a housing development earmarked for the Wallace Block which we now know as SHA62, high density of about 480 dwellings. I guess she had written her concerns about it, the pros and cons, the benefits, the not, for us, as tangata whenua, as a papa kāinga that had been continuously occupied in that space for over a thousand years and what the implications could be for us, as tangata whenua, as a papa kāinga moving forward, so we gathered together one summer’s afternoon at her kitchen table and we discussed it, discussed how we felt about it based on what little we knew, there were gaps that she was able to fill, but there were also gaps that we had, concerns that we had that we knew we needed to be addressed properly within the forum that it needed to be addressed in and at that time it would have been our marae meetings. (Waimārie Rakena, 20 December 2017)

Since its formation in 2015, SOUL has held weekly meetings with members holding a range of expertise and interests on subjects including law, archaeology, geology, heritage protection, history, politics and media. As is typical of successful political campaigns today, SOUL has made effective use of the internet and social media (Richardson, 2017); at the time of writing, SOUL maintains a website (www.protectihumatao.co.nz) and a Facebook page with more than 5500 followers. The Facebook page in particular has enabled SOUL to reach a wide public
audience through posting articles, photographs and short video clips. In the conventional press, SOUL has engaged with local and national news media by means of stories, commentaries, and letters to the editor across a range of platforms including print, radio and television outlets such as Māori TV, TV One News, NZ Herald, Manukau Courier, Radio NZ, The Wire (Bfm) and others (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). SOUL has given presentations to a considerable number of community groups and organisations across Aotearoa and overseas, including local sports teams, the New Zealand Parliament and the United Nations. Over the same period, SOUL has provided hundreds of guided tours of the Ōtuataua Stonefields to the general public, politicians and school groups; some which have been led by archaeologists, volcanologists and geologists (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). SOUL has facilitated a variety of community activities on the whenua, including hosting art workshops and cultivating maara kai, with leadership from Rebecca Hobbs and Kelly Marie respectively (Te Kuru o te Marama Dewes, 2018).
The central objective of the SOUL campaign is to prevent a residential housing development on the Wallace Block, also known to mana whenua as Puketāpapa, and currently designated as Special Housing Area 62 (as shown in Figure 5 on page 46). The singular objective of the campaign is juxtaposed by the diversity of participating individuals and groups. The variety of people, with their own particular interests and knowledges, is something that founding member Waimārie Rakena values highly. Waimārie spoke to me about the role that this plurality had played in the campaign,

The various interested parties, interested groups, and their specialised knowledge or interests or passions have actually drawn people in. You have your flora and fauna people, biodiversity people, you have your archaeologists, your geologists,
you have your educators, you have your arts (and that’s been huge too), and then of course you have your human rights people, advocates for social change. So it’s drawn a lot of people for different reasons, for various reasons, but that is the potential they see in that space, or whatever they see and feel in that space, there’s a place for it and there’s a place for them to express their passion and knowledge. That adds to the significance of the space, it’s helped to inform us even, because you obviously have your passions and specialisations and at the end of the day, you see it from a different perspective every time it’s like ‘WOAH didn’t know that!’, didn’t know that because that’s not my area of specialisation if you like, that’s where it’s been quite rich and enriching to know that we see the significance of this space through this lens and we each have our own even within the six cousins we all have our own passions and specialities but we’re learning from others, who are becoming involved and adding to the kete and to your knowledge base and your appreciation for the space but then they see the potential for it too is more than what you might have initially thought or foreseen, so that’s where the richness has been for us. (Waimārie Rakena, 20 December 2017)
Figure 5: Map of Ihumātao

(Auckland Council, 2014a)
‘Rocks and holes in the ground’

Ihumātao is a unique landscape (Veart, 1986; Searle, 1959; Lawlor, 2009; McFarland, 2015). From a geological perspective, the Ihumātao Peninsula is classified as a ‘Quaternary lava flow field with tuff rings, scoria and spatter cones’ (Gravis et al., 2017, p. 373). Puketāpapa forms part of the Ihumātao Peninsula, sitting within the broader Auckland Volcanic Field, and there were previously restrictions in place protecting it from development. The former Manukau City Council considered Puketāpapa to be part of a ‘logical extension’ to the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve and worthy of permanent protection (Auckland Council, 2002, p. 20).

The Ōtuataua Stonefields are the result of lava flows which erupted out of Puketāpapa (also known as Pukeiti) and the Ōtuataua volcanic cones approximately 20,000 years ago (Manukau City Council, 2000a, p. 6). In 1994, the Department of Conservation issued a report calling for the protection of the Ōtuataua Stonefields in which they stated,

The Ōtuataua volcanic stonefields are highly significant and worthy of permanent preservation. On this one small piece of land it is possible to trace the history of human presence in Auckland from initial Maori settlement to the arrival of Europeans with their pastoral farming techniques. (Department of Conservation, 1994, p. 1)

The Ōtuataua Stonefields are the only surviving area in Auckland where continuous settlement is ‘clearly visible on the surface of the land’ (Department of Conservation, 1994, p. 1). Evidence of pre-European civilisation includes ‘garden walls, earth and stone garden mounds, stone-walled houses, cooking and storage sites’ as well as ‘urban form and organisation’ (Department of Conservation, 1994, p. 1). Sheppard notes that along with the Matukurua Stonefields at Wiri,
the Ōtuataua Stonefields are the ‘last substantial remains of some 2,300 hectares of such settlement in South Auckland and represent a landscape of national significance’, both for ‘public appreciation and for the scientific opportunity that it provides to allow a better understanding of the traditional Maori way of life’ (1987, p. 81). The whenua also holds economically valuable high quality basalt and scoria, which has resulted in extensive quarrying of the landscape (Sheppard, 1987).

In addition to its geological and archaeological significance, the Ōtuataua Stonefields contain ‘rare fragments of indigenous coastal forest’ as well as a plethora of rare plants, birds and other animals (Manukau City Council, 2000a, p. 7). In terms of vegetation, the Ōtuataua Stonefields are home to a variety of species including ‘pasture grass species, remnants of native forest and pockets of coastal vegetation’ (Manukau City Council, 2000a, p. 7). In 1996, Māwhai were recorded on the Ōtuataua Stonefields, these native cucumbers were once a common plant at coastal mainland sites, today however the plant is exceptionally rare, and usually only found on a small number of offshore islands (Manukau City Council, 2000a, p. 8).

On the 10th December 2017, over 350 people participated in a celebratory hīkoi along Karangahape Road organised by Rebecca Hobbs and SOUL to connect the street with Ihumātao through the narratives of Hape’s voyage to Aotearoa. At Te Karanga a Hape Hīkoi, political campaigners including Green Party candidate Ricardo Menéndez March carried a large model Māwhai cucumber; a manifestation of the environmental value of the Ihumātao Peninsula (see Figure 6 on page 49).
Figure 6: Māwhai cucumber at Te Karanga a Hape Hīkoi, 10 December 2017. (From left to right, former Green Party MP Denise Roche, Ricardo Menéndez March, and Julie Zhu. Photograph by Raymond Sagapolutele)
More than a place to find rare fruits, the Ōtuataua Stonefields are also home to native lizards and skinks, as well as rabbits (Manukau City Council, 2000a, p. 8). In terms of fauna, it is regrettable that cattle have been grazed in the general area for over 150 years, as they have contributed to the degradation of archaeological sites. Fortunately a section of the Ōtuataua Stonefields is now protected from such degradation in the Historic Reserve established through Manukau City Council in 1999 (Manukau City Council, 2000b). The idea of using the land for grazing cattle was first pitched by settlers following the forcible expulsion of Māori from the area. On July 21, 1963, in a letter to the Editor of the Daily Southern Cross, a Pākehā in Ōtāhuhu wrote,

Sir, – how much good might be done by men for their fellow men if all would act according to this rule – “Do all the good we can that costs us nothing.” I think the Government have an opportunity, without any cost to the country, to greatly alleviate the difficulties of the settlers who are abandoning their farms, by allowing them to have the Native Settlements of Mangare [sic], Puhaki [sic], Ihumatao [sic], Papahino [sic], Papahino [sic], and Poketapopo [sic] (all in the Manguei [sic] district), as depositories for their cattle. These settlements are securely fenced, and would, I have no doubt, graze at least 500 cattle. (Daily Southern Cross, 24 July 1863)

More than demonstrating that the misspelling of Māori place names is by no means a recent phenomenon, the author of the letter also reveals the continuity of a settler desire to use forcibly alienated Māori land for grazing cattle. To this day, the land which Fletchers plans to transform into residential housing is leased to a farmer for cattle grazing. It may be of some interest to note that grazing cattle have been such an enduring presence on the Wallace Block in recent
times, that for some SOUL activists the absence of cows would signify that Fletchers are preparing to attempt to commence an earthworks on the site. In this sense the grazing cattle on the Wallace Block perform a dual and somewhat contradictory function as both an ongoing motif of colonisation, and as a symbolic barrier preventing Fletchers from developing the site.

The Ōtuataua Stonefields are also inhabited by approximately 30 species of sea and shorebirds, and waterfowl, as well as a number of land birds and a few species of native forest birds (Manukau City Council, 2000b). Many of these species are classified as threatened, endangered or rare (Manukau City Council, 2000b). Sitting somewhere between 500 to 1500 metres outside of the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve are two fossilised forests. The older forest is comprised of the remnants of an ancient kauri forest and the younger forest, preserved by volcanic ash from Maungataketake Volcano around 30,000 years ago, consists mainly of rimu, mori, hinau, kauri and tanekaha (Manukau City Council, 2000b).

**Degradation of the Ōtuataua Stonefields**

Fletcher Building have sought to reassure the public that their proposed residential housing development will have little to no negative impact on the Ōtuataua Stonefields (Fletcher Building, 2018). Stating on one of their websites that ‘We would like to emphasise that this new neighbourhood will not be built on the stonefields or on any archeologically significant sites. The homes are to be set well back from the existing 100ha park that preserves the nearby Stonefields in perpetuity’ (Fletcher Building, 2018). Fletcher’s statement here attempts to split the general landscape into two parts, one that is already protected within the Historic Reserve and the other that is suitably banal for housing construction. While Fletchers are technically correct that the homes will not be built on the Historic Reserve, local experts, academic
researchers and the former Manukau City Council have all considered the site that Fletcher Building intend to develop to be part of the same landscape as the Historic Reserve.

In direct contradiction to the general thrust of Fletchers arguments, contemporary academic literature on the Ōtuataua Stonefields claims that urban development will negatively impact the unique geosite values of the Ihumātao peninsula. Gravis et al. state clearly that,

implementing management strategies to add and conserve geosite values in the region [Ihumātao Peninsula] could provide positive outcomes; however, reduction of its main geosite values would be inevitable and irreversible should proposed urban development take place on a block of land immediately bordering the OSHR [SHA62] (2017, p. 373)

Gravis et al. (2017) explain that the Ihumātao Peninsula is one of only a few areas in South Auckland relatively unaffected by urbanisation but that it is ‘now threatened by intense housing and industrial development’ (p. 373). The authors continue,

The Ihumātao Peninsula is one of the last remnants of this type of volcanic landscape, once widespread on the Auckland Isthmus and densely populated by Māori communities engaged in a sophisticated system of horticulture. Despite decades of landscape degradation and destruction, significant features remain as distinctive physical markers within the context of a cultural and natural landscape. Urbanization and industrialization continues to encroach on the last few remaining undeveloped pieces of land contiguous with the OSHR [Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve]. Rezoning of the Wallace Block as future urban, and subsequent
designation as a Special Housing Area, has facilitated appraisal of the land predominantly in a utilitarian and economic context, despite suggested mitigation measures. (p. 390)

The strong economic motivations for Fletchers wanting to build on this particular site shall be explored in more detail in the Chapter Five. At this point it is important to note however that the economic interests behind the development have been clearly identified by members of the scientific community. Gravis et al. (2017) lament that the designation of Special Housing Area 62 ‘represents the expression of utilitarian and economic values over and above recreational, cultural, historical and scientific values’, concluding that it is this precise ‘expression of utilitarian and economic values that has led to the present day degraded landscape of Ihumātao’ (p. 383).

Gravis et al. (2017) argue that more than simply being an esoteric interest of academic geologists, the public stand to gain from the preservation of Ihumātao as a site of heritage values, stating,

Recognition of the heritage values of geological features implies that Earth systems have a story to tell in the ongoing history of human development, provide resources for the development and growth of communities and social structures, define our sense of place and encompass multiple values such as scientific historical, cultural, aesthetic and religious. (p. 373-374)

According to SOUL activists, politicians in Auckland have not always been able to recognise the geosite values in Ihumātao. SOUL activist Brendan Corbett narrated a story to me
Ian Lawlor took Len Brown out to the Stonefields, just the two of them, and spent hours walking around, and Ian was able to unravel everything that they could see in front of them in great depth and great detail, and with a cultural-historical-archaeological sort of mix. And after two hours of these two… Len Brown, this is the mayor of this Supercity who approved the SHA next door on the Wallace block! Anyway… Len Brown said to Ian, in response to Ian’s query about how he felt about things, he, Len, without hesitation says ‘well Ian’, he says, ‘to me these are just holes in the ground, these are just rocks and holes in the ground’ and Ian just about collapsed. This is the inspirational leader of the Supercity who was telling us that we were gonna have the most liveable city in the world, who was untouched by this tour around this most historic piece of land and yeah all he could see was rocks and holes in the ground. (Brendan Corbett, 14 December 2017)

The dismissive attitude towards sites of archaeological, geological, cultural, environmental, and historical significance encapsulated in Brendan’s narrative of events is consistent with the decision made by Auckland Council to designate a Special Housing Area on the whenua. Brendan’s story was disconcerting, I wondered if the alleged behaviour of the former Mayor could be indicative of nonchalant and cavalier attitudes towards heritage issues at Auckland Council.

The decision to allocate Special Housing Area 62 has been criticised publicly by academic experts, including New Zealand archaeologist, historian and former regional heritage manager
for the Department of Conservation, David Veart. Speaking to the *New Zealand Herald*, Veart said, ‘there are almost certainly items of archaeological significance on the rest of the site where housing is planned… the adjoining block is part of the same landscape… I always describe this as the paddock next to Stonehenge’ (Collins, 2016). The discrepancy between the careful appraisals of the site given by academic researchers in fields as various as history, archaeology and geology on the one hand and the banal descriptions proposed by Fletcher Building on the other are hard to reduce to an innocent difference of opinion. The gulf separating the two modes of discourse is not only indicative of the divergent interests which the respective parties have in the site, but speaks to deeper assumptions about the world.

**Lost Plans**

In recent history, Ihumātao has been subjected to the quarrying of maunga, industrial and urban encroachment and negative impacts resulting from the construction of Auckland Airport including the desecration of Māori burial sites (New Zealand Humans Rights Commission, 2017). The former Manukau City Council had strict protections in place at Ihumātao as part of the ‘Mangere Gateway Heritage Area’ to prevent harm caused by further development (Auckland Council, 2002). The *Manukau District Plan 2002* stated, ‘Areas in close proximity to the Ihumātao Papakainga, the Oruarangi Creek, the Waitomokia Creek and the Ōtuataua Stonefields are not appropriate for buildings, and particularly industrial/business development. These areas are best protected in public open space’ (Auckland Council, 2002, p. 5). More specifically, the *Manukau District Plan 2002* identified a section of land which includes what is now Special Housing Area 62 (and forms part of an area previously labelled as the ‘Mangere-Puhinui Rural Zone’ as shown in the Figure 7 on page 57) as ‘Proposed Public Open Space’ (Auckland Council, 2002, p. 17). In 2002, the Manukau City Council held the position that ‘the proposed public open space designation between Oruarangi Road and the Ōtuataua Stonefields
Historic Reserve is located to provide for a passive area of public open space for protection of natural and cultural heritage and landscape values, and as a logical extension to the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve’ (Auckland Council, 2002, p. 20).
Figure 7: Map of Mangere Bridge (Auckland Council, 2002, p. 54)
The Mangere Puhinui Rural Zone between Ōruarangi Road and the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve, as shown in Figure 7 above, included the 32 hectares of land currently designated as Special Housing Area 62. On the 18th October 2007, the Manukau City Council implemented a ‘Notice of Requirement’ for the Oruarangi Block until such time as it could be designated as a Public Open Space to be included in the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve (Chapple, 2016). After reviewing submissions from the public, taking into account the competing interests of private land title holders and the general public good, as required by the Resource Management Act 1991, planning commissioners rejected an initial request from Gavin H. Wallace Limited to rezone the land from rural to business development, confirming the rural zoning and the Notice of Requirement. However, in 2012, Gavin H. Wallace Limited and other private interests in the area took an appeal to the Environment Court. The Court upheld the appeal, removed many of the protections put in place by the Manukau City Council and rezoned the land as a Future Urban Zone, recommending only that any future urban development should be sensitive to the special characteristics of the area (Wallace & Ors v. Auckland Council, 2012).

At the same time that the Notice of Requirement was revoked (Wallace & Ors v. Auckland Council, 2012), the Manukau City Council attempted to purchase the Wallace block but were refused, as the descendants of Gavin Struthers Wallace considered the Manukau City Council’s offer of $6.5 million to be unsatisfactory (Chapple, 2016). The major shareholder in Gavin H. Wallace Limited, Ailsa Blackwell, told the Listener,

They offered around $5 million, and after the court case they offered $6.5 million. The council never got beyond that. I’d have preferred the council if they gave us a good price, but they wouldn’t, and we’d already lost the best part of the farm. We
sold the first 52 acres [21ha] to help the Ōtuataua Stonefields Reserve, for just over $1 million, I think, in the 1990s, so that was our contribution to the public good. It was all a matter of offering us enough money for this remaining section – that’s all there is to it. I think Fletchers are good. I think they’ve got great plans. (Chapple, 2016)

Not long after declining the offer from Manukau City Council, Gavin H. Wallace Limited agreed to sell the Oruarangi block for $19 million to Fletcher Residential Limited, a subsidiary of the transnational Fletcher conglomerate (QV, 2017). The deal was contingent on Auckland Council and the New Zealand Government designating Oruarangi as a Special Housing Area, as well as the Housing Accord and Special Housing Area Act 2013 commissioners rezoning the land from ‘future development’ to ‘residential’ under the Auckland Council Proposed Unitary Plan (Chapple, 2016). The application for a Special Housing Area presented to Auckland Council by Harrison Grierson Consultants Limited (representing Gavin H Wallace Limited) and supported by Fletcher Residential Limited was not supported by the Mangere-Otahuhu local board (Auckland Council, 2014a).

Because Fletcher Residential Limited is 56% owned by overseas investors, it had to demonstrate to the Overseas Investment Office (OIO) that it could benefit New Zealand more than any local firm. Fletcher Residential argued that it could contribute to Government policy of increasing the supply of housing, pointing to Fletcher’s history of rapid mass builds of residential housing (Chapple, 2016). On the 3rd of September 2014, the Overseas Investment Office (OIO) approved the sale (Land Information New Zealand, 2018).
At the Auckland Council, due diligence reports are prepared by staff using a colour coding system that quickly indicates to Councillors a rating ranging from very poor (red) to very good (green). The due diligence document, produced by Council to appraise a Special Housing Area on Oruarangi Road in Ihumātao, contains a Section D, titled ‘Iwi issues’, listed within are some serious concerns that local iwi had with urban development in the area. Section D concludes, ‘it is hard to overstate the level of concern and potential impact on this community of urban development on its doorstep’ (Auckland Council, 2014a). The notes under the title ‘Iwi issues’ did not receive a colour coding. When I asked Auckland Council why this was the case under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, they told me this was simply ‘the template at the time’ and that ‘infrastructure comments were colour coded and iwi comments were not’ because ‘the due diligence documents were there to provide decision-makers with relevant information in an accessible format’ (Auckland Council, personal communication, 12 March 2018). I have some sympathy with this response as I cannot find anything in either the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 or The Auckland Unitary Plan that would raise ‘iwi issues’ to the status of ‘relevant information’ for local government administrators.

Reflecting on her engagements with Auckland Council, Pania Newton said,

Council have been sitting on the side quietly and they’re the ones who recommended it to the Government and the Government designated it. You look at the disclosure document that they had to consider when recommending, looking through SHA locations, there’s red flags all over it, there’s no infrastructure here, there’s no schools, there’s no proper roads... this land was already earmarked as a public open space. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).
When I asked Auckland Councillor Cathy Casey why the Council voted to designate SHA62 she replied,

Well, the reasoning behind it was that we were under the gun to provide houses and if you tried to stop development you were called a NIMBY [Not In My Back Yard]. We were under the gun from both the hierarchic councillors’ staff and the Government to open land for development and to fail to do that you had to have a good reason and NIMBYism just wasn’t one of the reasons. If you did try to hold up anything everybody rounded on you as a faction. Through the unitary plan there were people who were riding the horses real hard at the front, and there’s people like me at the back who were saying well hang on a minute here why the rush? And the people with the horses were winning all the time, and making us look like Neanderthals. So that was the context for it at the time, so why it was granted simply was that it was another piece of land, it ticked all the boxes and so it went through.

(Cathy Casey, 3 November 2017)

The broader economic context in which Special Housing Area 62 was designated by Auckland Council will be explored in more depth in Chapter 4 on the Housing Crisis. The following section attempts to understand some of the motivations SOUL members have for participating in the campaign to #protectIhumātao.
Connections to land

The SOUL campaign is informed by tikanga Māori, with many members both Māori and Pākehā expressing strong relationships to the whenua of Ihumātao. When I asked Betty King how she was connected to the land at Ihumātao, she responded,

Well you see all those trees there? [gestures to more than a dozen potted plants]. They have my grandchildren’s placenta in them and they are going to be buried on the land and so is my placenta buried on the land where we were born. My dad made it our point that we were part of the land so therefore the placenta in Māori is whenua, it’s the same as the land, so it will be returned and there are more at the back that are planted at the back in pot plants that will be returned, that big tree there, or that tree there beside the house, the citrus plant has my great grandson’s afterbirth in it. Most of these plants hold the placenta of my grandchildren which
will be returned to the earth, directly back to the ground. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)

Betty King was not the only member of SOUL to speak with me about a whakapapa connection to the land at Ihumātao. When I asked Pania Newton a similar question, she replied,

My connection [to Ihumātao] goes back all the way to Ranginui and Papatuanuku, Tane Mahuta, who we (Ngāti Mahuta) descend from, then right down to the descendants, and you know some early historians have described Te Aho o Te Rangi Wharepu who settled here on this whenua and we’re just products of them. So I’m really connected, I feel really connected because this is where my whakapapa is, and I’m very passionate about this land because it’s important to my identity. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)

Pania continued to explain how this connection manifests in her everyday life,

When I do my pepeha, I acknowledge the physical, environmental features on this landscape. If we look here we have our maunga Te Puketapapatanga a Hape, we can see the moana Te Manukanuka o Hoturoa, we have the awa Oruarangi, we see our marae, we see our urupā that are located on this whenua. When I look out I can see my tūpuna building these stone walls, doing maara kai, and when I’m up here I stand on our maunga and I feel Tāwhirimātea, our gods come through me. That’s how important it is to me. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)
It is not solely the Māori members of SOUL who whakapapa to the area that express profoundly affective relationships to the land at Ihumātao. When I asked Beverly Knowles, a local Pāheka resident in Mangere Bridge what her connection to the land at Ihumātao was she replied,

When my children were small I used to take them out to the petrified forest and we sort of lived out in that area we loved the area I found it was an escape for me and the children, I had an alcohol infused marriage, and it was where the children and I found solace and I just loved the area and I loved the stone walls and I just loved the ambiance of the whole thing. (Beverly Knowles, 12 December 2017)

Some SOUL members, including Betty King and Pania Newton, stated explicitly that their whakapapa connections to Ihumātao are directly linked to their particular political motivations and general commitment to the campaign. For others, such as Beverly Knowles, an emotional connection to the land felt implicit in her speech,

A friend of mine said that they were meeting down in Ambury Park and I should go down and have a look if I was so wrapped up in the area and I went down and I had a look and I listened to them and I liked what I heard so I went back the following week and I still liked what I heard and I thought I will stay here and I will do what I can to help them preserve the land. (Beverly Knowles, 12 December 2017)

Along with a strong sense of connection to the land, a sensitivity to social and environmental injustice is another factor that appears to have influenced some members of the SOUL
campaign. David Fraser, a young Pākehā man who grew up in Manurewa, explained his motivations for being involved in SOUL as follows,

I’ve got a thing for trying to protect volcanic and historic sites in the local area and when I saw what was happening out at Ihumātao it had a lot of similarities; being a volcanic landscape and being swallowed up in past injustices and spat out the other end. Degradation and the abuse of the maunga in the past as well as Māori rights in the past, they’ve been exploited. It’s one of the last historical landscapes in Auckland, it’s got a papakāinga right next to it and it’s been through the wars and still they just have to struggle for every bit of respect, so it’s not too hard to empathise. (David Fraser, 28 November 2017)

As articulated by Betty King and Pania Newton, in Te Ao Māori land is not merely an inert physical object to be used for the production of material goods, whenua has a more profound metaphysical depth and one’s connection to place is simultaneously contemporary and ancestral (Marsden, 2003). While an ancestral connection to land is often considered to be an essential part of Māori identities (King, 1992), it was not only the Māori activists in SOUL who spoke to me about being connected to and motivated by ancestors. Frances Hancock spoke of her own whakapapa when she said,

I am an Irish Pākehā, a dual citizen of Ireland and Aotearoa New Zealand, and my identity is a profound source of direction for me. My great grandmother came here in 1863. I know some of the stories of her leaving and her coming, and every generation since her arrival someone has always returned to Ireland and more recently the Irish have come here. So, we’ve somehow maintained those strong
connections across the great oceans between the relations, those in Ireland and those in Aotearoa New Zealand. I feel very Irish in my heart and, I think, some Irish experiences and cultural practices seem to relate to some Māori experiences and cultural practices, although of course they are also unique and very different. An Irish cousin visited a couple of weeks ago and he told me that the worst thing to be called in the West of Ireland is a “settler” because the settlers were the invaders… My family in Ireland fought for their nation, their lands, their language, their culture, and their faith; they were freedom fighters through the years, and some were imprisoned in Dublin’s infamous Kilmainham Gaol. So that’s the whakapapa that drives and motivates me, and it is deeply embedded with a commitment to justice. (Frances Hancock, 5 December 2017)

Similarly, Brendan Corbett also spoke about the influence which his Irish ancestry plays in his politics,

My ancestry is Irish. I’m doing my best continue to the tradition of one of my grandfathers who was a great Irish patriot and nationalist, and famously, according to the priest who married my father, when I asked him about my grandfather he took a while and says well, he says, ‘put it this way, every time he opened his mouth it was treason’. So I feel really privileged to be able to continue that great tradition. I mean anything to do with British imperialism just really raises the hackles of anyone who understands any of our Irish history and world history really, because the British Empire didn’t exclude anyone, they shared their oppression around all over the place. (Brendan Corbett, 14 December 2017)
Truth

To date, representatives of SOUL have presented cases against the designation of Special Housing Area 62 to the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board, Auckland Council, the Waitangi Tribunal, the New Zealand Parliament’s Social Services Committee, the Minister of Building and Housing, the Minister for the Environment, the City Councillor for the Manukau Ward of Auckland Council, the Māori Land Court, Heritage New Zealand, the Environment Court of New Zealand, Auckland Council’s Heritage Advisory Panel, an Auckland Housing Accord Territorial Authority panel, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, as well as continuously interfacing with the general public (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). One could cynically presume that SOUL members merely speak on behalf of their particular self-interests. I claim here that the SOUL campaign constitutes a site where truth can emerge regardless of whether it is convenient to those in positions of power.

SOUL meets the criteria for truth contained within Adorno’s assertion in *Negative Dialectics* that ‘The need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth’ (Adorno, 1973, p. 18). More substantively, Badiou (2002) argues a truth is something new that enters a situation via an event which is not properly registered at the time when it emerges. According to Badiou (2002), subjects who remain committed to the consequences of such an event constitute a truth-process that has the potential to reconfigure a situation and manifest a new mode of being. Badiou (2002) writes,

> Essentially, a truth is the material course traced, within the situation, by the evental supplementation. It is thus an immanent break. ‘Immanent’ because a truth proceeds in the situation… ‘Break’ because what enables the truth-process — the
event – meant nothing according to the prevailing language and established knowledge of the situation. (Badiou, pp. 42-43)

From the perspective of what Badiou (2006) calls the state of the situation, SOUL appeared out of nowhere. Under the dominant count, SOUL was not an entity which had a formal place in the arrangements of bodies and language. And yet through consistent political work SOUL has been able to challenge the ‘prevailing language and established knowledge of the situation’ (Badiou, 2002, pp. 42-43). Using Badiou’s theoretical framework, the appearance of SOUL into the situation at Ihumātao constituted an event precisely because it was an unexpected, and in many ways, unwelcome intrusion into the situation. SOUL’s political work seeks to reconfigure prevailing discourses, leading to a new understanding of the situation, thus constituting what Badiou terms a truth-event.

SOUL continues to rupture discourses concerning Special Housing Area 62, while others, Fletcher Building in particular, try to stitch the situation back together, claiming that SOUL do not represent mana whenua (a source of their authority) and that the legitimate mana whenua authority according to the dominant account of the situation supports their residential housing development (Fletcher Building, 2018). This is despite the fact that Te Kawerau a Maki, the ‘legitimate mana whenua authority’ according to Fletcher Building, Auckland Council and the New Zealand Government says that, ‘Te Kawerau was not consulted by Central or Local Government regarding the placement of a SHA in this location, and has not supported moves to urbanise this landscape generally’ (Te Kawerau a Maki, 2015, p. 5). As it turns out, Te Kawerau a Maki, reluctantly agreed to be part of the Special Housing Area process in order to attempt to mitigate the negative impacts of the development (Te Kawerau a Maki, 2015).
any case, the SOUL campaign has contested the idea that Te Kawerau a Maki are the only ‘legitimate mana whenua authority’ in Ihumātao.

**Conclusion**

The SOUL campaign was founded by six cousins with whakapapa connections to Ihumātao concerned by the designation of a residential housing on Puketāpapa. Within a relatively short timeframe, the cause has grown into an eclectic network comprised of those who see value in preserving Puketāpapa as a heritage space for recreation and education. At a discursive level, there is a significant difference between what has been said about the Ihumātao Peninsula by Fletcher companies and academic researchers in the fields of history, geology and archaeology. These differences point to a divergence of interests in the potential of the land itself, as well as different assumptions about the nature of reality. It is a fundamentally different object for the respective interested parties, if object is in fact the right word here. These more philosophical questions will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Seven. For now, it suffices to say that a number of the people at the centre of the campaign voiced affective and ancestral relations to the whenua in Ihumātao. These relationships are integral to the ongoing commitment which members demonstrate to the SOUL campaign and are heavily informed by tikanga Māori.

It is unclear whether there is anything other than a commitment to the practical aim of the campaign that all the participants share in common. While SOUL makes coherent, logical and well evidenced arguments for the preservation of Puketāpapa, it is not a commitment to ideological orthodoxy that holds everything together, many of the participants express divergent opinions and ideas on any number of topics. There were no recruiting sergeants who convinced people to join SOUL using a thoroughly rational set of principles. The participants and supporters have been drawn in on their own multifarious currents, with their
own motivations and relative levels of commitment. On this note, I can think of no better way to close than through the eyes of Brendan Corbett,

This is the not first campaign that I’ve been involved in aye. Like I’m 60 now, so I’ve been pounding the streets for a while, but yeah, to have a mana whenua led campaign like this is totally unusual, the synthesis of a community group and a mana whenua group working together is quite a unique scenario, quite a unique thing. We’re not bureaucracy heavy, we don’t have any membership, it’s quite a lovely merging of Māori protocols and sort of quasi, semi-organised sort of structured group thing aye, you know, but yeah, no we kept it, we kept everything very fluid and it’s been a really, really successful sort of mix… most beautifully – we’ve managed to avoid conflict, there’s some sort of magic going on aye, we’ve got a simple, a very, very simple goal and it’s stopping the destruction of this beautiful piece of land. (Brendan Corbett, 14 December 2017)
Chapter 4

The Housing Crisis

In liberal Western democracies, political and economic actors seek to justify their actions in relation to the common good (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006). In Auckland, the designation of Special Housing Areas, including SHA62 in Ihumātao, have been explicitly justified through recourse to an urgent need to address a deficit in the supply of housing. The notion of a ‘Housing Crisis’, which in many ways is very real, forms a crucial element of these arguments. In New Zealand, the term ‘Housing Crisis’ encapsulates well documented social harms, particularly prevalent in Auckland, caused by a failure of the market to supply sufficient housing to meet demand; including unaffordable house prices, high rents, homelessness, poor living conditions, overcrowding and consequent negative health outcomes (Malva, 2016; 2017). The Housing Crisis has been successfully invoked by politicians to justify the circumvention of established legislative frameworks for building consents under the Resource Management Act 1991. It has been argued that it was necessary to implement legislation to fast track development consents in order to substantially increase the supply of residential housing to alleviate human suffering.

This chapter has five sections. The first contains a description of the economic and political context in which the Special Housing Areas were created, its purpose is to offer a statistical overview of the housing market. The second section considers the legislative changes that were implemented in an attempt to fast track building consents as a way to increase the supply of housing in Auckland. The third section looks at the question of affordability, both in the manner
in which it was approached through the Special Housing Area legislation as well as the extent to which SOUL activists accept the aforementioned discursive modes of justification. The fourth section explains how such discourses concerning a Housing Crisis function as justification not only for issuing building consents but also for the circumvention of established democratic protocols. The fifth and final section calls into question the often cited motivation to build affordable housing and instead suggests that the Oruarangi Road site is primarily attractive for the construction of housing due to rises in land values.

**High Demand, Low Supply**

The decision by Auckland Council to designate Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao sits within a broader economic situation in Auckland. Since the early 2010s, the New Zealand Government had been aware that there was, and at the time of writing still is, a substantial lack in the supply of affordable housing (Howden-Chapman, 2015). In March 2012, the New Zealand Productivity Commission (2012) published a *Housing Affordability Inquiry* that concluded there were significant impediments to the supply of market housing in New Zealand, particularly in Auckland. According the New Zealand Productivity Commission (2012), barriers to the construction of housing included restrictions on land supply, lack of sufficient scale in construction projects, as well as excessive risks for investors resulting from existing regulatory processes (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2012). One of the key recommendations put forward by the Commission were for Government to review ‘planning related legislation’ with a mind to streamline consents processes for the construction of housing (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2012, p. 121).

In December 2012, Auckland Council published the first stage of a *Housing Action Plan*. In the document, Mayor Len Brown acknowledged that there was already a deficit of between 20,000
and 30,000 homes in Auckland (Auckland Council, 2012). The *Housing Action Plan* explained that historically low interest rates (shown in Figure 9 and 10 below) had increased demand by enabling consumers and investors to access larger amounts of credit with which to purchase housing. At the same time, Auckland Council (2012) claimed that housing construction had ‘significantly decreased over the last ten years’ in major part because the supply of ‘ready to go’ land had been insufficient (p. 10).

![Official Cash Rate in New Zealand (%pa)](image_url)

**Figure 9: Wholesale Interest Rates in New Zealand (1999-2016)**
(Data from Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a)

The Official Cash Rate shown in Figure 9, is an interest rate determined by the Reserve Bank of New Zealand that has an influence on all other interest rates. Technically speaking, it is the rate at which the central bank charges interest on overnight loans to commercial banks, in effect, it is the wholesale price of borrowing or lending money in New Zealand (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018b). The rate of interest which consumers are charged on floating mortgages are
shown in Figure 10 below, lower interest rates mean that home buyers can afford to take on greater amounts of debt, contributing to the upward pressure on house prices.

![New Residential Mortgage Interest Rates – Floating (average % end of month) (2004-2017)](chart)

Figure 10: New Residential Mortgage Interest Rates (2004-2017)
(Data from Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a)

In 2013, a *Briefing to the Incoming Minister of Housing* noted that the supply of housing was not keeping pace with demand, especially in Auckland and Christchurch, leading to house price inflation, potential economic instability, as well as negative health and education outcomes resulting from substandard and expensive housing (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2013). Since 2013, the pressure on demand from low interest rates, has been intensified by high net migration to New Zealand (see Figure 11 below) a trend which increases the demand for housing at all levels in the market.
In the four years prior to April 2018, the average value of a house in New Zealand increased by 44.9% in Auckland, over the same period, prices rose 49% (QV, 2018). The recent inflation in the price of housing is part of a longer trajectory demonstrated in Figure 12 below.
The high demand for housing can be explained as a result of greater purchasing power caused by historically low interest rates, and significant net migration to New Zealand. Taken along with an inability to match demand with supply, this situation is creating unhealthy living conditions and financial strain for many people (Howden-Chapman, 2015).

Figure 12: Average Sale Price of Housing in Auckland (1954-2017)
(Data from Barfoot and Thompson, 2017)
At the same time, financial institutions with the ability to sell mortgages are making record profits as shown in Figure 13 below.

![Graph showing Bank profits in New Zealand after tax (1991-2018) ($m)](image)

**Figure 13:** Quarterly Profits of New Zealand Banks (1991-2016)
(Data from Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a)

As of April 2018, housing related loans comprised 46% of the assets on the books of banks in New Zealand (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a). The monetary amount of residential mortgages held by banks operating in New Zealand are shown in Figure 14 on page 78.
The interest payments on these loans contribute to the increasing profitability of the banking sector in New Zealand shown in Figure 13 (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a). The high profitability of the banking sector is part of a broader trend in which finance, insurance and real estate have become the dominant sectors of the New Zealand economy (Kelsey, 2015). Kelsey (2015) refers to this economic formation as the FIRE economy, in line with the financialisation of Western economies in general, led by the United States (Krippner, 2005).
As shown in Figure 15, the interest on housing loans forms roughly half of the interest income for banks operating in New Zealand. The interest on housing loans received by banks operating in New Zealand increased by more than 15% between September 2013 and March 2018 (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a). Over the same period, the amount of interest income on all other asset classes increased by less than 0.01% (Reserve Bank of New Zealand, 2018a). The interest on housing loans comprised virtually all of the increase in total interest income of banks operating in New Zealand from September 2013 to March 2018.

**Auckland Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas**

Two pieces of legislation were introduced in the second half of 2013 in an attempt to address the Housing Crisis. On the 13th September 2013, the Governor General of New Zealand signed the royal assent for the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 (HASHAA)* on behalf of the Crown. The legislation had been passed through the New Zealand Parliament under urgency in response to a crisis in the supply of affordable housing. On the 3rd October...
2013, the *Auckland Housing Accord 2012* was signed by Len Brown, Mayor of Auckland, and Nick Smith, Minister of Housing. The Auckland Housing Accord is an agreement between Auckland Council and the New Zealand Government concerning the development of housing in Auckland.

The express goal of the *Auckland Housing Accord 2012* is the ‘development of as much additional housing as is possible, as quickly as possible, to alleviate pressures in the housing market’ (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2012). The *Auckland Housing Accord 2012* works in concert with the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 (HASHAA)* legislation and is ‘intended to result in increased housing supply and improved housing affordability in Auckland in the interim period until the Auckland Unitary Plan becomes operative’ (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2012). The *Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013* states that its purpose is to ‘enhance housing affordability by facilitating an increase in land and housing supply in certain regions or districts… identified as having housing supply and affordability issues’ (New Zealand Legislation, 2018, p. 6). In line with this aim, the *Auckland Housing Accord 2012* granted Auckland Council ‘new flexible powers’ to approve residential developments that were consistent with the Draft Auckland Unitary Plan. Notably, section 17 of the *Auckland Housing Accord 2012* stipulates that ‘while the Housing Accord is in place, the Government commits to not use any proposed or existing powers under the RMA (Resource Management Act 1991) to override the Council’s planning and consenting processes in respect of housing’ (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2012). The circumvention of existing protections, including rights of notification and rights of appeal contained in the *Resource Management Act 1991* were instrumental in the designation of Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao.
Previously under section 2AB of the *Resource Management Act 1991* a ‘clear and concise’ public notice was required to be circulated in the ‘entire area likely to be affected by the matter’. Conversely section 29 subsection 1 of the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Area Act 2013* (HASHAA) states, ‘an authorised agency must not notify, or hold a hearing in relation to, an application for a resource consent’, however subsection 3 does stipulate that the authorised agency can decide to notify ‘owners of the land adjacent to the land subject to the application’.

Similarly, under the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Area Act 2013* the ability to make a submission on a resource consent application is reserved for adjacent owners. One of the lawyers working with the SOUL campaign, Cameron Hockly, informed me that at the time the HASHAA was implemented there was not even any case law that clarified how ‘adjacent owners’ ought to be interpreted (Cameron Hockly, personal communication, May 8, 2018).

Figure 16: Roger Fowler with Pania Newton wearing a Special Housing Area Act 2013 t-shirt
Some members of SOUL were able to lodge a submission to the application by successfully demonstrating that they were ‘adjacent owners’ to Special Housing Area 62. Cameron Hockly also explained that whereas under the Resource Management Act 1991, significant issues pertaining to environmental impact, heritage values and Treaty rights would be heard in a court of law at the same time, under the HASHAA an ‘accord territorial authority panel’ only considered submissions relevant within the framework of HASHAA (Cameron Hockly, personal communication, 8 May, 2018). Furthermore, the panel would not permit those making submissions to ask Fletchers questions directly, all communication with Fletchers in this context had to be mediated through the panel.

Cameron Hockly explained that because the panel would only deal with issues pertaining to the HASHAA, eliminated the ability to discuss matters arising from the archaeological significance of the land, its proximity to the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve, as well as its cultural and historical significance. Whereas Heritage New Zealand could have participated in a court appeal process under the RMA, Fletchers were required to seek Heritage New Zealand approval after the panel hearing. In contrast to the promise of a streamlined fast-track to resource consent approval, the process to date has been considerably more fragmented and drawn out than it likely would have been under the RMA. The panel also refused to hear evidence relating to the Environment Court hearing in 2012 that rezoned the land for urban development (Cameron Hockly, personal communication, 8 May 2018).

Additional changes were made to the status of Te Tiriti o Waitangi under the HASHAA legislation. Given that the standing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the Resource Management Act 1991 was already relatively weak, with section 8 of the Resource Management Act 1991 simply stating,
In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and power under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

The HASHAA legislation places even less emphasis on Te Tiriti; only requiring that persons sitting on an accord territorial authority panel ‘collectively, have… appropriate knowledge and experience relating to the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) and tikanga Māori (Māori customary values and practices)’. It says nothing about how this knowledge ought to be implemented and makes no explicit demands that the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi be adhered to whatsoever. The diminished standing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi under the HASHAA is consistent with the removal of Cultural Assessment Impacts for Māori from the Auckland Unitary Plan (Forbes, 2016; Cole, 2017).

**Affordability**

Both the Auckland Unitary Plan and the *Housing Accord and Special Housing Area Act 2013* were presented to the public by the New Zealand Government as a solution to a crisis in affordability of housing in the city. On the 10th of September 2013, Housing Minister Nick Smith’s office dispatched a press release commending the Auckland Council for their ‘unanimous support’ for the Auckland Housing Accord to ‘urgently increase the supply and affordability of housing in Auckland’ (Eboss, 2013). The Housing Minister argued that the passing of the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas was ‘essential if we are to make progress on increasing housing supply and to cool the overheated Auckland housing market’ (Eboss, 2013). Nick Smith claimed that the Auckland Housing Accord would help to ‘get some
momentum around building the least contentious 39,000 of the 400,000 homes identified in the
draft Unitary Plan that Auckland needs to keep up with population growth over the next 30
years’ (Eboss, 2013). The Minister’s optimistic views would prove to be misplaced (Niall,
2017).

On the issue of affordability, the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013* allowed
for Auckland Council to prescribe a ‘percentage of dwellings that must be affordable dwellings’
by Order in Council. The required dwelling sale price in order to meet Special Housing Area
relative affordability criteria as of 30 June 2017 was $618,750, which amounts to 75% or less
of the Auckland median house price (MBIE, 2017). I spoke to Auckland Councillor Cathy
Casey about the construction of affordable housing through the Special Housing Areas, asking,
‘Do you think the Special Housing Areas are helping to reduce the price of housing?’ to which
she responded,

No, that’s very clear, they haven’t been putting up cheap housing. Some of them
have produced their retained affordable housing because they had to under the
legislation but now that the Unitary Plan has removed that, which was another
crappy vote by this Council to remove the retained affordable housing, I cannot
believe we lost that vote, I cannot believe it, so it’s been removed, so they don’t
have to do it anymore. They don’t want to build poor housing. (Cathy Casey, 3
November 2017)

The Order in Council which declared the Oruarangi Road Special Housing Area requires either
10% of the housing to be sold at 75% of the Auckland region median house price or 5% of the
housing to be sold at a price that allows monthly mortgage payments for a household with the Auckland median household income to not exceed 30% of gross monthly income (New Zealand Legislation, 2018). At the time of writing Fletcher Building maintain that they are committed to providing 10% (48 homes) of the housing at affordable prices as per the ‘Affordable Housing Legislation’ (Fletcher Building, 2018). In her comment above Councillor Cathy Casey refers to the decision made by Auckland Council on the 11th August 2016 to remove all provisions for affordable housing from the Auckland Unitary Plan (Craig, 2016). It is indicative of the barrier which affordability criteria present to the interests of private developers that this was removed from the Plan.

Outside of Council there is also some scepticism as to whether the Special Housing Areas are helping to increase housing affordability. I asked SOUL member David Fraser and lifelong Manurewa resident if he thought the Special Housing Areas would help to reduce the price of housing or the price of rent in his area. He replied,

I very much doubt it, I mean how many of them have been built? I’m not sure. I mean, assuming some of them have been built, have you noticed the prices go down? [Laughs] I mean they’ve sort of stalled at the moment. Maybe there’s a cap on how much people are actually willing to pay. Even the rich people that can afford it, and people who are stretching as far as they can just to get one of those ah… what are they called? Interest only mortgages, where you’re only ever paying of the interest which seems sort of pointless, you might as well just be renting [Laughs]. (David Fraser, 28 November 2017)
I asked David for his thoughts on the arguments which have been put forward by Fletchers and the Auckland Council claiming that Special Housing Area 62 was necessary to address the housing shortage in Auckland. He replied,

I think it’s a pretty thin argument. Because as much as you can say we’ll build these houses because we need houses, you don’t have to do that over sites that have a lot of importance. There’s a lot of places you can build which don’t have so much history and importance to people. Both in terms of landscape features and in terms of the maunga and culturally and everything else. It seems strange for what in terms of time is a relatively small thing, the housing crisis, as severe as it seems right now, to just erase things that should mean so much to people seems bizarre. Especially when you look at all the housing – the Special Housing Areas – there are very few that are contested as fiercely as this one. It’s just one of them and they’ve got a ton more. But they don’t like to really back out of things once they’ve committed to them. (David Fraser, 28 November 2017)

Similarly, after being asked what she thought about the argument that SHAs were required to address the housing shortage in Auckland, Frances Hancock said,

I think that there will always be particular sites, particular places with particular histories, particular relationships and particular archaeological or cultural features, or whatever. There will always be those particular places that are and should be important to the nation as well as to those who have known them longest, mana whenua. I think we’ve got a huge problem with housing in our city fuelled by various factors. The proposed Fletcher housing development was never going to
serve the local people, for one thing, and in any case I think that some land ought not to be built on. I think we have an ethical responsibility to educate ourselves about the landscapes that we seek to develop for particular purposes. There will be a great many places we can build houses on, we’ve got large areas of land actually, and we could make other decisions that would build up other parts of this country. Other decisions could be made that would respond to the complexity of problems we’re facing in this city around housing and housing affordability, and transport and infrastructure and so on. I certainly don’t think that we should sacrifice an area of such significance to the nation and to mana whenua for a Special Housing Area. Surely, we can be more imaginative and ethical. That is what I think. (Frances Hancock, 5 December 2017)

While David Fraser and Frances Hancock questioned whether the loss of archaeologically and culturally significant land was justified by the need to address a housing crisis, another member of the SOUL campaign, Roger Gummer, expressed concern over land speculation and a potential lack of government competence. He told me,

I don’t think the SHAs have shown to be particularly effective. It’s market driven and they’re quite happy to sit on the increasing values for a year or two. Maybe under a different government they might work a little bit better. Yes we need housing but we don’t actually need that much housing, we need about 40,000 homes or something to house everyone in Auckland who’s not in a house at the moment. (Roger Gummer, 13 October 2017)
In response to being asked what she thought about the argument that Special Housing Areas were needed to address the housing shortage in Auckland, Pania Newton rejected the premise of the argument while reaffirming the importance of retaining public open spaces. She said,

I don’t believe that. I recently saw an article which said there’s not even affordable homes being offered through the special housing area scheme. It’s too slow, there’s only been like 3100 homes built and they promised 39000... What about green space? No I don’t think it’s valid. Why can’t we come up with better ways to address the housing crisis rather than taking up all the green space that we have left in Auckland? Especially our public spaces, cultural sites, archaeological sites, we’re sacrificing this piece of land which is described as the ‘paddock next to Stonehenge’ for houses. They’re not understanding once this land is gone, it’s gone forever, once it’s destroyed by housing it’s gone, we destroy the history that is on it and under it as well and that’s going to affect a lot of people. I just think that there’s better ways to address the housing crisis than taking up all the green space that we have left, the few green spaces that we have left in Auckland. We’re becoming this urban sprawl. I think that they have short term fixes. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)

Pania was not convinced that Special Housing Area 62 would help to reduce the price of housing or the price of rent in Auckland. On this topic she explained, ‘no one is going to be able to afford here, the whānau is not going to be able to afford it’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017). Pania’s comments are consistent with views put forward by planners in local government. On the 11th of October 2017, Auckland Councillor Chris Darby, chair of the Auckland Council planning committee, announced that the Auckland Housing Accord was a ‘dismal failure’ in terms of addressing housing affordability (RadioNZ, 2017). At the time he
was speaking, the Accord which had enabled 154 Special Housing Areas had only produced 98 ‘free market affordable homes’ according to the Government's own criteria and only 3,157 homes had been constructed in total at the end of June 2017 (Niall, 2017).

Auckland City Councillor Cathy Casey expressed concern with the decision making processes concerning the designation of Special Housing Areas as a whole which under the Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 bypassed public notification requirements and opportunities for appeal under the Resource Management Act 1991. Casey said,

I think the process was not right, I think it cut the public out of the equation, and whenever you do that you make mistakes, you get mistakes, it’s almost impossible to put them right. So the democracy, as far as I’m concerned democracy is up there at number one, it’s messy and it takes a long time and it’s costly but it’s the only way you’re ever going to get proper things done in Auckland is if you take the people with you, not insert things on top of them. (Cathy Casey, 3 November 2017)

The circumvention of existing democratic protocols under the Resource Management Act 1991 cuts against the grain of the values of a liberal democracy, and was justified explicitly by a state of urgency.

**Justification**

The Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 aimed to fast track housing consent processes in order to address the deficit in supply of housing and therefore to alleviate the financial and social harm experienced by people in the housing market. Boltanski & Thévenot
(2006) claim that in the ‘market polity’ a general system of assumptions is in operation; crystallised in Adam Smith’s book *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Specifically, that in a society of competitive individuals, the market bond allows each individual to pursue their own self-interest while serving and maintaining the common good. In Smith’s book, the argument in favour of a market society functions by appealing to a higher common principle, and not merely to the existence of competing interests. Similarly, in the case of Special Housing Area 62, and the designation of the Special Housing Areas in general we can see this type of discursive justification in action.

Auckland Council, the New Zealand Government and Fletcher companies have all sought to justify their actions based on the assumption of a competitive market society and in relation to the common good. The ‘Housing Crisis’ exists as an assemblage of beings which constitute part of these discourses, and advancing the claim of increasing the supply of housing functions as justification for their actions. Thus Fletcher companies have sought to discredit SOUL’s opposition to Special Housing Area 62 not with the direct assertion of their right to pursue their interests, but rather mediated via a claim to be acting in service of the common good. Fletchers argued (to the Overseas Investment Office in particular) that out of all the companies that could develop the land, they will be the most sensitive to the concerns of the local people. Or in other words, in the competitive market polity, the common good (as a higher shared principle) will be best served by Fletcher Building pursuing the self-interest of their shareholders rather than some other company.

It is not clear that key thinkers within SOUL share the assumptions of Adam Smith’s market polity. When I asked Pania Newton if she thought the profit motive was a positive force in society, she replied ‘we live in a capitalist society, it’s negative, I hate it’ (Pania Newton, 19
October 2017). When I asked ‘Why would organisations build housing if they couldn’t make a profit?’, Pania replied, ‘To house people, yeah. I don’t understand that question. Fletchers have just monopolised the housing industry. I don’t know what to say to that question.’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017). From these responses, it seems to my mind that it is not at all clear that Pania is operating under the assumptions of the market polity. Nevertheless, SOUL’s political campaign has also appealed to the common good, in terms of protecting cultural values, green spaces, as well as archaeological and historical sites in the public interest. Boltanski & Thévenot’s theory of non-violent discursive conflict is applicable to the ongoing exchange between SOUL and those pursuing the development of Special Housing Area 62, as it has produced competing claims to a higher common principle, specifically, what would be in the best interests of the general public.

**Land Values**

On the 27th August 2015, SOUL representatives pitched the idea of a land swap during a presentation to the Auckland Council Governing Body, a suggestion which was promptly rejected (SOUL Campaign Working Group, 2018). The same proposal was later dismissed by Fletcher’s chief executive Mark Adamson (Meadows, November 17, 2015). To understand why the Oruarangi Road site is potentially more valuable to Fletcher Building than other sites of equivalent size, it is necessary to grasp that the economics of residential housing are fundamentally wedded to the value of land. In the case of housing construction, ‘it is ground-rent and not the houses themselves that forms the real basic object of speculative building’ (Marx, 1981/1894, p. 909). An advantageously positioned construction site enables investors to generate profit from working capital in the form of ground-rent. Marx noticed in the mid 1800s that in a capitalist economy, where capital is concentrated both with individuals and joint-stock companies, and credit is also available, it is common that a capitalist builder makes a
‘business out of building rows of houses and whole districts of towns for the market’ (Marx, 1978/1885, p. 311). He writes,

Today the contractor no longer works directly for a client, but rather for the market; just like any other industrialist, he has to have finished goods for sale. Whereas previously a contractor might have built three or four houses at a time on speculation, he now has to buy an extensive piece of land... erect on it 100 or 200 houses (1978/1885, p. 311)

Or in the case of Special Housing Area 62; 480 houses. This type of large scale capitalist housing construction places considerable importance on the piece of land in question if it is to be profitable. Marx explains,

It is impossible nowadays for any contractor to get along without speculative building, and on a large scale at that. The profit on the actual construction is extremely slight; the main source of profit comes from raising the ground rent, and from the clever selection and exploitation of the building land. (1978/1885, p. 312)

The concept of ground rent refers to the ability of land owners to collect payment from those using their land (Marx, 1981/1894). In the case of tenant farmers, ground rent represents a deduction from the surplus-value created by producers on the land. In the case of rental housing, ground rent appears as a portion of the house rent which the tenants pay to the landlord (Marx, 1981/1894). Unlike other commodities, land is not a product of human labour (Polanyi, 2001). As such its price cannot be explained in terms of the amount of labour required for its production. The price of land is rather the expression of capitalised ground rent. When a
consumer or investor purchases housing, capitalised ground rent forms part of the sale price of the property that includes both land and buildings. The price of housing is equivalent to the value embedded in the buildings in addition to the capitalised ground rent.

The price of land is based on the capitalised ground rent of the land under its current use (Marx, 1981/1894). However, most often for reasons of location, it is possible to increase ground rent by changing the use to which land is put, such as turning rural land previously used for agriculture into urban land for residential housing. Such is the situation with the Wallace Block in Ihumātao, which it is currently leased to a farmer for grazing cattle but has planning permission for residential housing. The gap between current ground rent and the ground rent which could be captured under another use for the land gives rise to the concept of potential ground rent (N. Smith, 1979). Potential ground rent refers to the revenue which could be collected by the landowner under the land’s ‘highest and best use’ (N. Smith, 1979). Ground rent in and of itself is entirely unproductive, it simply represents a deduction from the surplus value generated in productive sectors of the economy. This fact led Adam Smith to the conclusion that profits associated with land constitute a proper site of taxation as they are generated by the productivity of society in general and owe their existence to the stability of the state (A. Smith, 2012).

As new construction projects occur in a district, the area becomes more attractive to other investors due to the rising land values. A listing in *New Commercial* for another piece of land for sale in the vicinity of the Wallace Block advertised to potential buyers that,

A 500 home residential subdivision is also underway across the road [SHA62], with construction due to commence in October. These major projects will change the
face of this area within a very short time frame and we expect land values to increase as a result. (Taylor, 2015)

Average land values in Mangere Bridge are shown in Figure 17 below. There has been a considerable increase in the price of land in the area since Fletcher Residential Limited entered into a conditional purchase of the Wallace Block in 2014.

![Figure 17: Mean Land Values in Mangere Bridge (2005-2015)](image)
(Data from Property IQ)

In 2011, prior to being zoned for residential housing the Wallace Block was valued at $2.4 million (QV, 2017). In 2017 having receiving planning permission for residential housing and in the ownership of Fletcher Residential Limited, the same piece of land with no improvements was valued at $35 million (QV, 2017).
Conclusion

The inability for the supply of housing to keep pace with high demand produced as a result of low interest rates and positive net migration to New Zealand has created a housing crisis across the country. In Auckland, where the symptoms of the crisis are most acute, authorities have responded with legislation targeted at increasing the rate of housing construction. The *Housing Accord and Special Housing Area Act 2013* was a key component of central government’s approach to addressing the inevitable social harm manifesting in the form of unaffordability and poor living conditions. In the process this legislation has undermined established democratic protocols and commitments to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

In practice the housing crisis has functioned as a discursive justification for the designation of building consents on sites such as Special Housing Area 62. As a case in point, Special Housing Area 62 reveals that the promise of fast tracking consents to result in greater supply of affordable housing has largely proved to be illusory, while the circumvention of rights of notification and appeal, as well as the ability to have concerns heard in a court of law have resulted in an extension of the time frame necessary to resolve issues attending to the designation of building consents. At the same time, Special Housing Areas are potentially highly profitable for private developers such as Fletcher Building insofar as land values stand to be increased as a result of changing land use and greater investment in the surrounding area. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the resistance of Fletcher Building to abandon their project in Ihumātao, can be largely understood as a refusal to surrender a financial stake in what promises to be a lucrative venture.
Chapter 5

Fletchers

Under New Zealand law, the Wallace Block in Ihumātao is currently owned by Fletcher Residential Limited; a subsidiary of Fletcher Building Limited. Fletchers are a conglomerate of companies, which, taken as a whole, typify the contemporary transnational corporation. As New Zealand historian and National Party List MP Paul Goldsmith explains, ‘for a century there hasn’t been a moment when Fletcher’s companies didn’t strive to become bigger. At its best, Fletchers epitomised the genius of capitalism, as determined individuals endeavouring to achieve greater scale and scope for their businesses’ (2009, p. 11). Or as SOUL activist and former Fletcher employee Nikki Elder puts it, ‘it’s all about money… money drives them, and power. They just want to own everything’ (Nikki Elder, 11 December 2017).

Fletchers emerged as a family enterprise in the early 1910s, and has an ongoing history of working intimately with local and central government in New Zealand. However, by the 1990s, Fletchers had become a global institution. Today, the question of whether Fletchers demonstrates a so-called ‘home bias’ for New Zealand is debatable, and the apparent public benefits of such an orientation are certainly difficult to see in the case of Special Housing Area 62. At the time of writing, Fletcher Building Limited, the largest construction company in New Zealand, are reporting substantial losses as a result of poor management and underquoting for contracts (Fletcher Building, 2017). While this situation has put the brakes on some of their
projects, Fletchers continue to pursue residential builds such as Special Housing Area 62 which have the potential to yield profitable returns (Fletcher Building, 2017).

This chapter evaluates the history of Fletchers, drawing on the work of political economists. The first section offers a theoretical description of capital using the work of Adam Smith and Karl Marx. The second section selects notable moments in the early years of the business which are indicative of underlying tendencies in the organisation. The third section details some of Fletchers’ involvement in state housing projects in New Zealand from 1935 onwards, as well as highlighting its reported ability to lobby government effectively. The fourth section is concerned with the transformation of Fletchers from a national institution to a global market entity. The fifth and final section is focused on some of the political controversies that Fletcher companies have experienced in recent history.

**Capital**

‘Fletchers’ names a set of capitalist organisations unified under a common brand and history. But what exactly is meant today by the signifier ‘capitalist’? A politically charged term that often remains loosely defined if not an entirely empty epithet. In pursuing clarification of this concept I have returned to two of the classical political economists of Western civilisation: Adam Smith and Karl Marx. Given that ‘capitalist’ is a descriptive term for an individual or organisation that manages capital, I begin with an inquiry into the nature of capital.

Adam Smith (2012/1776) defined capital simply as the part of a ‘man’s stock’ which he expects to afford him a revenue in contrast to the part that is used up in ‘immediate consumption’ (p. 270). Smith (2012/1776) argues that there are two ways in which one can obtain a profit from one’s capital; through the ‘raising, manufacturing, or purchasing’ of goods for resale, and by
employing it in the ‘improvement of land, in the purchase of useful machines and instruments of trade’ (pp. 270-271). The first process Smith called ‘circulating capitals’ and the second ‘fixed capitals’, due to the necessity of goods changing hands in order to reap of profit in the former and the ability to generate revenue without such trade in the latter (p. 271). In broad agreement with Smith (2012/1776) that capital is wealth used to attract revenue (although challenging the definitions of circulating and fixed capital) Marx (1976/1867) explained the simple formula of the process of capital accumulation as,

\[ M - M' \]

Where \( M = \) money capital and \( M' = \) original money capital plus additional money capital. Marx (1976/1867;1978/1885) argues that capital is money thrown into circulation in order to gain more money. In Marx’s estimation the circulation of capital is the process by which capital appears to valorise itself. Marx demonstrates that a common way in which capital increases in value is through purchasing commodities and then reselling them, represented by the formula,

\[ M - C - M' \]

Where \( M = \) money capital, \( C = \) commodity capital and \( M' = \) original money capital plus additional money capital. In the case of retail or finance capital this process can occur in the absence of a productive process, money is exchanged for commodities, which are then resold at a profit. Industrial capital on the other hand, necessarily includes a productive process, formalised by Marx in the expanded formula,

\[ M - C \overset{<_{\text{MP}}}{P} ... C' - M' \]
Marx explained that in this form of capital circulation, the owner of money capital (M) purchases commodities (C) comprising labour-power (L) and a means of production (MP), these elements are combined in a production process (P) which generates commodities of higher value (C’) than those originally obtained by the owner/s of money capital due to the fact that they embody; the value of raw materials, the value transferred from the wear and tear of the machinery used to produce them (or fixed capital by Marx’s definition), as well as additional value contributed by the variable element in the equation: labour-power. In Marx’s theoretical schema, labour-power is the only commodity in this process which has the ability to produce more value than it requires for its reproduction. At the end of a productive cycle, commodities are sold in a market realising the additional value generated in the process, resulting in more money (M’) finding its way into the hands of the original investors.

Firms oriented towards the valorisation of capital exhibit distinct qualities. In their actions, Fletchers display a general distain for limits to the expansion of their productive capacities. Marx argued that this is a general feature of capitalist enterprises, noting in his Grundrisse, that capital cannot stand limitation; for capital, he wrote, ‘every limit appears as a barrier to be overcome’ (p. 408). Through reading the histories of Fletchers businesses, the drive to overcome external barriers to capital accumulation are evident. From public dishonesty, to law breaking for commercial gain, as well as consistently seeking to monopolise the construction industry in New Zealand, Fletchers have demonstrated many of the hallmarks one would expect from an organisation primarily motivated by the pursuit of profit and expansion (Goldsmith, 2009; Shaw, 2009; Smith, 2009, 2014).
Humble beginnings and rapid growth

From its inception Fletchers has made prudent use of political connections, working closely with central and local government to expand its enterprises. Born out of the aspirations of two young builders, James Fletcher and Albert Morris, the history of the Fletcher conglomerate can be said to begin when they secured their first contract on the 1st June 1909 to construct a villa in Broad Bay, in Otago (Goldsmith, 2009; Smith 2009). Albert Morris seemed to lack the determined ambition of his business partner, leaving the nascent enterprise, while James Fletcher’s brother Bill Fletcher joined in 1911 (Goldsmith, 2009). The first significant opportunity for expanding the business came later the same year when James Fletcher met his future wife Charlotte Cameron, from a wealthy and politically connected Dunedin family (Goldsmith, 2009; Smith 2009). The Camerons helped Fletcher and Morris to obtain their first large construction project in April 1912; to undertake extensions at Knox College Council and its chapel in Otago. Charlotte Cameron’s uncle, Andrew Cameron, held the position of chairman of the Knox College Council and her father James Muir Cameron, advanced the guarantee of £3,000 (Goldsmith, 2009). These developments gave Fletcher and Morris both sufficient capital and credibility to secure the contract for the £9,120 project (Goldsmith, 2009).

The early history of the business was characterised by intermittent episodes of incompetence, dishonesty, and law breaking, or what Goldsmith (2009) refers to as the ‘cowboy years’ (p. 24). For example, in 1914, Fletchers completed the construction of the municipal swimming baths for the Dunedin City Council (Goldsmith, 2009). An old concrete mixer was brought down from Wellington for the job and the concrete used on the pools had been finished rough instead of smooth, leading to tears in the waterproof sheeting which caused the pool to leak. Upon realising this, Fletchers used a six inch pipe to keep the pool full during the opening ceremony, while securing two new contracts (Goldsmith, 2009). It was announced to the public that the
pools would be closed for a few days for ‘adjustments’, however it was a full three months before the leaking was fixed (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 22).

Over the three years from 1914 onwards, Fletchers secured a number of contracts in Dunedin including with publisher and bookseller Whitcombes & Tombs (Goldsmith, 2009). Having been denied permission to blast out solid rock to make way for the foundations, Fletchers’ foreman Bill Smith, decided to flaunt government regulations, organising for an old blaster to come onto the site in the middle of the night to ‘fire three holes’, in the process causing considerate damage in the shop next door (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 23). After five years of rapid expansion, James and Bill Fletcher had established Fletcher Bros amongst New Zealand’s dominant building firms, with large projects in Dunedin, Invercargill, Auckland and Wellington (Goldsmith, 2009). It wasn’t long before Fletchers’ was accused of ‘attempting to monopolise Dunedin’s building industry’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 23).

**State Housing**

In the 1930s, state housing formed the major component of Fletcher’s business (J. Smith, 2009). After the New Zealand Labour Party won the general election in November 1935, James Fletcher managed to secure contracts for the new government’s plans for large scale state housing construction. James Fletcher met with Finance Minister Walter Nash and Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage in London on the 3rd June 1937 to broker a deal to sell the company to the state (Goldsmith, 2009). James Fletcher seemed to have been convinced of some of the merits of centralised planning, and ‘wanted to be appointed to head a new department of building which controlled all the work of rail, the post office, defence, housing and even education and local government’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 86) However much like contemporary State Owned Enterprises, he envisioned that bringing Fletchers under the arm of
the state would mean that it continued to function as if it were still a private business, including generating ‘profits sufficient to cover all overhead charges’, a ‘return on capital invested in the business’ and paying income taxes (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 86). The Labour government rejected this idea on the grounds that it was in contradiction to the socialist principles influencing the direction of their government (Goldsmith, 2009).

It soon became clear that the active role which the Labour government were taking in regard to housing construction undermined Fletchers ‘competitive advantage’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 87). Despite securing a large portion of the contracts for building the new state houses, John Fletcher later ‘concluded that they were losing £200-300 per house’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 87). Legislated wage increases and shortages of materials, started to impact on the profitability of Fletcher’s housing construction, to the point that towards the end of 1937, James Fletcher told the Labour Cabinet that the company wanted to get out of state housing as quickly as possible (Goldsmith, 2009). The government had to advance an overdraft of £200,000 to a newly established Fletchers’ subsidiary called Residential Construction Company, which provided the capital for Fletchers to ‘restore themselves to profitability’ over the next few years (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 88). After having been bailed out by a socialist government, Fletchers began searching for new avenues for making money in housing.

In January 1939, James Fletcher was invited to participate in a committee to address the supply of housing in New Zealand (Goldsmith, 2009). Fletcher complained that his company could not access finance at interest rates low enough to increase the production of housing (Goldsmith, 2009). Once again Fletcher proposed that the ‘state buy the housing branch of his company which would then be administered by Fletcher Construction on behalf of the state for five years on the basis of a set net profit per house’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 90). Fletcher argued that this
would mean that the rate of housing construction could increase, as the state was able to access finance at lower interest, and Fletchers would be able to move out of housing (Goldsmith, 2009).

Two union representatives on the committee, R. Ross and Bill McAra rejected Fletchers’ proposals. McAra in particular objected to Fletcher’s claim to five years of risk free profits. Instead they argued for a complete takeover of Fletcher’s housing division. The committee reached a compromise by recommending a ‘State Housing Corporation buy-out of Fletcher Construction’s housing division’ (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 90). The proposals of the two union representatives were defeated, with Cabinet coming out in favour of a government guarantee for Fletchers on the 15th March 1939 (Goldsmith, 2009). Goldsmith (2009) explains that,

Having toyed with the idea of selling the firm, or part of it, to the government, James Fletcher had elected to carry it on as a private concern. He hadn’t yet achieved his grand plan of a state building organisation that would smooth demand and free his company from the perils of business cycles and unrestricted competition, nor had he gained a monopoly on state houses, but he’d responded rapidly to the changed political and business environment and, to a considerable degree, he had shaped it too. He had bound his fate and that of his company to the government that provided most of Fletchers’ work and granted its licenses, just as, with housing, to succeed. This new level of co-operation between business and government led to much activity and a return to strong profitability in most areas of Fletcher’s business (Goldsmith, 2009, pp.102-103).
The close relationship between Fletchers and the New Zealand government stretches back to the earliest phase of growth in Dunedin in the 1910s. As one might imagine this has meant that lobbying has been a crucial part of the Fletcher business strategy. Reflecting on the ability for James Fletcher to find business opportunities working with central government Goldsmith (2009) writes,

James Fletcher, was one of the earliest and most successful ‘government entrepreneurs’ who saw the potential to work with an activist government on state housing in the 1930s; in the 1960s and 1970s Fletchers were equally quick to reshape their business to exploit the unfolding array of export incentives; in the 1980s, Fletcher Challenge pounced on opportunities offered by the privatisation of Government assets. (Goldsmith, 2009, p. 12)

Even during wartime, James Fletcher was actively working with Government to find opportunities to make profits. The onset of World War Two bolstered the idea that New Zealand should manufacture more goods and rely less on imports in light of the disruption to shipping and trade caused by war. Goldsmith (2009) writes,

An instinctive nationalist, Fletcher responded quickly. In this new world businessmen needed to be lobbyists more than ever, since many decisions previously made by the market were now in the hands of ministers… Fletcher was dab hand at lobbying and could expect to flourish in this new environment (pp. 95-96).
Going global

Adam Smith commented in the Wealth of Nations that ‘every individual endeavours to employ his capital as near home as he can’ (2012/1776, p. 348). Smith claimed that ‘upon equal or nearly equal profits, every wholesale merchant naturally prefers the home trade to the foreign trade of consumption’, where ‘capital is never so long out of his sight’ and ‘he can know better the character and situation of the persons whom he trusts’ (2012/1776, p. 348). Moreover, Smith argued that if an investor should encounter difficulties it is preferable to know ‘better the laws of the country’ such as is the case when doing business in one’s own nation where capital is ‘placed under his own immediate view and command’ (2012/1776, p. 348). Adam Smith was convinced that such is the ‘uneasiness’ which a merchant ‘feels at being separated so far from his capital’ that they prefer to bring it back under their own ‘view and command’ even if this incurs additional costs (2012/1776, p. 348). In this context he wrote, ‘home is in this manner the centre… round which the capitals of the inhabitants of every country are continually circulating, and towards which they are always tending’ (2012/1776, p. 349). According to Smith (2012/1776), by preferring the domestic economy to international trade, a capitalist is ‘led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention’ (p. 349). In this way, Smith (2012/1776) makes the claim that investors inadvertently promote the interests of the society in which they live.

These arguments presented by Smith seem rather antiquated and inaccurate in the face of the contemporary systems of global capitalism dominated by multinational corporations. In the case of Fletchers, one can see some validity in the idea that entrepreneurs prefer to invest in the domestic markets of the country in which they live. At least this appears to be the case throughout the early history of the Fletchers conglomerate, while it was still dependent on local political and business connections, and remained under the control of the Fletcher family.
However by the 1990s, the transformation of Fletchers from a family run business into a global corporation was sufficiently developed that any claim that Fletchers were simply benevolent and responsible actors in a domestic New Zealand market loses all credibility.

The last formal connection between the Fletcher family and the Fletcher businesses ended in September 2012 when Hugh Fletcher left Fletcher Building (Bind, 2012). Fletcher Residential, the company which owns a title to 545 Oruarangi Road in Ihumātao, is a subsidiary of Fletcher Building. Fletcher Building is a publicly listed company, however the eight largest shareholders are: HSBC Nominees (New Zealand) Limited (21.17%), HSBC Custody Nominees Australia Limited (8.83%), JPMorgan Chase Bank N.A. (7.92%), Citibank Nominees (New Zealand) Limited (6.52%), JP Morgan Nominees Australia Limited (4.56%), National Nominees Limited (3.52%) and Citicorp Nominees Pty Limited (2.84%). These companies are holding entities connected to five big players in the Australasian economy, HSBC, JPMorgan Chase, National Nominees, Citibank and Citicorp. Together they own the majority of Fletcher Building shares (55.36%) (New Zealand Companies Office, 2018a). Deleuze and Guattari argue that ‘While it is true that capitalism is industrial in its essence or mode of production, it functions only as merchant capitalism… it functions only through its alliance with commercial and finance capital. In a sense it is the bank which controls the whole system’ (1983, pp. 229-230). In the case of Fletchers, it is not difficult to see that the industrial arm of their operations can only function through their alliance with finance capital, as they are quite literally owned by the banks.

Goldsmith writes that ‘having enticed international investors to provide extra funds for expansion, Fletcher discovered in the 1990s that modern markets had zero interest in anything other than consistently good returns’ (2009, p. 11). However Kelsey (1999) argues that
transnational corporations ‘behave selectively’ and that while ‘many take a ruthless approach to their operations offshore, most have a strong home identification, and behave differently in their own country’ (p. 162). It is unclear how this type of home bias might manifest in the context of Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao. One SOUL activist said ‘Fletchers made it really clear that what they care about is the shareholder, and… the shareholder just wants the money’. Kelsey (1999) argues that,

Transnationals epitomise globalisation. The popular stereotype is of free-ranging mega-corporations which operate in a borderless market place and act in ways that nation-states cannot control; their sole motivation is to make money for their shareholders (and top-tier management); what happens to workers, indigenous nations, consumers, or the environment is not their concern, except as it affects financial return. This stereotype is true in many respects. (p. 162)

Crucially, however, Kelsey (1999) also stresses that transnationals do not always succeed in achieving their objectives; national governments have the ability to regulate them to a certain extent, and, perhaps most critically: people have power. Elaborating on this last point Kelsey (1999) notes that ‘consumers, local communities, indigenous nations, trade unions, and environmental groups’ have the capacity to ‘resist and innovate when confronted by the power of transnationals’ (p. 162). The SOUL campaign, supported by workers unions, local residents, environmentalists, academics, students, community organisations and even some Fletcher shareholders is an example of people power coming to bear against the will of a transnational corporation.
Political controversy

The Fletcher conglomerate is no stranger to public controversy. In 1988, a *Frontline* television documentary revealed the poor working conditions which existed in Fletcher Challenge’s forestry operations in Chile (Kelsey, 1999). In the documentary, the New Zealand public were able to see Fletchers’ employees felling trees wearing ‘open-toed sandals, and living in rat infested huts’ (Kelsey, 1999, p. 124). Fletchers were exposed not only for worker exploitation, but also scrutinised for investing in Chile under General Pinochet, whose regime was known to be engaging in torture and other forms of violent repression (Kelsey, 1999).

Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao is not the first time Fletcher companies have found themselves in conflict with indigenous peoples protecting sacred land. The Nlaka’pamux and St’at’imc nations experienced significant disruption to their communities when the Canadian government issued logging permits to Fletcher Challenge during the mid-1980s (Johnston, 2006). Those opposing the logging had to face ‘death threats; logging trucks that tried to knock Indigenous leaders from the road; burned cars; and outlandish bribes’ (Johnston, 2006, pp. 153-4). In early November 1988, two indigenous leaders from Canada, Chief Ruby Dunstan of the Lytton Band and Chief Leonard Andrew of the Mt Currie Band, arrived in Aotearoa to raise awareness concerning the desecration of their lands in the Stein Valley, British Colombia at the hands of Fletcher Challenge (Te Iwi o Aotearoa, 1988). Dunstan and Andrew wanted to inform the New Zealand public that ‘Fletcher-Challenge’s diversification in tribal territory was having a dismaying effect on their cultural, social, and natural heritage’ (Te Iwi o Aotearoa, 1988, p. 3). The two Chiefs described their roles as environmental guardians and explained that they had never ceded sovereignty to anyone:
The Stein Valley is sacred to us and the responsibility we bear for protection of the Stein has been passed to us by our ancestors from our earliest memories and should not be lightly dismissed. We ourselves have never dismissed this obligation: we have never entered an agreement with any nation or government which would abrogate our authority and responsibility in the Stein watershed (Stein Valley, 1987).

Hugh Fletcher agreed to a ‘two-minute’ meeting with the Chiefs while they were in Aotearoa during which they asked him to intervene in the destructive logging occurring in their homelands (Johnston, 2006, p. 154). However Dunstan and Andrew soon discovered that their words were falling on deaf ears, and they were given an ‘abdicatory fob-off’ (Te Iwi o Aotearoa, 1988, p. 3). Hugh Fletcher claimed that the British Colombian government alone was responsible for the decisions being made and that he could not try to influence them, even though it was his company which had taken on the logging contracts (Te Iwi o Aotearoa, 1988).

**Conclusion**

The Fletcher conglomerate is characteristic of the modern transnational corporation embedded in global markets. Using conceptions of capital provided by Adam Smith and Karl Marx, I have shown that Fletchers’ history demonstrates they are primarily driven by the desire to valorise the capital under their authority. Repeatedly, Fletcher companies have shown themselves willing to bend or break the moral norms of society in order to pursue these objectives. Working closely with government, regardless of their political colours, Fletchers have managed to maintain a dominant position in the construction industry in New Zealand. No strangers to political controversy, nor conflicts with indigenous communities protecting sacred land, and
currently experiencing substantial financial losses, Fletcher Building has an even greater incentive to push ahead with Special Housing Area 62.

Today, Fletcher Building Limited and Fletcher Residential Limited are both majority owned by regional nodes of global finance capital; highly liquid and mobile forms of money capital that are able to invest in ventures across a diverse range of industries around the world, thus creating revenue streams back into the financial sector. In this sense, Fletchers is a financialised transnational corporation; an industrial arm of the banking sector, on the other hand, Fletchers also maintain their headquarters on Great South Road, in Auckland and are directed by people who all (except one) live in Auckland (New Zealand Companies Office, 2018a; 2018b). If Kelsey (1999) is correct, a ‘home bias’ could potentially impact decision making at Fletchers, although it is unlikely to weaken their resolve to press ahead with Special Housing Area 62 while it is considered to be in the public interest. In this sense, the Save Our Unique Landscape campaign faces an uphill struggle as they soldier on, doing everything in their power to protect Ihumātao.
Chapter 6

Auckland Council

If the Auckland Council were a private enterprise, it would be one of the largest in the country. However, it is not only the scale of Auckland Council’s operations which bears resemblance to the corporate. Since its inception, the Council has implemented policies that correlate directly with those governing the behaviour of contemporary corporations. Nevertheless, with all the integrity and transparency one might expect from a state institution, the Council makes no bones about how it runs its affairs, regularly publishing financial reports for citizens to scrutinise and even expressing pride in its financial performance. (Auckland Council, 2017a). As will be examined in this chapter, such bureaucratic self-satisfaction is looked on with some scepticism by sections of the general public, including many members of the SOUL campaign.

The following sections detail what Løding (2018) calls the financialisation of local government. There is a growing body of academic literature concerning the financialisation of capitalist economies (Lapavitsas, 2013; van der Zwan, 2014; Engelen, 2008; Krippner, 2005), which, broadly speaking, describes global shifts from primarily industrial to increasingly financial modes of capital accumulation. According to van der Zwan (2014) studies of financialisation have sought to understand how finance operates ‘beyond its traditional role as provider for the productive economy’ and to ‘interrogate how an increasingly autonomous realm of global finance has altered the underlying logics of the industrial economy and the inner workings of democratic society’ (van der Zwan, 2014, pp. 99-100). The rapid expansion of financial markets
following the second World War and the neoliberal restructuring of Western economies since the 1970s has generated significant interest in this area (van der Zwan, 2014). These lines of analysis became increasingly relevant in the West with the collapse of the dot com bubble in the early 2000s, and the subprime mortgage crisis in 2007/8 (van der Zwan, 2014). As Engelen argued at the time of the global financial crisis: ‘something has actually radically changed in contemporary capitalism’ which necessitates the search for new conceptual tools (2008, p. 118).

This chapter is organised into four sections. The first section explains the genesis of the Auckland ‘Supercity’ Council and details the place and power carved out for Māori within its formal architecture. In this section, I present some of the views expressed by research participants on an institution that has played a central role in the unfolding drama taking place in Ihumātao. The second and third sections critically analyse the operations of the Auckland Council in relation to processes of financialisation as defined by the literature. The second considers financialisation as an emergent regime of capital accumulation, identifying changes in the functioning of the Auckland Council particularly in relation to global capital markets. The third section discusses the role that local government plays in facilitating land speculation, gentrification and urban sprawl, and the impact that this has on people living in places such as Ihumātao. In the fourth and final section I speculate on the dangers inherent in new modes of financial management and consider to what extent such processes could interfere with the democratic functioning of the Auckland Council.

**Centralising power**

The Auckland ‘Supercity’ Council was established in 2010 as an amalgamation of eight existing regional and district councils (Linter-Cole, 2012). According to Chen (2014), former ACT Party Leader Rodney Hide ‘drove the process, was interested in all aspects of the development of
policy and was closely involved in all facets of policy preparation’ (p. 11). Chen (2014) claims that the ‘idea behind the amalgamation was to unite Auckland with a single leader with a single vision’ (p. 5). This vision, as presented to the public, was nothing less than to be the most liveable city in the world. While it has never been clarified what being the world’s most liveable city might mean in practice, Auckland Council is marked by significant differences from the local regional councils which preceded it. One important change is that the Auckland Council has centralised a greater amount of control, resources and debt within a single set of institutions. As of 31 December 2017, the Auckland Council Group had an annual revenue of $3 billion, an operating surplus of $1 billion, while maintaining a total net debt of $8.2 billion and total assets of $49.2 billion (Auckland Council, 2017b).

At the same time as the new Auckland Council was being established, an ‘Independent Māori Statutory Board’ (IMSB) was created to provide representation for Māori. The board is comprised of seven representatives chosen by a panel of 19 people who represent ‘Iwi with interests in the Auckland region’ (Chen, 2014, p. 16). Critics argued that the IMSB was insufficient, campaigning instead for dedicated Māori seats on the Auckland City Council as recommended by the Royal Commission (Chen, 2014; Linter-Cole, 2012). The Royal Commission report on Auckland Governance (2009) had previously recommended that ‘one seat on the Auckland Council should be reserved for a representative of mana whenua, and a further two seats for representatives of Māori generally (that is, for both mana whenua and taura here)’ (p. 489). The Commission considered that the mana whenua member ought to be appointed by the iwi directed Mana Whenua Forum supported by Auckland Council (Royal Commission on Auckland Governance, 2009).
The IMSB has limited powers to determine decision making at the Auckland Council. However, this has not stopped IMSB members and Auckland City Councillors from stressing the ‘importance of hearing “the Māori voice” at this level of governance’ (Linter-Cole, 2012, p. 105). Linter-Cole (2012) claims,

Auckland Council staff are now able to hear issues which are of importance to Māori, first hand by Māori; such as the importance of mana whenua being the kaitiaki of natural and physical resources in a region. It is hoped with this new understanding, Auckland City councillors might be persuaded to vote in favour of issues of significance to Māori when those issues are discussed by the Auckland Council and its committees. (Linter-Cole, 2012, p. 105)

Whatever the influence of the IMSB has been on the decisions made by Auckland City Councillors, evidently it was insufficient to prevent the designation of Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao. In my correspondence with Auckland Council, I was informed that the IMSB ‘recognised that reduced public, including Mana Whenua, input into planning processes was a key policy intention under the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013’ (Auckland Council, 20 February 2018). I was told that the IMSB also identified a ‘lack of Māori expertise in the planning process (primarily relating to Council ‐ internal decision making), as a critical issue which the Board raised in committee and more generally’ (Auckland Council, 20 February 2018). However, in practice the IMSB ‘supported the Council’s overall SHA programme as a matter of legislative compliance, and as a means to increase housing supply’ (Auckland Council, 20 February 2018). While the ISMB were able to locate, raise and discuss issues of importance to Māori, in the final analysis they supported the designation of Special
Housing Areas (including SHA62 in Ihumātao) which have led to conflict with other mana whenua entities such as SOUL.

The IMSB may have been convinced of the need to compromise on ‘iwi issues’ in order to urgently increase the supply of housing in Auckland, in any case the IMSB lacked the power to stop the developments. The fact that the IMSB does not have the authority to make legislatively binding decisions on issues pertaining to Māori, raises the question of whether Auckland Council is fulfilling its obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The restructuring of local government bodies in Tāmaki Makaurau is considered by many people to have reduced decision making influence not only of Māori but of people across the city. Crothers et al. (2013) found that only 20% of Aucklanders think local communities have benefitted from the amalgamation of the regional councils. When I asked Auckland City Councillor Cathy Casey if she thought the formation of the Supercity had taken power away from local communities, she replied,

Absolutely it has… I don’t think people even understand that the ward councillor is still the ward councillor. My ward is Albert-Eden-Roskill and when you stand up for your ward people accuse you of parochialism and you think “hang on, I’m the ward councillor, it’s them who elect me to represent their interests”. So we’re supposed to take off our hats and put on the regional hat to make regional decisions and somehow that ward stuff will all go away. We’re not regional councillors, we’re not elected at large, and that’s the big difficulty in the super city, the relationship the councillor has with the ward but also has to do the regional decision making. (Cathy Casey, 3 November 2017)
In line with the concerns voiced by Councillor Casey above, a number of SOUL activists have been vocal about the loss of the land protections in Ihumātao granted by the former Manukau City Council. As described in Chapter 3, the Manukau City Council had plans to include Puketāpapa within the Ōtuataua Stonefields Public Reserve and even attempted to purchase the land currently designated as Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao (Auckland Council, 2002). Pania Newton drew a direct causal relation between the formation of the Auckland Supercity and the loss of land protection in Ihumātao,

They [Auckland Council] can’t understand all the issues that each area has. Auckland is so huge and diverse and each community experiences its own issues, how are they supposed to understand? What’s right for North Shore, isn’t necessarily right for here… The amalgamation is why this [Puketāpapa] lost its earmarked position as a public open space. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)

Pania reiterated that Puketāpapa was ‘supposed to be part of the Ōtuataua historical reserve but because they [Manukau City Council] wouldn’t pay enough, the Wallace’s looked to an alternative and they applied for a Special Housing Area status with Fletchers of course’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017). A number of other research participants also expressed the idea that the amalgamation of the regional councils had been a key factor in reducing their ability to influence the direction of planning in Ihumātao. For example, Roger Gummer said,

Yeah I actually protested against it [amalgamation]... I think it worked badly in a lot of ways. And I think it hasn’t really achieved a huge amount now because we’re several years down the track and there’s no great savings in cost and there’s no
marvellous achievements. And what we did lose? We lost a whole lot of threads that were happening with the council and the regional council, all those threads have been lost. And this [Puketāpapa] was one of those threads, we had a thread going on with the councils and then they got merged and things were lost. (Roger Gummer, 13 October 2017)

In a similar vein, Waimārie Rakena spoke about various projects that had been neglected as a result of merging the regional councils into the supercity,

We had a dye spill four or five years ago from industrial dye that was spilt at a local factory that then turned the whole river purple [Oruarangi Awa]… but prior to that they had a restoration project for the Ihumātao foreshore and we seeded a lot of the shellfish that had otherwise not been there for over 60 years. These are the projects that we’re talking about, that some of our grandparents were involved in, to try and restore the life force. Then it may be able to serve a purpose for the public. I mean the bird sanctuary that was there, pretty much when the Supercity came about, that all sort of, I won’t say disappeared, but it wasn’t a priority as it was for the Councils prior to that Supercity. A lot of it wasn’t being maintained, then after the dye spill that set back the health of that body for I think ten or so years, and then, only then, it was like: it’s not our responsibility anymore. But you’re the landowner? But it’s not your responsibility? Okay, whose responsibility is it then? (Waimārie Rakena, 20 December 2017)
One of the claims made by proponents of the amalgamation of Auckland’s regional councils was that it would be more efficient (Chen, 2014). In my conversation with Beverly Knowles, she expressed disbelief about this idea, telling me that she thought the Auckland Supercity was a mistake,

They say they’re running it more efficiently but I cannot see it being run more efficiently, the needs of the people in South Auckland are entirely different from the needs of people in West Auckland and how somebody can sit there in the CBD and say ‘this is what we'll do’ I do not know, both of those places that I mentioned are economically, how would you put it? Strapped? They both need help, but they need different help… No, I don’t think they should have ever amalgamated, I think they’re getting their infrastructure wrong now, what we needed out here is not happening. (Beverly Knowles, 12 December 2017)

The hollowing out of democratic institutions in favour of corporate governance models has been part and parcel of the general trajectory of neo-liberal reforms in New Zealand since the 1980s, which have sought to remove barriers to market activity while minimising public spending (Kelsey, 1997). When viewed as part of this tendency it is perhaps less surprising that members of the SOUL campaign express dissenting opinions on the formation of the Auckland Council.

A number of arguably negative consequences associated with the formation of the Auckland Supercity Council have been discussed so far including a reduced ability for local communities to influence decision making, a loss of existing plans and the neglect of restoration projects.
However there are also key benefits resulting from the centralisation of authority which has occurred, particularly from a financial perspective. More specifically, Auckland Council has been able to establish and maintain a remarkably high credit rating which enables them to access offshore capital markets. The following section explores the financialisation of Auckland Council in detail.

**Financialisation as emergent regime of capital accumulation**

There are several schools of thought on financialisation which are relevant to my purposes here. The first is concerned with financialisation as a new mode of capital accumulation. French Regulation School theorists such as Boyer (2000) have argued that a financialised regime of accumulation emerged following the demise of the Fordist system and the decoupling of wages and productivity. Boyer (2000) claims that the ‘financial regime plays the central role that used to be attributed to the wage-labour nexus under Fordism’ (p.112). In a study of the United States economy, Krippner (2005) describes how since the 1970s American corporations have increasingly accumulated profit from financial activity rather than production. Krippner (2005) defines financialisation as ‘a pattern of accumulation in which profits accrue primarily through financial channels rather than through trade and commodity production’ (2005, p. 174). Krippner (2005) notes that the share of GDP attributable to the financial sector has grown while corporate wealth derived from dividends, capital gains and interest has outstripped profits taken from productive investments. Similarly, Kelsey (2015) demonstrates that financial services have become one of the dominant sectors of the New Zealand economy.

Challenging the idea that a finance-led regime of accumulation is an entirely new development, Arrighi (1994) argues that financialisation is a reoccurring phase of capitalism which emerges during times of transition as elites react to global competition by shifting capital from
production to finance. Both Krippner (2005) and Arrighi (1994) identify a contemporary sequence of financialisation from the 1970s onwards as the United States sought to maintain its global hegemony in the face of international competition. Additionally, Milberg (2008) argues that the restructuring of production into global supply chains, in particular off-shoring, has enabled US corporations to maintain greater levels of financialisation. Milberg (2008) notes that this process generates powerful incentives to further reduce costs. Financialisation and globalisation are thus not disparate tendencies but integrated parts of the same phase of capitalist development, as the financial sector also facilitates, and profits from, the increasingly free movement of capital around the globe.

Processes of financialisation are significant factors in the growth and maintenance of economic inequalities. The financialisation of the world economy has enabled a rentier class who own and manage assets to accumulate higher levels of profit while wage-earners have experienced stagnating real wages and increasing debt (Epstein and Jayadev, 2005). Economists argue that high levels of debt alongside low rates of growth have contributed to the formation of inherently unstable and precarious economies in which even short term reductions in household income can send shocks through the entire system as people default on their debt obligations (Stockhammer, 2012). Higher levels of systemic risk under regimes of finance-led capital accumulation make economies more prone to reoccurring crises (Boyer, 2000). Building on the work of economists such as John Maynard Keynes and Hyman Minsky, accumulation school theorists have argued that financial instability coupled with lower real wages has led to a capitalist regime dependent on ‘debt-driven consumption and housing bubbles’ (van der Zwan, 2014, p. 105). Similarly, Lapavitsas (2009) claims that financialisation has created ‘an enormous superstructure of debt, critically undermining its own liquidity and solvency’ (p. 138). From the perspective of this scholarship, events such as the US subprime mortgage crisis
of 2007/8 and subsequent global financial crisis, are directly caused by a regime of financialisation, rather than the result of irrational investors or a failure of regulatory institutions.

Since its formation in 2010, the Auckland ‘Supercity’ Council has taken on increasing volumes of debt sourced from global capital markets. Rises in public debt are characteristic of contemporary financialisation, and have the consequence of directing profits to creditors in the form of rents (Lazzarato, 2013). In 2015, the Auckland Council published a ten year plan which justified the borrowing as follows,

We consider the fairest way to pay for long-life assets is to borrow as this spreads the cost across the generations of ratepayers who will receive the benefits from these assets… To this end, we have adopted a set of three prudential limits to ensure borrowings and interest expenses do not grow too large relative to our rates and other revenue. Together with our large asset base, these limits underpin our AA credit rating [Standard and Poor’s], which is stronger than any New Zealand bank (Auckland Council, 2015a, p. 14).

Following Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), we can again witness how justification functions through an appeal to a higher common principle, in this case the apparent fairness of spreading cost across generations. However the statement quoted above is also important in that it reveals a careful monitoring of debt relative to revenue and assets. Auckland Council explain that taken together these metrics safeguard their credit rating (Auckland Council, 2015). The Auckland Council’s credit ratings were reaffirmed in October 2017 with a AA (stable) rating from Standard and Poor’s and an Aa2 rating from Moody’s Investor Services (Auckland Council,
The fact that revenue and assets underpin the credit ratings of public institutions is particularly salient in the context of urban planning, as it demonstrates that it would be perfectly logical for local government to approve building consents in a way that maximised future revenue and asset values. An example of financialised urban planning emerged in the City of Chicago in the United States, where the municipal government issued building consents in low socio-economic communities in order to increase property tax revenue. Even going so far as to pay private developers with debt securities backed by anticipated future rises in property values caused by the redevelopments (Weber, 2010).

**Rent gaps**

There is no evidence that the Auckland Council is functioning in this manner. As was discussed in Chapter 5, large scale property developers turn a profit through the selection of land where there exists a difference between current and potential future ground rent, or what Neil Smith terms a rent gap (N. Smith, 1979). Identifying rent gaps is the key factor in successful land speculation, a process that leads to the gentrification of communities, resulting in displacement and financial hardship as housing costs increase (Cole, 2015). Auckland Council have engaged in State-led gentrification in Tāmaki through their ‘Council Controlled Organisation’ Panuku Development, leading redevelopment projects that have involved the eviction of state housing tenants to make way for private housing (Cole, 2015). In the case of Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao, and with Special Housing areas more generally, the process has been market led, and simply facilitated by the State. This market-led gentrification externalises the calculations required to identify pieces of land that have the potential to yield profits through increasing ground rent. The application for a Special Housing Area on the Wallace Block in Ihumātao was submitted by Gavin H. Wallace Limited and supported by Fletcher Residential Limited. The Council simply approved it.
On the 2\textsuperscript{nd} March 2018, I asked Auckland Council if they considered potential increases in land values when designating Special Housing Areas. The Auckland Council told me that ‘Existing land values were not a factor in deciding where to establish Special Housing Areas anywhere across Auckland’ (Auckland Council, 3 April 2018). Additionally, they said, ‘Auckland Council does not have an expectation that Special Housing Areas will increase land values’ (Auckland Council, 3 April 2018). It seems that I asked the wrong question. As it turns out the process of identifying which land was most attractive to developers preceded the Special Housing Area programme. It was in 2012 that Auckland Council considered which sites were most attractive to private developers. In their 	extit{Housing Action Plan}, they wrote,

In greenfield areas there is the ability to include the retained affordable housing requirement into structure plans that precede the rezoning of land from rural to urban. In this way the retained affordable housing requirement can be taken into account early in the development process and most costs are absorbed in the lift of land values that arise when land shifts from a rural to an urban use. (Auckland Council, 2012, p. 28)

Auckland Council’s Land Release Programme focused on land that was zoned as Future Urban Zone inside the Rural Urban Boundary (Auckland Council, 2012). In this way they facilitated the changing of land use from essentially (if not always nominally) rural land into residential housing, thus increasing land values. Auckland Council wrote,

For the brownfields areas, the Unitary Plan will seek to facilitate redevelopment in selected areas and promote best practice urban design outcomes. However,
rezoning of areas for greater density does not always mean a substantial lift in land values. (Auckland Council, 2012, p. 28)

The economics of market housing incentivise the development of rural or previously undeveloped land (greenfield) over existing urban or industrial/commercial spaces (brownfield), as there is more scope to profit from closing a rent gap. Thus increasing land values as a result of changing land use. Auckland experiences problems associated with urban sprawl for this reason.

Whether Auckland Council was aware of the dynamics of land speculation is something of a moot point. As there is no need for Auckland Council to calculate precisely which pieces of land have the largest rent gaps, as this work is done by market entities and Council merely have to approve resource consent applications. People living in Ihumātao have seen their housing costs increase due to property development in the area, whether in the form of housing rents or council rates. Once these increases extend beyond the ability of the current residents to afford them, there is little choice but to move to another area. Those displaced by market-led housing developments, appear as collateral damage in a process that is seemingly beyond the control of government.

**Liquid finance and democracy**

In recent years the Auckland Council has become increasingly dependent on low interest investment capital from overseas lenders. The *Local Government Borrowing Act 2009* (amended September 2011), enabled local authorities to access foreign capital markets, previously prohibited under New Zealand law. The creation of the *Local Government Borrowing Bill* was overseen by then ACT Party leader and Minister of Local Government
Rodney Hide (Vaughan, 2011a). Under the Act, public institutions such as Auckland Council are able to attract overseas investors in order to raise capital. The *Local Government Borrowing Act 2009* also established the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA); a local council bond bank through which local authorities are able to access offshore capital markets (Vaughan, 2011b). Auckland Council’s overseas borrowing programmes have been arranged by HSBC, with ANZ, ASB, BNZ, Citibank, HSBC, Goldman Sachs, UBS, and Westpac acting as dealers (Vaughan, 2011b).

As can be seen in Figure 18 above, in 2012 the vast majority of Auckland Council Group funding was raised via bonds issued domestically (Wholesale bonds and Retail bonds), however, since 2012, Auckland Council has rapidly transitioned to bonds issued on foreign exchanges (Offshore funding and Local Government Funding Agency). As of the 30th June 2017, the majority of Auckland Council Group funding, approximately 60%, was the result of financial instruments sold in offshore capital markets.
This practice is typical of contemporary financialisation. Weber (2010) explains that one of the ‘central organizing principles of contemporary capitalism is its dependence of the short-term flows of global finance’ (p. 252); what Cerny (1993) refers to as the ‘infrastructure of the infrastructure’ (p. 18). Analysing the financialisation of local government in the United States, Weber (2010) writes,

The degree of financial market penetration is reflected in the increase in municipal debt, the privatization and securitization of public assets, the size and scope of the financial services available to city governments, and the investor-orientation of critical collective consumption decisions. Local governments have come to rely heavily on financial markets, and not just through traditional forms of municipal indebtedness, for the provision of standard public services. (p. 252)

Financialisation is possible in this context because local governments have the means to create financial markets through producing investment instruments underwritten by publicly owned assets and tax revenue. Weber explains that ‘cities transform promises of future tax revenues into securities that far flung buyers and sellers exchange through global markets’ (2010, p. 254). In the most recent Offering Circular for Auckland Council’s US$5 billion Secured Medium Term Note Programme, (arranged by HSBC, with ANZ, Citigroup, Westpac, Bank of New Zealand, Commonwealth Bank of Australia and UBS Investment Bank acting as dealers) it states,

There can be no assurance as to the liquidity of the Notes or that an active trading market will develop. If such a market were to develop, the Notes may trade at prices that may be higher or lower than the initial issue price. This will depend on many
factors, including, but not limited to, prevailing interest rates, the Issuer’s operations and the market for similar securities. (Auckland Council, 2017b)

This statement stresses that there is no guarantee an active trading market will develop from the issuance of debt securities by Auckland Council, while also acknowledging that this is a possibility, thus asserting the validity of the claim made by Weber (2010) that local governments have the ‘capacity to participate actively in the construction of financial markets’ (p. 253). More than simply affirming that Auckland Council has the ability to potentially generate trading markets, is the confirmation that if such a market were to develop the value of the Notes would be determined at least in part by the Auckland Council’s operations in relation to other institutions. This raises concerns as to the incentives that a future active market in Auckland Council Notes could have on their decision making.

The debt taken on by the Auckland Council has led to increased financial liabilities and thus greater vulnerability to fluctuations in global financial markets, particularly in terms of interest rates. As documented by Standard and Poor’s in 2012, ‘Auckland Council is able to continually escalate debt levels partly because it is prepared to increase rates and user charges without any legal restrictions’ (Anderson, 2012). A general overview of the Auckland Council Group accounts since 2012 is shown in Figure 19 below;
As shown in Figure 19, there has been a greater increase in liabilities (which have more than doubled since 2012) than income and assets. To the point that in 2017, net debt was equal to 199% of total revenue and 18% of rates income was spent on interest payments alone (Auckland Council, 2017a). The Auckland Council explains,

We also prudently manage the council’s exposure to interest rate changes by fixing the interest rate on a portion of the council’s current and future borrowings. While this provides a high degree of protection in the short-to-medium-term, over the longer term there is a risk that interest rates will be higher than we have projected over the next 10 years. In this event decisions could be made to reduce capital expenditure, reduce service levels in some areas, sell additional surplus assets, find
additional efficiency savings and/or increase rates or other revenue. (Auckland Council, 2017a, p. 59)

In addition to increased liabilities and thus vulnerability to changes in interest rates, the financialisation of the Auckland Council has implications for Council spending which does not produce revenue streams. Weber explains that local governments have differential capacities to ‘protect the income streams of the assets underlying these instruments’ (2010, p. 253). The ‘growing interdependency, complexity, and uncertainty’ of the global economy is creating more opportunities for speculators while also increasing the desirability of assets where control can be demonstrated over the ‘factors that might threaten repayment and cause owners to default on their obligations’ (Weber, 2010, p. 253). Because the debt securities issued by Auckland Council are backed by property rates, which owners must pay by law, the Notes are well secured. However, Council spending that does not result in an increase in revenue runs at counter purposes to the objective of maintaining a high credit rating which is dependent on the ratio of debt to revenue and assets. It is perhaps not surprising that projects such as the restoration of the Oruarangi Awa and the Ihumātao foreshore discussed by Waimārie earlier in this chapter have been neglected by the Auckland Council, as they do not necessarily produce an identifiable revenue stream, and thus from a financial perspective could be simply considered a waste of funds.

This is not to say that all local government institutions that become integrated with financial markets retreat from a focus on public goods, however as Weber notes, the ‘nature of these goods and services are often themselves transformed by the manner in which they are financed’ (2010, p. 253). This claim is supported by Leyshon and Thrift who argue that in financialised organisations the provision of ‘public goods become subordinated to international financial
imperatives’ (2007, p. 100). In this vein, Hackworth (2007) argues that ‘entrepreneurial governance is a de facto requirement of increasing a city’s exposure to capital markets’ (p. 25). On the other hand, it is possible for local government to access funds from overseas investors without allowing this process to corrupt the purposes to which that funding is put. Weber claims that while it is ‘certainly harder to justify public investments that are not fiscally productive, some cities have used their access to global financial markets as leverage to pressure other private actors and public agencies into providing public goods, such as infrastructure and education’ (2010, p. 253).

In Auckland, the consequences of integrating local government with global capital markets will at least in part be determined by external public pressure. We have already witnessed public concern at the pressure which increasing debt places on rates to continue rising (Newshub, 2016). Rates are currently projected to continue rising at approximately 3.5 percent per annum for the next ten years, projections that have provoked some members of the public (Auckland Council, 2018). Perhaps more concerning however is the prospect of local government becoming thoroughly curtailed by financial calculations.

Conclusion
In this chapter I have argued that Auckland Council demonstrates clearly identifiable practices associated with financialisation; this includes the centralisation of power and resources, the marginalisation of Māori political influence, a reduced ability for people to be involved in decision making in their own communities, as well as the neglect of restoration projects and other local initiatives. Using relevant literature I explained how financialisation emerged out of the collapse of the Fordist economic model that coupled wages to productivity, rapidly sweeping across the Western economies. I described how the Auckland Council facilitates land
speculation and gentrification by making land available for development where rent gaps exist, leading to the problem of urban sprawl. I demonstrated that Auckland Council now sources the majority of its credit from overseas capital markets in line with contemporary processes of financialisation.

The literature on financialisation and the experience of municipal governments such as the City of Chicago contains a warning as to the potential costs of integrating organisations with financial markets and the risk of replacing democratic decision making with the technocratic rules of finance. Given the evidence, we can say with some confidence that the public risk losing the ability to participate in local governance if public institutions become ensnared in networks of global finance with its attendant logics of accumulation and efficiency. For campaigns such as Save Our Unique Landscape whose arguments and objectives are informed by commitments to non-financial values there could be an impasse, as such ideas are not easily registered when the operations of local government are evaluated and executed in an abstract realm of quantifiable units.
Chapter 7

Colonising Metaphysics

This is also a spiritual disease; it attacks the hinengaro of Māori. The name of this spiritual disease – ‘internalisation of colonisation’. Here, the disease is most potent. It manifests in a slow, lingering, debilitating death. The causes of the disease were brought to Aotearoa by Pākehā colonisers. Some can be seen with the eye – tobacco, alcohol, white flour… Others are hard to see. They came in latent form, in the crevices of minds, in the processes of thought, in the guise of World Views that sought to appropriate, dominate and negate other World Views that it found in its path. (Walker, 1996, p. 122)

‘As we think we live, and how we live is a pretty good indication of how we think’ wrote Māori Marsden. ‘A person’s\(^1\) metaphysics is the sum total of the beliefs out of which develop the basic convictions and assumptions by which they direct and guide their life. Metaphysics deals with first principles, especially those dealing with knowing and existence or being; and this metaphysics is connected with a person’s centre’ (Marsden, 2003, p. 27). The approach to the study of metaphysics outlined by Marsden (2003) is likely not universal. Mika (2015) claims that ‘It may be that indigenous peoples and the West mean different things when discussing

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\(^1\) Marsden (2003) uses male gendered language, I hope that the reader can forgive him for conforming to this now outdated convention. I have taken the liberty of reworking his quotations to better represent humanity as a whole.
metaphysics’ (p. 1138). Mika (2015) suggests that the West tends to reduce metaphysics to a theoretical discipline whereby initial phenomena must first be conceptualised in order to be discussed, whereas for Māori it is more a case of how one perceives and relates to entities that exist prior to the act of theorisation.

This chapter advances a bold claim, specifically, that the Save Our Unique Landscape campaign has philosophical implications. The first section describes the tendency for political actors to qualify and classify persons and objects in the world. The second section explores the different ways of relating to the land in Ihumātao as exhibited by Flectchers and the Save Our Unique Landscape campaign. The third section positions contemporary Western metaphysics in relation to the Enlightenment and earlier sequences of historical violence that resulted in a conceptual fragmentation of the world. Section Four asks ‘Can Europeans think?’; calling into question the idea that the dynamic between Western and Indigenous thought is one of simple opposition. The fifth section speculates on some of the complexities inherent in political campaigns grounded in Indigenous metaphysics. The sixth and final section argues that Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao is in violation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and considers proposals for constitutional transformation advanced by Matike Mai Aotearoa as potential solutions to such situations arising in the future.

**Qualification and Classification**

There is more at stake in the SOUL campaign than what happens to a piece of land. Park (2006) claims that the ‘losses that Māori have suffered since the treaty, while sited in the solid surface of the Earth that we call “land”, have been much more than the loss of ground’ (p.242). The contestation of Special Housing Area 62 through the SOUL campaign has raised deeper issues pertaining to colonisation in the domains of politics and economics, but also in the spheres of
thought and imagination. In our conversation, Frances Hancock suggested that the practice of demarcating land boundaries with lines divorced from the inherent qualities of the land is a manifestation of the colonial imagination,

The idea that someone could put a fence in the ground and decide unilaterally that on one side we have area deemed to be so precious that we make it into a historic reserve and on this side we say ‘this side we’ll just build housing’ just makes no sense to me. To me, that fence represents the colonial imagination at work, only a colonist way of thinking could create that fence, the same way that a colonist imagination created that boundary between the United States and Canada irrespective of the fact that the Wabanaki Confederacy of Nations populated the North Eastern bioregion for centuries before the settlers came. One day they woke up and suddenly some of them were Canadian citizens and some of them were American citizens. It just makes no sense unless you think with a colonist mindset. So that’s what I think about that fence. (Frances Hancock, 5 December 2017)

Political actors seek to justify their actions through appeals to higher principles shared across lines of conflict (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). The prevalence of justificatory discourse in the political and economic domains is well established in sociology (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). In Chapter Four, I discussed how a housing crisis has been mobilised to justify the designation of Special Housing Area 62 against public criticism (McFarland, 2015). This discursive strategy functions through appealing to a higher common principle formalised in the concept of the public interest. It is imagined that those involved in the contestation of speech share certain metaphysical assumptions and therefore what is required is to demonstrate that one’s actions are in alignment with certain principles. In the world of economics, Boltanski & Thévenot
(2006) claim that the set of metaphysical assumptions in play can be located in Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. As was argued in Chapter Four, it is not clear that all members of the Save Our Unique Landscape do in fact share the assumptions crystallised in Smith’s work. However, there is another issue to attend to with regard to the discursive conflict between SOUL and those defending Special Housing Area 62.

In the market and civic polities, imperatives to justify one’s actions require the qualification of beings. For Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), the concept of qualification refers to the epistemological operations involved in the construction of meaning in both the lived worlds of actors and in objective scientific discourse. They claim that through qualification we turn ‘persons and objects’ into ‘person-states’ and ‘thing-states’ whereby a person or thing is considered as a particular instance of a more generic phenomena. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) argue that qualifying a being through establishing its equivalence with other similar beings in a class of beings is necessary in order to generate a relatively stable field of social and/or technological organisation. Beings are thus qualified in order to be classified. We must know what qualities a being possesses, in order to know how to classify it, so that we can decide what to do with it. Moreover we must convince others that both our qualification and classification are accurate and reasonable if we want to be successful in justifying our behaviour.

Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) note however that beings tend to resist this process of qualification. The qualifications made about beings are not as universal as is often imagined, but are rather given a sense of appropriateness as determined by the context in which they are qualified. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) argue that in the case of disputes, whereby critics
attempt to move towards a state of justice/appropriateness, while a judgment is being passed on a particular set of beings in any given situation, a classification is also being established.

Persons and objects in Ihumātao have resisted the qualification and classification imposed on them by government authorities and private property developers.² For instance, Fletcher Residential consider the Oruarangi Awa to be a suitable outlet for a stormwater pipe they intend to lay from their proposed housing development, while others, including members of SOUL, view the Oruarangi Awa as a living being requiring protection and restoration (Mills, 2003). It is hard to overstate the import of such differences. It is not the case that the conflicting parties have opposing views on the same object, it is more accurate to say that they are relating to a different being embedded in a culturally specific metaphysics. One might presume that Fletcher Residential and SOUL are talking about the same objects, and yet, due to the differences in their processes of qualification, they find themselves in the company of entirely distinct ‘person-states’ and ‘thing-states’ (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006). While it is by no means self-evident that object or thing are the correct words to use in this context, it is possible to apply this framework to the discursive conflict surrounding Special Housing Area 62.

**Land/Whenua**

The so-called object at the centre of the Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL) campaign and the entire controversy surround Special Housing Area 62, is the land/whenua. In this case, the conflicting processes of qualification and classification are perhaps most clearly visible through an analysis of multiple ways of relating to land/whenua. The differences between a utilitarian conception of land and a whakaaro Māori notion of whenua were articulated by Pania Newton.

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² The phrasing of this sentence may sound strange to readers accustomed to the assumption that human beings are the only entities in the world possessing agency. This view of reality is not shared universally across cultures and has been called into question within Western academia (see for example Latour, 1993).
She told me that ‘Whenua is whakapapa, whenua is whānau, whenua is tikanga, whenua is me, whenua is survival, whenua is everything. Without the land there would be no people.’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017). Pania’s explanation of the concept of whenua resonates with contemporary Māori philosophy on the topic. For instance, Mika (2016) argues that whenua is the ‘solid manifestation’ of Papatūānuku which ‘gives rise to everything and, importantly, eternally refers things back to herself’ (p. 61). Pania argued that the connotations attached to land which inform the understanding and decision-making processes at Fletchers Residential are distinct from her notion of whenua. Explaining that for Fletchers ‘Land means profits, land means money, land means power’ (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017).

Pania Newton is not the only member of the SOUL group to express the idea that there are differences between the concept of whenua and the more instrumental conceptions of land informing the operations Fletchers Residential, Auckland Council and the New Zealand Government. Betty King also argued that the Māori concept of whenua is different to the Western concept of land,

Whenua and land are totally different. Whenua is that which doesn’t necessarily belong to you, but connects with you. From a Māori perspective, it gives you that identity, that link to, that forms that connection with it. That’s what it does, and that’s the very thing of placenta, what it does, it connects you to that land. It literally encompasses everything that is important in your life. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)
There seems to be general support for the idea of whenua as something akin to the metaphysical substrate of Being within the SOUL campaign, to the point that some activists argue Fletchers are relating to an entirely different entity. Another SOUL campaigner speculated on how Fletchers have qualified and classified the land in Ihumātao as follows,

I think that Fletcher just saw a paddock next to a park with close proximity to an international airport. I don’t think they saw a fraught history or a precious landscape needing protection. To propose the development they want to build suggests a kind of flat thinking approach that disregards history and a broader sense of location… I think they just thought they’d get in there, get the consents, build their 480 houses, make a huge profit and move on… Fletcher has made it very clear that what they care about is the shareholder, and… the shareholder just wants the money.

Tim McCreanor put it slightly more bluntly when he said: ‘I think that Fletcher doesn’t really care, I mean basically they describe that taonga at Ihumātao as a piece of dirt. They just wanted places to build whatever they want to build’ (Tim McCreanor, 12 December 2017).

**The Rise of Mechanical Philosophy**

Mika (2017) argues that indigenous peoples ‘could be dealing with metaphysical colonisation when they are challenging social injustices such as land and language loss, health inequalities and racism, even though this may not be their intention’ (p. 97). It is likely that the SOUL campaign, whether it is the conscious intention of the participants or not, are contesting metaphysical assumptions that came to prominence during the Enlightenment and spread to Aotearoa through colonisation. Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues, ‘The form of imperialism which indigenous peoples are confronting now emerged from that period of European history known
as the Enlightenment’ (1999, p. 61). This imperialism extends to the domain of first principles, or metaphysics. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) argues that during the Enlightenment, also known as the ‘Age of Reason’, and implementing a project called ‘modernity’, lineal views of time and space came to prominence. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes, ‘Different orientations towards time and space, different positioning within time and space, and different systems of language for making time and space ‘real’ underpin notions of past and present, of place and of relationships to the land’ (p. 57). Tuhiwai Smith (1999) claims that these lineal conceptions of time and space are related to the Enlightenment ideal of progress ‘present in both liberal and Marxist ideas about history’ (p. 57).

Proponents of Enlightenment rationality would have us believe a romantic narrative that celebrates the triumph of Reason over Faith and Superstition. It must be said that this version of events is by no means entirely unfounded. There is ample evidence that can presented to support the claims that the European Enlightenment demolished the oppressive authority of the Church and led to remarkable scientific achievements that have vastly improved material human wellbeing. Many critics of Enlightenment Reason would not deny its positive aspects. As Mika (2017) notes, rationality certainly has its place. However, despite what Western rationalists may think, rationality is not self-sufficient, but rather grounded in a deeper metaphysical substrate. Mika (2017) argues that Western rationalism in embedded in a ‘metaphysics of presence’ that is based on the assumption that the world is fragmented. This presupposition, Mika (2017) attributes to the ‘sinister triad of Descartes, Newton and Bacon’ (p. 19). Indigenous peoples, Mika (2017) claims, ‘do not buy the idea that the world is fragmented’, instead ‘for indigenous peoples the complexity of the world lies in its thorough interconnectedness’ (p. 19).
Mika (2017) offers a succinct definition of metaphysics of presence as: ‘an approach to a thing that enables one to conceive of it as this or that, as stuck in time, without incursion by any other thing’ (p. 20). It is hard to entirely escape from a metaphysics of presence. Even in attempting to clarify a definition of it, one seems to falls into its trap. This thesis is no exception, as it is full of the language of presence; ‘making clear’, ‘grasping’, ‘demonstrating’, ‘revealing’ and ‘showing’ (Culler, 1982, p. 94). Similarly, I have relied on the words ‘thus, however, indeed, and certainly’ throughout, turns of phrase which Mika (2017) argues are ‘all authoritarian, seeking to have the final say in response to something but cannot really contain the fullness of the world’ (p. 156). As Culler (1982) claims, the metaphysics of presence is ‘pervasive, familiar and powerful’ (p. 94).

The Enlightenment raised specific metaphysical assumptions commonly identified as harmful to Indigenous peoples to the status of self-evident truths, including the idea of Nature as an inert object, and then obscured the cultural origins of such beliefs with a veil of idiosyncratic rationality (Merchant, 1980). While Enlightenment Reason ultimately secured victory over its opponents, religious and otherwise, the success of its development was contingent on a prior sequence of violent oppression. Federici (2004) argues that lengthy campaigns of terror during the Middle Ages were the ‘necessary subtext’ for the rise of what she calls Mechanical Philosophy. The emergent Mechanical Philosophy conceived space/time, land, and the human body through a general framework which was, and still is, characterised by fragmentation and regimentation. Federici (2004) claims that the attacks against ‘witchcraft’ and the ‘magical view of the world’ during this time by both Church and State must be read in the context of a process of proto-capitalist rationalisation: an economic but also metaphysical transformation of society.
On this note I ought to say that it is not my intention to attempt to collapse the unique histories of Māori and the European working classes, nor do I wish to transfer the negative connotations attached to Western concepts of ‘magic’ and ‘animism’ onto Indigenous philosophy. Māori Marsden argues that Māori have never had an animistic conception of nature and that this is a popular misconception (Marsden, 1992). However, Mika (2017) seems to contest this idea when he says, ‘indigenous peoples understand the world not just as interrelated but as animate. By this, I mean that its entities are animate as well’ (p. 19). On this point, Mika (2017) cites Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) who explain that ‘the rivers, mountains, land, soil, lakes, rocks, and animals are sentient’ (p. 151).

Notwithstanding the potential differences and/or commonalities between Māori metaphysics and Western animism, the point here is that there were more ‘holistic’ (for want of a better term) metaphysics in Europe that were suppressed by force. Federici (2004) explains that pre-capitalist belief systems in Europe were informed by ‘an animistic conception of nature that did not admit to any separation between matter and spirit, and thus imagined the cosmos as a living organism, populated by occult forces, where every element was in “sympathetic” relation with the rest’ (pp. 141-142). In this light, it seems reasonable to suggest that some pre-Enlightenment metaphysical traditions in Europe have some similarities (while retaining differences) with Māori worldviews. At least insofar as the Earth was conceived as a living entity rather than an inert store of resources, time was not conceptualised as linear and orderly, and the body as well as the cosmos were not conceived as clock-like machines driven by immutable laws. Or as Moana Jackson put it more recently: ‘there was once a European tradition of the Earth Mother’ (Jackson & Taylor, 2017).
Many centuries later, as the Industrial Revolution progressed, Western scholars observed that social and political developments were having impacts which far exceeded the economic domain. In the 19th century, Karl Marx, noticed the tendency for industrial development to erase established ways of life, break down social structures and fundamentally alter the relationships between people and the natural world. Marx wrote,

Thus capital creates the bourgeois society, and the universal appropriation of nature as well as of the social bond itself by the members of society… nature becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility; ceases to be recognized as a power for itself; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of consumption or as a means of production. (1973/1939, pp. 409-410)

The argument that capitalist development turns nature into an exploitable object has been echoed more recently by Lazzarato (2013) who writes,

Capital’s appropriation of the earth is also intensive, because it exhausts the earth in the same way as it exhausts living beings and the environment. Capital treats the earth, matter, and the living beings that proliferate on the earth as exploitable “objects.” Extensive appropriation (colonization, imperialism, the division of labor) is coupled with intensive appropriation (the exhaustion of natural resources, industrial and nuclear pollution, climate change, etc.)… Capital has always contained in embryo not only the domination but also the current and potential destruction of the earth and of the nonhumans that inhabit it, both reduced to the status of appropriable and exploitable objects. (Lazzarato, 2013, pp. 59-60)
The merit of these critiques is not in question here, nevertheless, it is clear that what is at stake in the relation between Māori and Pākehā metaphysics, goes much deeper than the prevailing economic system.

**Can Europeans think?**

It is sometimes assumed that there is an unbridgeable gulf separating Western science and Indigenous knowledge systems. Even categorising Māori philosophy as ‘knowledge’ or ‘traditional worldviews’ reveals a hierarchical valuing of ways of speaking about the world that relies on ongoing processes of colonisation and westernisation. If one accepts these assumptions then indigenous concepts appear as some kind of exotic commodity in relation to the dominant categories of Western thought. The respect sometimes afforded to Māori concepts by Western trained academics can often appear analogous to the way in which visitors to a museum take great care not to damage the ornaments on display. It is seldom imagined that what is perceived to be a relic of the distant past could perhaps be a more useful tool for grasping a contemporary political situation than its modernist equivalents. The SOUL campaign has been notable for both its unapologetic use of Māori concepts, protocols and historical memories, as well as its welcoming of Pākehā people such as myself, who may be relatively unfamiliar the use of these terms in political discourse.

Pania Newton commented on the success of the biculturalism of the SOUL campaign as follows,

I think this is a very interesting campaign, I always tell people what a great example this kaupapa is of biculturalism in Aotearoa because there are so many non-Māori who are supporting this kaupapa which is led by Māori because it is Māori whenua,
and it’s a Māori predominant kaupapa. I think it’s been very interesting and I’m so grateful for the people, it’s amazing, I’m just speechless when it comes to talking about the campaign because I honestly don’t think I could have done it without the people that have been around these past couple of years. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)

SOUL demonstrates that political campaigns do not necessitate the prioritisation of Pākehā concepts, protocols and historical memories. While this is almost definitely a case of telling Māori activists what they already know (L. Smith, 2012), it may be of interest to Pākehā people grappling with the position of Western political theory in relation to anti-capitalist and decolonial activism.

Māori concepts such as mana, tapu and mauri, have been central to many of the arguments made by members of SOUL against the designation of Special Housing Area 62 at 545-561 Oruarangi Road. After having encountered the concept of mauri in the context of SOUL a number of times, I asked Betty King to explain to me what mauri means to her, she replied,

I understand it in a very in-depth way; in that every one of us have mauri. It’s about understanding what it is and how it relates to you and what it does, how it can affect you. Mauri for me is something really deep… It’s about total respect for something you don’t see. You might not understand but it’s there… The land is giving you the vitality, its energies, its spirit to you and that’s the part that makes it so valid, you can feel it, it’s there, and you know that just having that is just so important, every part of that land has it in many ways… it’s just full of energy for me… The mauri of the land was so important that we never trampled on it, we didn’t disrespect it. It
was alright to walk on it, but not to abuse it. And that’s what we’ve found, that a lot of the times that will happen, it’s going to happen, people are not aware of that aspect of understanding of how important it is. Yeah. I don’t know how to explain it any more, but it’s just something that I’ve always felt and I have an inner depth, a respect for it. [chuckles] Sounds funny when you try to explain it, but that’s what it is. It’s hard to put into words. (Betty King, 7 November 2017)

Similarly, when I asked Pania Newton the same question she explained the concept of mauri as follows,

Mauri is the life force of anything. Everything has a life force, everything has a mauri and you see our awa has been polluted, our moana has been polluted, our maunga has been quarried, all four of them, these are our tūpuna so their mauri has been damaged. Some I have no faith can even be restored, like the mauri of Puke-tutu is damaged every single day that they’re putting bio solids into our maunga. How disgusting is that? When I look at our maunga I think of it as a person, as a tūpuna, and I would not fill it with shit, people’s waste... And our moana, that’s where we get kai from, why are we putting sewage and discharge into it? People used to get kai from down here, that is a luxury and an experience that I’ve never had because the whole time I’ve been alive it’s been polluted, I won’t even swim in there. It sucks because our pakeke and our elders talk about when they used to go down there and get kai when they used to swim down there. Those are all just dreams for me, they’re all stories because I can’t experience that anymore because there’s warning signs down there telling us not to swim in our awa that sustained our people for many many years. Yeah it sucks. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)
Mignolo (2011) argues that a 500 year sequence of history is coming to an end. Specifically, the economic, political, military and epistemological hegemony of the European and later American nations (Mignolo, 2011). With this in mind, it is worth considering what metaphysical assumptions may increasingly be called into question as this process unfolds. A common point of contention found in Indigenous critiques of Western philosophy concerns the social consequences stemming from the division of matter and spirit. Māori Marsden for instance claims that,

In Western culture, there is a disjunction between the material and the spiritual, between the secular and sacred. This disconnection is linked to the capitalistic mode of production and expropriates and commodities the land, its resources and people. All have a price in the market place. In a market driven economy prime values are thrown out the window and values that revolve around economics rank uppermost. This value overrides spiritual and human considerations and the profit motive becomes the prime value. (2003, p. 16)

Arguments along these lines have been made on many occasions to the Crown. On the 26th of July 1984, in a submission to the Waitangi Tribunal concerning ‘The Recognition of Spiritual Values’ delivered at Makaurau Marae in Ihumātao, James Ernest Ritchie argued that,

it is Western ways that are aberrant … the separation of spiritual from other matters is not as general or as “natural” as Westerners often think… denial of such linkages was a necessary step in the development of that kind of resource exploitation that has caused environmental degradation and considerable human misery (Ritchie, 1984, p. 14).
Another point of difference that surfaces frequently in critiques of Western philosophy and Western culture more generally concerns the relationship between humans and Nature. Mignolo (2011) argues that the Western concept of ‘Nature’ and Indigenous notions of ‘Pachamama’ (Earth Mother/Papatūānuku) are not the same. Attempting to build a bridge, Māori Marsden (2003) likens Papatūānuku to the Western concept of Gaia, the Greek personification of Earth, explaining that,

Papatūānuku is our mother and deserves our love and respect. She is a living organism with her own biological systems and functions creating and supplying a web of support systems for all her children whether man, animal, bird, tree, grass, microbes, or insects. (Marsden, 2003, p. 45)

On the other hand, Marsden (2003) claims that,

Western man either because he holds to the traditional scientific view, or because of the pietistic disjunction between the secular and spiritual, approaches his environment with the idea that there are no constraints on his powers to exploit the natural resources to serve his private needs and ends. (p. 51)

The differences between Western and Māori metaphysics concerning the division of spirit/matter and the relation between humans and the natural world are quite evident. There is a danger however of falling prey to the idea that all Pākehā knowledge is equally incompatible with tikanga Māori. I am doubtful that this is the case. For a start, Māori philosophers such as Carl Mika have successfully woven the ideas of Western thinkers such as Heidegger, Foucault, Adorno, Horkheimer, and Derrida into powerful critiques of influential strands of Western
philosophy. This is perhaps unsurprising given that these authors are all critics of the West in one way or another, and Mika (2017) is able to use their work to advance his particular brand of Māori metaphysics. However Mika (2017) does not call for the total abolition of Western thought. Instead Mika (2017) stresses the importance of an ongoing conversation between the West and other philosophical traditions, arguing that ‘dominant Western philosophy quite simply needs to branch out, not in a tokenistic way but with a genuine dialogue in mind’ (p. 13).

There is a Māori proverb: ka mua, ka murī. It refers to the idea that we walk backward towards the future with the past in front of us. Māori political activists (and humans in general), including within the SOUL campaign, frequently draw on the past to inform their contemporary orientation to the world. Western critical theorists, on the other hand, can tend to view a strong connection to the past with some suspicion, identifying a desire to maintain culture with conservative or reactionary politics. To take an extreme example, French philosopher Alain Badiou (2015), claims, remarkably, that ‘History does not exist’ (p. 181) and is a ‘symbolic fiction’ (p. 189). Badiou (2013) argues that a preoccupation with the past is the mark of an ‘obscure subject’, who wants to prevent social conflict by invoking the idea of a ‘full and transcendent body’ whether ‘City, God or Race’ thus carrying out an ‘occultation of the present’, in the process masking the ‘real body’ which is a ‘divided body’ (pp. 59-60). Or in other words, the ‘obscure subject’ is anyone who values a unifying principle over a divisive one. Rather predictably, Badiou (2013) links the ‘obscure subject’ to a ‘generic fascism’ (p. 72).
Not all Western critical theorists denigrate a concern for the past however, and there exists a romantic Hegelian Marxist tendency which comprehends the benefits of such an approach to radical politics. Löwy and Sayre (2001) are as good an example as any in this regard,

It is thus not a matter of finding solutions to certain problems but of aiming at an overall alternative to the existing state of affairs, a new civilisation, a different mode of life, which would not be the abstract negation of modernity, but its “sublation” or absorption (*Aufhebung*), its insistent negation, the conservation of its best gains, and its transcendence toward a higher form of culture – a form that would restore to society certain human qualities destroyed by bourgeois industrial civilisation. That does not mean a return to the past but a detour via the past, toward a new future, a detour that allows the human spirit to become aware of all the cultural richness and all the social vitality that have been sacrificed by the historical process launched by the Industrial Revolution, and to seek new ways of bringing them back to life. (pp. 253-254)

If activists grounded in the traditions of Western critical theory want to better understand Māori political movements that seek to connect with the past, the approach presented by Löwy and Sayre (2001) would be a far more productive starting point than confusing indigenous concerns for lost culture with Badiou’s concept of ‘generic fascism’.

**The Spiritual Option**

The SOUL campaign has highlighted the relation between land and what in the Western episteme is often categorised as spirituality, which is not to say that this nomenclature is necessarily particularly instructive. Walker (1996) argues that the notion of ‘Māori spirituality’
is a colonial construction. Similarly, Bell (2014) warns that the ‘settler imaginary’ tends to buy into narrow ideological stereotypes, attempting to reduce complex human beings to knowable and predictable others. There is a great deal of truth to these arguments.

It is the case that the Western mind struggles to classify the idea of a lived relationship with land that has implications for one’s wellbeing within materialist discourses oriented towards the production of an objective scientific account of reality. In a sworn affidavit to the Waitangi Tribunal, founding SOUL member Haki Wilson stated,

We of Ihumātao see all of Ihumātao as a sacred landscape, a whenua tapu. It is not natural for us to look at Ihumātao and say, this part does not need protection. This whenua is ours to protect, to act as kaitiaki and to ensure that that taonga and tapu of the whenua is protected to whatever extent we are able. (Waitangi Tribunal, 2015, p. 3)

Wilson explained that for those of Ihumātao, the role of kaitiaki is comprised of three key concepts: mana, tapu and mauri. In his testimony, Wilson drew attention to the relationship between kaitiaki responsibilities and mana,

Our mana as mana whenua, requires us to act as the kaitiaki, to ensure that we uphold the status of our people and maintain Ihumātao with the respect it deserves. Should we fail to maintain this mahi as kaitiaki, it would result in a loss of mana to us all. (Waitangi Tribunal, 2015, p. 8)
Wilson further established a link between the alienation and desecration of Māori land, and the subsequent impact on the mana and therefore general wellbeing of the people of Ihumātao, telling the Tribunal,

As SHA 62 has been private land, it has been difficult to practice our kaitiakitanga over that whenua. We are aware that we could not simply turn up on the whenua and do our jobs; this is why there has been so much desecration of our taonga and wahi tapu on the SHA 62 land over the years. (2015, p. 10)

The concepts of mana, tapu and mauri that Wilson relied on to make this case do not fit neatly into discourses grounded in a metaphysics of presence nor within the multiple strands of Enlightenment rationalism. Given the separation of spirit and matter in the post-Enlightenment Western episteme, the repeated inferences to something more than inert physical matter, tempts Western trained scholars to classify such discourses in the realm of the spiritual. Indigenous scholars however, have been critical of modern connotations attached to the term spiritual. Reflecting on her relationship with her grandmother, Smith (1999) states,

Although she developed in me the spiritual relationships to the land, to our tribal mountain and river, she also developed a sense of quite physical groundedness, a sense of reality, and a sense of humour about ourselves. It may be those qualities that make me sceptical or cautious about the mystical, misty-eyed discourse that is sometimes employed by indigenous people to describe our relationships with the land and universe. (p. 13)
On the question of the relationship between Indigenous philosophy and spirituality, Mika (2017) writes, ‘I agree with Smith to a certain extent but I am interested in how such talk became off-limits to begin with’ (p. 64). Mika (2017) suggests it is possible that ‘the so-called spiritual utterances she refers to tend to be automatically relegated to a transcendent realm without any anchoring, even though we never intended them to be out there’ (p. 64). Mika (2017) claims that the agent determining the apparently ungrounded transcendent meaning of the term spirituality is ‘likely to be the Enlightenment’ with its reductive mathematical positivism (p. 64). Additionally, and with direct reference to the Māori conception of Papatuānuku, Mika (2017) argues that there is ‘a problem of language’ as the term ‘Mother Earth’ referring to the ‘expansive phenomenon that underpins all things in the world simply sounds trite’ (p. 64). Although Mika (2017) is uncertain as to whether this is a problem of denotation or connotation.

The SOUL campaign, while firmly grounded in the practical work of preventing Special Housing Area 62 through a variety of legal and political means, also unequivocally extends to the more-than-rational, eliciting emotive and existential responses that in the Western episteme are categorised as spiritual. New Zealand archaeologist David Veart, for instance, rather unexpectedly declared,

My Scots ancestors had a name for place like Ihumātao, they called them ‘CaolÁit’, meaning ‘thin places’. It is here where the veil separating time and space is transparent. Here the past and the present, the spiritual and the physical come together and merge. It is a sacred place, wāhi tapu. I am an archaeologist, a scientist. I’m not meant to think things like this but I have worked all over Aotearoa, the Pacific and Britain and there is only one place where I have this feeling of ‘thinness’, and that is at Ihumātao. (SOUL, 2015, p. 2)
Mignolo (2011) posits the ‘spiritual option’ as one of five contemporary trajectories – along with de-westernisation, re-westernisation, re-orientation of the Left and the decolonial option – that are shaping politics at a global level. Mignolo (2011) argues that the spiritual option can be summarised as the process of ‘decolonising religion to liberate spirituality’, operating mainly at the ‘level of knowledge and subjectivity’ but equally crucial to the ‘decolonization of economy and politics’ (Mignolo, 2011, p. 62). While secular modern and postmodern thinkers warn that ‘religions can be dangerous’, Mignolo (2011) reminds us that ‘modernity and postmodernity can be dangerous too’ and that there is ‘no safe space’ (p. 62). Acknowledging that spirituality also exists outside religions, in music, art and psychology for example, Mignolo (2011) claims that the commonalities among the revitalisation of multiple forms of spirituality is the ‘desire to find ways of life beyond capitalism and its magic of modernity and development that keep consumers caught in the promise of dreamworlds’ (p. 62). According to Mignolo (2011) the spiritual option offers the ‘opening up of horizons of life that have been kept hostage (that is, colonized) by modernity, capitalism, and the belief in the superiority of Western civilisation’ (p. 62).

While the spiritual option often presents a challenge to capitalist enterprise, it is not necessarily supported by anti-capitalist political tendencies. Mignolo (2011) writes, ‘Hardcore materialists tend to look at spirituality as related to ‘new age’ or to soft and romantic revolutionaries’ and that through this devaluation and dismissal ‘progressive secular intellectuals indirectly support capitalist arguments for modernity and development’ (p. 62). Distancing himself from new age literature, Mignolo bases his analysis in Indigenous land-based metaphysics. Drawing on the work of Andrea Smith, who Mignolo claims advances a ‘succinct and groundbreaking connection between spirituality and land that neither Christians, liberals, nor Marxists may be ready to accept’ (2011, p. 63). Specifically, Mignolo (2011) cites Andrea Smith’s summary of
Gabrielle Tayat that ‘Intolerance toward Indian religions cannot be addressed by educating white people about our spiritual beliefs, because our religious oppression is not based upon ignorance but on the seizure of Indian lands upon which Indian spiritualities are based.’ (p. 63). While universalising ‘Indigenous people’ is problematic due to the immense diversity which exists between and within indigenous communities (Mika, 2017), this point appears particularly salient in relation to mana whenua concerns within the SOUL campaign.

**Crossing boundaries**

While Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā name two cosmologies with distinct metaphysics, some bodies of knowledge that circulate in the West are more open to and communicative with Indigenous philosophical styles than others. The interconnected fields of deep ecology and ecofeminism are domains in which the human capacity to apprehend (rather than comprehend) the so-called natural world is articulated as being in excess of both teleological and causative modes of scientific discourse (Sessions, 1995; Miesologists & Shiva, 2014). The ability to simply *be there* in tandem with other entities prior to the cognitive production of descriptive and explanatory formulations one finds in such literature certainly speaks more easily with Māori arguments concerning the primordial nature of being and lack of a Cartesian split than philosophical tendencies which reduce the world to a thoroughly knowable and supposedly objective empiricism.

Just as some strands of thought in the West resonate more strongly with whakaaro Maori than others, there are also open scientific debates where historically dominant positions in Western thought are called into question. In the field of cognitive science, for instance, there is an ongoing argument as to the most appropriate way in which to conceptualise the mind. Many researchers, including Rejeski and Gauvin (2013), advance an embodied and relational theory
of mind that places great importance on the interdependence between humans, the social world and the physical/natural environment. On this side of the conversation there are scientists who claim that the mind goes beyond the mere contents of brains; that we do not simply perceive objects which are ‘out there’ in the world but that these so-called objects are inseparable from our perception (Wilson, 2002). Moreover, theories of embodied and relational cognition emphasise the importance of supposedly external factors in the maintenance of one’s health and wellbeing (Rejeski and Gauvin, 2013). On the other side of this debate, scientists studying the same evidence argue that while there is a causative relation between external objects and the brain, this does not indicate that the mind is fundamentally interconnected with entities outside the person (Wilson, 2002).

Given that scientists often present the same evidence interpreted in different ways to support their conclusions, it is in fact a question of the sets of a priori assumptions that the researchers are operating under, whether they are conscious of it or not. The assumption of a bounded-self interacting with external objects on the one hand and an open-self that is interconnected with the rest of the world on the other. Commentaries on these types of axiomatic assumptions suggest that the former are dominant in Te Ao Pākehā and the latter are given pre-eminence in Te Ao Māori (Marsden, 2003; Walker, 1996). In view of this debate it would be a mistake to position mainstream science in absolute opposition to mātauranga Māori. As scientific arguments in favour of an open, interconnected self, resonate strongly with the canon of Māori philosophy.

Mika (2017) for instance, argues strongly against the assumption of the banal self and object in the field of education, discussing in depth that it is not so easily determined where the boundary between the self and the world might lie. Moreover, Mika (2017) reminds us that ‘What one
proposes the world to be is… linked intimately with one’s ability to draw life from the external world’ (p. 54). Not only does the evident complementarity between the arguments made by Mika (2017) and Rejeski and Gauvin (2013) demonstrate the fruitfulness of reading Māori philosophy alongside mainstream scientific research, rather than imagining an intrinsic contradiction between the two. It also reveals the two competing sets of assumptions concerning a bounded/banal-self engaging in complex relations with external objects and an open/interconnected-self fundamentally inseparable from beings outside the brain are neither arbitrary nor are they a merely semantic distinction. There is in fact a great deal at stake here.

As both Mika (2017) and Rejeski and Gauvin (2013) argue persuasively, an emphasis on the interconnectedness of the human self with other beings has beneficial health outcomes. Here lies the crux of the issue, faced with two competing interpretations capable of explaining the same evidence, how are we to decide which theory is correct? The relativist position would be to say that both are equally valid. This is the kind of debilitating relativism that hides the impoverishment of its thought and weakness of spirit beneath a glossy layer of pseudo-democratic politeness. If it is in fact the case that we are living, breathing, embodied beings, then a failure to come out in favour of empirically valid theoretical perspectives which also offer the most potential for human wellbeing is stupid and irrational at best. At the extreme it drips with the same anti-human nihilism that has characterised all of the most brilliant architects of human misery and destruction.

In the same way that the axiomatic decision to emphasise a banal self or an expansive self has implications for human wellbeing, and in this sense the outcome comes to bear on the validity of the theory. The antagonistic orientations towards land/whenua in Ihumātao resulting from differential processes of qualification and classification can be distinguished by the outcomes
which seem reasonable in accordance with them. On the side of Fletchers, Auckland Council, the New Zealand Government, and dominant Western philosophy in general, the idea that land is a bounded physical object suitable for industrial purposes leads quite smoothly to the conclusion that a residential housing development is not only reasonable but thoroughly desirable given the broader context of a housing crisis.

On the side of SOUL, the concept of whenua as the ‘solid manifestation of Papatūānuku’ (Mika, 2016) giving rise to all beings including humans – and in this particular case, rich with cultural, spiritual, historical, archaeological, geological, and recreational value – propels ones faculties towards the inevitable conclusion that a housing development is neither reasonable nor appropriate, and perhaps even criminal. In this sense, the purposes to which one’s rational faculties are put is dependent at least in part on the metaphysics that one inhabits. In the words of Pania Newton,

I’m involved in SOUL because this land is so significant to me and I’m prepared to do everything that I can to prevent this development from happening because I think if this development goes through, many of our significant sites will be damaged. We’re still trying to restore the mauri of our awa, of our moana, of this whenua from all the pillage that has happened, and a housing development on top of that is just adding salt to the wound. It’s about standing up for what we believe, whether that is whakapapa, our connections to this whenua or if it’s green space, archaeology, history, it’s about taking a stand and that’s why I’m taking a stand because this whenua means so much to me and my people. (Pania Newton, 19 October 2017)
Constitutional Transformation

The discussion in this chapter so far has focused on divergent metaphysics as they come to bear on the situation concerning Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao. What is at stake is not merely a question of knowledge, but of politics. I have stressed the importance of moving beyond a simple opposition between Western science and Indigenous philosophy. However, as Ludwig (2016) argues, efforts at integrating Western science and Indigenous knowledge must be accompanied by a ‘political notion of ontological self-determination’ (p. 37). This is more than a question of respect, it is an eminently practical issue stemming from the fact that there are limits to the extent to which Indigenous knowledge can be integrated on the terms of Western science. Without granting Indigenous knowledge the rights to its foundational axioms, methods, and speculative thinking on its own terms, humanity as a whole stands to lose the evident benefits of applications of such knowledge which happen to not be exhausted by the failure of Western science to draw them into its schemas through dominant processes of rationalisation.

With this in mind, the fact that public institutions in New Zealand continue to fail to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi should give us all cause for concern. From the 14th to the 16th of August 2017, SOUL representatives Pania Newton and Delwyne Roberts attended the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Geneva, Switzerland. The Committee commended the New Zealand State for acknowledging that racial disparities exist and accepting responsibility to correct them. As well as praising the passing into law of Te Awa Tupuna Act 2017; a piece of legislation that recognises the Whanganui River’s fullness of being (often translated as ‘personhood’), in line with foundational axioms of Māori ontology. Additionally, the Committee welcomed the efforts of various ‘policies, programmes and administrative measures’ which protect human rights, and noted with appreciation the ‘active
role of a vibrant civil society’ (UNCERD, 2017, p. 1-2). On the issue of Special Housing Area 62 in particular, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racism stated,

The Committee is concerned by conflicting information regarding consultation with local Māori in connection with the designation of Special Housing Area (SHA) 62 at Ihumātao on land traditionally and currently occupied by Māori. The Committee notes that this land has been sold to a commercial developer who is required to actively mitigate the effects of development. While noting the State party’s position that it adequately consulted and obtained support from Māori authorities regarding the designation, the Committee is concerned by alternate reports that Māori have not had the opportunity to formally take part in decision-making with respect to use of the land… The Committee recommends that the State party review, in consultation with all affected Māori, the designation of Special Housing Area 62 to evaluate its conformity with the Treaty of Waitangi, the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant international standards, and that the State party obtain the free and informed consent of Māori before approving any project affecting the use and development of their traditional land and resources. (UNCERD, 2017, p. 5)

The Committee also expressed concerns regarding the status of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, stating,

The Committee is concerned by the apparent lack of progress in implementation of the 2013 recommendations of the Constitutional Advisory Panel concerning the Treaty. It notes that an independent, Māori-led initiative has also undertaken wide-ranging consultation and issued its own report, Matike Mai Aotearoa, which put
forward other proposals for discussion on a range of constitutional models which also have not been taken up by the State party. The Committee sees little progress during the reporting period in securing indigenous rights to self-determination under the Treaty or the power-sharing arrangement between hapū and the State party required by the Treaty. The Committee is concerned by reports that the Waitangi Tribunal is under-resourced, leading to long processing delays. (UNCERD, 2017, p. 3-4)

The removal of ‘sites of significance to Māori’ and a list of Treaty principles from the Auckland Unitary Plan, as well as the designation of Special Housing Area 62 by the Auckland Council and New Zealand Government are indicative of this failure to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Forbes, 2016). I have argued in this thesis that the New Zealand Government has mobilised a housing crisis in order to circumvent existing legislative protections. Special Housing Area 62 might have been prevented if the New Zealand Government had remained within the established parameters of the Resource Management Act 1991. In this sense the New Zealand Government can be found wanting in relation to a system of British Common Law, the jurisprudence that informs the New Zealand legislature. There is a deeper problem however, in the sense that the cultural-political traditions underlying the Māori led opposition to Special Housing Area 62 are not properly registered under the New Zealand legal system, grounded as it is in a colonial metaphysical substrate.

The situation in Ihumātao concerning Special Housing Area 62 further demonstrates the relevance of arguments put forward by Matike Mai Aotearoa (2016) referenced by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racist Discrimination. Specifically, that the practical implementation of Māori sovereignty is necessary in order for Māori to make decisions within
their own metaphysics. It is worth being specific here about what exactly has been breached in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The English translation of Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi states,

The Queen of England agrees to protect the chiefs, the subtribes and all the people of New Zealand in the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands, villages and all their treasures. But on the other hand the Chiefs of the Confederation and all the Chiefs will sell land to the Queen at a price agreed to by the person owning it and by the person buying it (the latter being) appointed by the Queen as her purchase agent. (New Zealand History, 2018)

Puketāpapa in Ihumātao was never sold to a purchase agent. It was confiscated as a result of the Waikato War as punishment for local Māori refusing to swear allegiance to the Crown and transferred to a Pākehā settler through a Crown Land Grant on the 28th December 1867 (Archives New Zealand, 1867). While the Crown has accepted full responsibility for the Waikato War and issued a formal apology. The land which was confiscated has not been returned to Māori. In the case of Special Housing Area 62, the land remains in private ownership and is to be developed in the interests of private property developers and their financiers.

On the 7th December 2015, the founding members of SOUL, Haki Wilson, Bobbi-Jo Pihema, Qiane Matata-Sipu, Pania Newton, Waimārie Rakena and Moana Waa submitted an application to the Waitangi Tribunal for an urgent hearing concerning the impact of Special Housing Area 62 on them as mana whenua. The Waitangi Tribunal declined their application, noting that ‘it is well established that the Tribunal is not empowered to make orders against either the developers or Auckland Council’ (Waitangi Tribunal, 2017, p. 8). The Waitangi Tribunal stated
that ‘only the Crown has the power to remove Ihumātao from the Special Housing Area status as set out in s18(3) of the SHA Act’ (Waitangi Tribunal, 2017, p. 7). Specifically, the Tribunal advised that ‘power to remove the SHA designation is held solely by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister of Housing’ (Waitangi Tribunal, 2017, p. 5).

On the 26th of July 1984, at Makaurau Marae in Ihumātao, James Earnest Ritchie told the Waitangi Tribunal,

> The people believe that the signing of the Treaty was a spiritual act of trust; that behind that signing lay an understanding that the Treaty was a sacred document rather than merely a legal one; that the presence and the mediatorship of men of the Church was witness and evidence that the Treaty was not an act of trade or simply polity; but that the signing was a proper extension of spiritual guardianship enshrined in their heritage and now reposing in the Treaty. (Ritchie, 1984, p.12)

The trust embodied in Te Tiriti o Waitangi has been betrayed. Special Housing Area 62 is only one instance in a history that has too often been characterised by violence, treachery and deceit. Matike Mai Aotearoa (2016) present the Crown with another opportunity to restore some balance to the treaty relationship and to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi as it was understood at the time of signing. While the demand for multiple sites of political sovereignty raises a great number of challenges, the need to address the wound at the heart of the nation is there for anyone who cares to look.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has drawn on the work of Boltanski & Thévenot to argue that conflicting processes of qualification and classification are in play between the SOUL campaign and proponents of
Special Housing Area 62. It is not a disagreement over what to do with the same ‘object’, the two sides of the discursive conflict are concerned with different ‘object-states’ embedded in distinct metaphysical substrates. Land and Whenua are not merely the same thing in different languages, they are radically different beings.

The question of whether Europeans can think is not a tongue in cheek comment designed to solicit the allegiance of the oppressed. It is a line of investigation based on critical literature documenting the limitations of Enlightenment thought to admit outsiders into the fold (Dabashi, 2015). As Federici (2001) has documented, holistic metaphysics in Europe were suppressed through extreme violence and persecution. The Spiritual Option is a term coined by Mignolo (2011) to describe a political movement of global significance that values Indigenous land-based metaphysics. As many Indigenous scientists and philosophers are already aware, upon closer inspection the binary distinction between Western science and Indigenous thought falls apart.

In recent times, the assumptions of Mechanical Philosophy have increasingly been open for debate as Newtonian and Cartesian assumptions about reality have proved insufficient. The relation between Western knowledge and Indigenous philosophy must be accompanied by a notion of political self-determination as the metaphysical foundations of distinct cosmologies are not fully captured by rational argumentation. The failure of political and legal institutions to protect the whenua in Ihumātao, validates many of the arguments put forward by Matike Mai Aotearoa, who present the colonial state with an opportunity to meaningfully honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
Conclusion

I stated in Chapter One of this thesis that I would endeavour to remain present in the text, as a way to avoid the colonial assumption of the invisible knower. Despite my intentions, in places I became somewhat absent, as I slipped back into this dominant mode of producing knowledge. If I may step forward here, I will summarise the arguments I have made to this point and then try to explain what I have learnt from my experiences with the Save Our Unique Landscape campaign.

In Chapter Two I argued that early relationships between Māori and Pākehā were not always characterised by conflict, but at times have been harmonious, reciprocal and productive. I explained that the Waikato War devastated the Māori economy in place such as Ihumātao. The Crown has formally apologised for the conflict, yet the vast majority of the land which was stolen, including in Ihumātao has not been returned. I commented that the ability for SOUL to articulate the historical trauma carried by people in Ihumātao has been attractive to notable elders participating in the campaign.

In Chapter Three I described SOUL as a mana whenua led campaign that has drawn on a range of people and knowledge, making effective use of traditional and social media, public speaking, guided tours and community activities. I noted that the Ihumātao peninsula is of significant geological, cultural and ecological value, but that neither Fletchers nor the New Zealand Government have prioritised the preservation of the geosite values of the Ōtuataua Stonefields. Quoting Pania Newton and Betty King I explained some of the ways in which the SOUL
campaign is informed by Māori philosophies that identify whenua as the physical manifestation of Papatūānuku; the metaphysical ground of Being. I noted that as well as being motivated by a desire to preserve the integrity of the whenua, both Māori, and Irish Pākehā activists such as Frances Hancock and Brendan Corbett, are guided by the presence of their ancestors. I suggested that more than a mere collection of individuals pursuing shallow self-interest, SOUL is a place where truth can be spoken.

In Chapter Four I argued that the designation of Special Housing Area 62 sits within a broader government response to a nationwide housing crisis characterised by a lack of housing, low interest rates and high net migration. I demonstrated that this situation is profitable for the banking sector. I explained that the *Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013* was passed under urgency in an attempt to increase the supply of housing by streamlining consents processes. But that this has undermined heritage protections, community power, and Māori rights under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I noted that the Special Housing Areas have failed to deliver on the promise of greater housing affordability. Using Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) I argued that the Housing Crisis has functioned as discursive justification for the designation of contentious residential housing developments including Special Housing Area 62 in Ihumātao. I claimed that more than simply building housing, Fletcher Residential are seeking to profit from land speculation.

In Chapter Five, I argued that the Fletcher brand unifies a number of organisations motivated to valorise the capital under their management. I claimed that the history of Fletchers demonstrates a willingness to push the bounds of acceptable social behaviour in the pursuit of profit seeking and business expansion. I also detailed how Fletchers considered becoming a state owned enterprise, but later pulled out of building state housing due to a lack of profits and
were bailed out by the taxpayer. I described how Fletchers went global in the 1990s, integrating themselves with modern markets, and further undermining their ability to make decisions that negatively impact the bottom line. I mentioned that both Adam Smith and Jane Kelsey suggest that capital favours its home country, but that the Fletcher brand is familiar with political controversy, investing in Chile under Pinochet and driving Indigenous people off their land in Canada in the 1980s.

In Chapter Six, I argued that Auckland Council has centralised power, resources and debt, with minimal Māori representation and diminished local democracy. I noted that plans made by the Manukau City Council to include the Wallace Block in the Ōtuataua Stonefields Public Reserve were lost during the amalgamation of the Auckland regional councils. Using relevant literature I argued that financialisation is a regime of capital accumulation that has been ascendant since the collapse of the Fordist system that coupled wages to productivity. I explained how Auckland Council facilitates land speculation by approving developments where rent gaps exists, leading to gentrification and urban sprawl. I showed that since its formation Auckland Council has taken on increasing amounts of debt borrowed from global finance markets. Citing case studies of other institutions of local government, I suggested that the financialisation of Auckland Council could potentially delimit democratic decision making as the bounds of possible courses of action become curtailed by restrictions imposed by funding mechanisms.

In Chapter Seven, I claimed that the SOUL campaign has philosophical implications. Again drawing on Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), I argued that people qualify and classify objects and persons in the world. I noted that persons and objects in Ihumātao have resisted qualification and classification. Based on the kōrero of my research participants, I argued that land and whenua are fundamentally different beings grounded in distinct metaphysics. I claimed
that Western science and Indigenous philosophy are not mutually exclusive, but neither can the axiomatic foundations of one be fully explained on the terms of the other. I noted that several of the fundamental assumptions about reality commonly critiqued by Indigenous thinkers are dependent on violent oppression perpetrated in Europe. I drew on Western theorists to describe the metaphysical transformation that occurred in Europe through the Industrial Revolution. I showed that while many Western critical theorists dismiss a preoccupation with the richness of pre-industrial culture, some thinkers including Löwy and Sayre (2001) value such an approach. Citing Mignolo (2011) I described the Spiritual Option as a global political force compatible with the reclamation of land by Indigenous peoples. I argued that some fields in Western academia speak more easily with Māori philosophy than others, and that the debates concerning the nature of the relations between self/world, or consciousness in general, are ongoing. Finally, I made a case for why Constitutional Transformation remains on the table for the foreseeable future and noted that the United Nations has expressed concern with the New Zealand Government’s treatment of Māori.

I explained in the Methodology that I went into this project fairly preoccupied with the inequality caused by housing markets. While I am certainly no more enamoured with the social ills produced by markets, as I write this conclusion, I am thinking about metaphysics. In particular, metaphysics that extend beyond mere rationality; first principles embedded in narrative structures that have psychological depth and moral weight. Metaphysics with wairua. Wairuatanga Pākehā. I have been left with the lingering thought of Frederick Nietzsche’s diagnosis of the ‘death of God’ in the West (Young, 2014). Nietzsche wrote,

God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all
that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? (1974, p. 181)

The metaphysical inheritance of Pākehā people living in Aotearoa largely comes from a Judeo-Christian tradition layered over the ruins of European ‘paganism’, infused with multiple bodies of mythologies, and various pantheons of deities. There is much that can be said about the strengths and weakness of those traditions. I am certainly not recommending an unthinking return to a patriarchal Church of shame, guilt, and hate, complete with stifling dogmas, racism, and repressed sexuality. Nevertheless, the modern Western subject lives in the remains of these traditions, fumbling through the metaphysical wreckage left following the obliteration of prior belief systems at the hands of Enlightenment Reason. Nietzsche grasped over 130 years ago that the modern Western subject struggled to inhabit the dream like structures of their spiritual metaphysics. Either blindly going through the motions of empty religious rituals or engaging in cynical and hubristic mockery from a perch of intellectual superiority. Similarly Māori Marsden (2003) identified that,

in the west, metaphysics and philosophy seem to have lost their way. There is today a plethora of Modern Philosophy… mostly spurious and therefore confused; lacking wairua; lacking a challenge to seek out the why of life. There is no authentic vision and without a vision, the people die. (p. 113)
Perhaps this helps to explain some of the intrigue with which Pākehā intellectuals approach tikanga Māori; unable to believe in our own metaphysical traditions, we settle for believing through a colonial construction of the Other (Walker, 1996). The Other believes for us; our impoverished spirit takes solace in the idea that someone, somewhere, is connected to something transcendent.

Despite our secular materialist convictions, we make an exception. In the proximity of the SOUL campaign our certainty falters: ‘Māori believe the land is sacred, and I don’t want to be a colonial bigot, so I guess that’s cool’. Still sidestepping the whole issue that, if we are honest with ourselves, we struggle to believe the land is sacred, because we find it hard to believe anything is sacred. Nietzsche wrote,

> How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all the suns? Are we not plunging downwards? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as if through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? (1974/1887, p. 181)

Nietzsche did search for lanterns, he hoped that in the wake of the death of God people might be able to invent their own values (Nietzsche, 1969). After his death, Nietzsche’s concept of the person who could create their own values, the Übermensch, or Superman, was appropriated by the Nazis and warped into fascist propaganda (Golomb & Wistrich, 2002). The evidence for
an individual’s ability to successfully manufacture their own values does not seem to have improved much since, not if the literature on suicide is any indication (Fitzpatrick, 2008; 2009).

Māori Marsden argues,

All subjects no matter how specialised must be connected to a centre. This centre is constituted of our most basic convictions – ideas that transcend the world of sense-perception. This does not mean that they are purely subjective, or relative, or even mere convention. But they must approximate reality whether in this world of sense-perception or the real world behind that. Such ideas without this approximation inevitably lead to disaster. A truly educated person is not one who knows something about everything, or everything about something but one who is truly in touch with their centre… If they have faced up to the ultimate questions, their centre no longer remains a vacuum which ingests any new idea that seeps into it. Those ideas are likely to be a denial of the meaning and purpose of life which leads to total despair and meaningless. (2003, p. 113)

In a similar vein, Nietzsche thought that without a sufficient metaphysical grounding people would fall into nihilism, or find themselves gravitating towards authoritarian political leaders, captured by reductive, totalising ideologies (2017/1901;1969/1885). The history of the twentieth century provides much evidence for the parallel observations of Nietzsche and Marsden: without a culturally embedded values structure, people suffer from a lack of meaning, and we have to believe in something, or we die.

This brings me to my final point: Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It is all very well to repeat the dictum of ‘Honour the Treaty’ as many Pākehā people today do. But how many pause to consider whether
Ritchie (1984) spoke the truth when he said that the Treaty is not merely a political or legal document, but a spiritual union. What exactly are we to supposed do with such an idea? And by ‘we’ I mean those of us for whom the language of spirituality is metaphorical at best, or, as is often the case, a derisible relic of the forgotten past. Are we to content ourselves with believing through the Other? Or can we achieve what is seemingly impossible? Could we find a way to inhabit a vivifying metaphysics that takes us to our rightful place in the political, legal and spiritual union embodied in Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

The challenge thrown down by the SOUL campaign strikes at the deepest foundations of Western civilisation. It can be said: where is your soul?
Appendix

The following timeline was produced by the SOUL Campaign Working Group (2018), I include it here in the hope that it may provide additional information concerning the SOUL campaign which was not discussed in the main text.

| 1160 – 14th Century | Ihumātao is among the sites of earliest human occupation of Aotearoa New Zealand and home to the longest continually occupied papakāinga (village) in Auckland. Carbon dating of an archaeological site on nearby Puketūtū Island dates human settlement by the people of Ihumātao in the range of 1160 A.D. Around the 14th century the Tainui waka settle in Ihumātao with ancestors of Te Wai-o-Hua. Archaeologists argue that Ihumātao area is internationally significant because it contains crucial knowledge of the end point of the 5000-year Polynesian migration across the Pacific. This area offers one of the last remnants of an original 8000 hectares of volcanic stonefields in the Auckland area, all intensively cultivated by early Maori settlers. |
| 1863 | Governor George Grey issues a proclamation on 9 July, 1863. The proclamation demands that mana whenua swear allegiance to Queen Victoria or withdraw into the Waikato beyond the Mangatawhiri Stream on pain of forced eviction. After the land is emptied, it is handed to the ‘Waste Lands Office’ for survey and sale. Over 1000 acres belonging to Te Wai-o-Hua were confiscated at Ihumātao because of their support for Kingitanga (the Māori King Movement). |
| 1860s to 2016 | Through a Crown Land Grant on 28th December 1867, a Scottish settler Gavin Struthers Wallace gains ownership of land at Ihumātao (Puketāpapa). He and his descendants farm the land until they sell it in 2016 to Fletcher Residential Ltd (as outlined below). The 1867 Crown Grant explains how the land becomes known as ‘the Wallace Block’. |
| 2001 | Manukau City Council, the Auckland Regional Council, the central government and mana whenua combine forces to create Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve. The land (around 100 hectares) was purchased from four separate farming families at Ihumātao in 1999 for $4.7 million. |
| 2007 | Manukau City Council, as part of planning for the Manukau Gateway Heritage Area, states that, “Land adjacent to the Ōtuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve is designated and will be acquired by Council for Public Open Space, for the protection of the landscape and natural and cultural heritage values.” This includes the Wallace Block. The Council tries to buy the Wallace Block, but the owners (descendants of Gavin Wallace) refuse to sell the land to Council because they are dissatisfied with its offer of $6.5 million. |
| 1 Nov 2010 | Manukau City Council (along with six other territorial authorities and one regional council) is amalgamated into the new unitary authority of the Auckland Council. |
| 15 June 2012 | Despite strong opposition from Auckland Council and mana whenua of Ihumātao, an Environment Court decision directs Auckland Council to rezone land at Ihumātao from “Rural Land” to “Future Development Zone” (FDZ). The Court and the other parties accepted that “the land to the west of Oruarangi Road, including the Wallace Block was of special significance to Māori”, but the Court felt that “sympathetic development which protected the heritage, cultural and historic values of the area could be undertaken “with the right planning regime”. The Court ordered |
Council to amend the District Plan, including a description of the new FDZ subzone that was to identify and provide for, among other things, the Māori cultural associations with the area, including wāhi tapu, the heritage and historic associations, the coastal environment and the landscape values. The Environment Court could not have foreseen the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act (HASHA) which effectively takes away any right to oppose plan change applications.

**13 Sept 2013**  
Parliament passes the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act (HASHA) under urgency. This Act is designed to fast-track housing developments in Auckland in response to a growing housing crisis in the city.

**20 March 2014**  
Fletcher Residential Ltd enters into a conditional purchase agreement for the Oruarangi Road Wallace Block, dependent on obtaining a resource consent from Auckland Council that would allow for the development of a Special Housing Area (SHA). Fletcher plans to build 480 dwellings on the land.

**1 May 2014**  
Auckland Council votes that the land at 545-561 Oruarangi Road, Ihumātao (the Wallace Block) be recommended to the Minister of Housing for declaration as an SHA.

**31 July 2014**  
The 32 hectares Wallace Block at 545-561 Oruarangi Road is gazetted as an SHA.

**3 Sept 2014**  
The Overseas Investment Office (OIO) allows Fletcher Residential Ltd to purchase of land at 545-561 Oruarangi Road. Fletcher Residential. Although having NZ origins, Fletcher is now a majority foreign-owned company which explains why it needed OIO approval to buy the land.

**Early 2015**  
- Following discussions among rangatahi (younger members) of Makaurau Marae (Māori community centre) at Ihumātao and with local community leaders also concerned about the future of Puketāpapa, the SOUL Campaign is created.  
- A working group is established and weekly meetings continue to this day with various advisers (cultural, legal, archaeological, geological, cultural, political, media) offering advice and assistance on a voluntary basis.

**May 2015 – present**  
SOUL activates a multi-media public awareness-raising strategy:  
- SOUL establishes a website and active Facebook page (now with over 4500 followers)  
- SOUL engages with news media through national and local media with stories, commentaries and letters to the editor appearing in print, radio and television media outlets, including Māori TV, TV One News, NZ Herald, Manukau Courier, Radio NZ, The Wire – Bfm and others (mentioned below).  
- SOUL delivers presentations to numerous community groups and organisations across Auckland  
- SOUL offers numerous guided tours across the land at Ihumātao, to the public, politicians and school groups, including tours led by respected archaeologists, volcanologists and geologists.  
- Stories of Ihumātao are told to a wider audience via video clips published online.

**June 2015**  
- Fletcher Residential Ltd applies to Auckland Council for a plan variation to the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (PAUP) to rezone SHA 62 from “Future Development Zone” in the District Plan and “Future Urban” in the PAUP to a combination of Mixed Housing Suburban, Public Open Space – Conservation, and Green Infrastructure Corridor. (The Re-zoning)  
- Te Kawerau a Maki Iwi Tribal Authority produce a report entitled: “Cultural Impact Assessment for Fletcher Residential Oruarangi Road SHA 545 Oruarangi Road, Ihumātao, Auckland.” The introduction states: “Te Kawerau was not consulted by Central or Local Government regarding the placement of a SHA in this location, and has not supported moves to urbanise this landscape generally. Nevertheless, to ensure effects are managed and the outcome is culturally robust, Te Kawerau Iwi Tribal Authority (TKITA) has been working closely and
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 June 2015</td>
<td>SOUL hosts a ‘packed’ public meeting at Manukau Rugby League Club in Māngere at which participants strongly oppose the SHA 62 development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>TE ĀKITAI WAIHOUA produce a confidential “Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) for the Oruarangi Road SHA Project.” The CIA defines mitigation measures for the development and states it does not represent consultation between Te Ākitai Waiwhua and an applicant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 June 2015</td>
<td>SOUL presentation to the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board who reaffirm their opposition to SHA 62.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 June 2015</td>
<td>SOUL requests the NZ Overseas Investment Office (OIO) to review the consent granted to Fletcher Residential to purchase 32 ha of farmland at 545-561 Oruarangi Road Ihumātao in 2014. The Office agrees to conduct the review. (Case 201410052).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 June 2015</td>
<td>SOUL presentation to Auckland Council’s Heritage Advisory Panel uncovers deep concerns over the SHA designation of the land at 545-561 Oruarangi Road, given its unique archaeological, historical, cultural, farming features, and social implications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 July 2015</td>
<td>SOUL sends letters to every Member of Parliament. The Labour Party, Green Party, and Māori Party express support for the SOUL Campaign.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 August 2015</td>
<td>Makaurau Marae Committee endorse their rangatahi [members of SOUL] and give them full support to proceed with opposition to the SHA at 545 Oruarangi Rd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 August 2015</td>
<td>Seven Auckland Councillors sign a Notice of Motion requesting the revocation of the Auckland Council Governing Body resolution that designated the Ihumātao site as a Special Housing Area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 August 2015</td>
<td>SOUL presentation to Auckland Council Governing Body. Around 250 SOUL supporters attend, including a large mana whenua presence. Some Councillors declare their decision-making was not properly informed when voting on the SHA designation for the Ihumātao site. They argue the decision-making process did not allow for proper consideration of crucial factors in relation to the site. Regardless, a motion to revoke the Auckland Council’s recommendation for SHA62 is lost, with 7-12 votes. The Council also refuse to consider the land swap option proposed by SOUL, which would have allowed for an equivalent number of residential dwellings to be built on other non-controversial, council-controlled land. Same day, an hour after the Auckland Council Governing Body meeting. Minister Nick Smith and Mayor Len Brown declare 11 new SHAs in South Auckland including SHA62.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August-September 2015 onwards</td>
<td>SOUL erects protest signs around the papakainga (Ihumātao village) which remain to this day and are periodically refreshed. SOUL also erects white flags along the perimeter of the land at 545-561 Oruarangi Road so everyone can see what is at stake.</td>
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<td>23 September 2015</td>
<td>Mayor Len Brown hosts, what he describes as, the first of a series of ‘round table’ discussions including a SOUL delegation and representatives of Fletcher Residential, Auckland Council Housing Projects Office and Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board. Others are invited but do not attend. Participants share points of view and explore alternatives. SOUL explains again why mana whenua, Ihumātao residents and the broader community oppose SHA 62. Despite SOUL’s commitment to work with interested parties to resolve the problem, the meetings do not continue.</td>
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<td>24 September 2015</td>
<td>SOUL holds a silent protest at an Auckland Council Governing Body meeting held on Makaurau Marae at Ihumātao.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 October 2015</td>
<td>SOUL engages with the Minister of Māori Affairs through a Ministry of Maori Development Housing Advisor who attends a SOUL meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 November 2015</td>
<td>SOUL presents a 4,000+ signature petition to Parliament in Wellington and receives support from a number of Labour and Green Party MPs. The local Mangere MP is a strong supporter of the Campaign.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 November 2015</td>
<td>SOUL meets with representatives from the Auckland Council Resource Consents Department staff to deliver more than 300 submissions against the zone change for the proposed SHA development at Ihumātao.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>13,000 copies of SOUL Times newspaper delivered to households across Māngere, Māngere Bridge and Ihumātao (Edition 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>15,000 copies of SOUL Times newspaper delivered to households across Māngere, Māngere Bridge and Ihumātao (Edition 2).</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 December 2015</td>
<td>An application is submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal for an Urgent Inquiry into the Crown’s actions concerning the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013, and the development of the Ihumātao SHA. The application argues that the Crown has breached principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand’s founding document, in particular the principle of partnership (by failing to consult with Māori) and the principle of active protection (by disrupting the ability of mana whenua to exercise kaitiaki (guardianship) responsibilities in relation to the area).</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2015 onwards</td>
<td>SOUL Sundays (public open days) initiated to create opportunities for people to visit the area and learn about its history and unique features</td>
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<td>31 January 2016</td>
<td>Workshop with Tosh Ah Kit. Live workshop making videos, t-shirts, flags and stories at the Māngere Mountain Education Center, Māngere.</td>
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| 3–5 Feb 2016       | • Auckland Council hearing on the re-zoning of the SHA 62 from ‘future urban’ to ‘residential’. With SOUL support, the representatives of notified adjacent landowners make submissions opposing the housing development to the panel of independent commissioners on 4 February, and call their own experts. Concerns are expressed about the behaviour of the Chair and her moderation of the hearing during those submissions.  
• SOUL Peaceful Protest Rally outside the Auckland Council hearing |
| 5 February 2016    | SOUL submits a 43-page written submission to Parliament’s Social Services Committee in relation to SHA 62 – seeking immediate Government intervention to revoke the SHA designation and arguing the need for a highly skilled, independent facilitator to help resolve the problem. The Government is alerted to the possibility of an occupation of the land by those opposed to the development. |
| 13 March 2016      | A SOUL peaceful protest at Ihumātao – “Make a Stand for the Land” – draws over 400 people, who form a human chain along the perimeter of SHA62, with speeches by concerned politicians and community leaders. Over 13,000 views recorded on Facebook after the event. |
| 6 April 2016       | • SOUL presentation to Parliament’s Social Services Committee in Wellington regarding the SOUL petition and submission.  
• SOUL representatives also meet with members of the Maori, Green and Labour political parties who again express their support for the Campaign. |
<p>| 26 April 2016      | SOUL meeting with Rt Hon Dr. Nick Smith, the Minister of Building and Housing, and for the Environment, as well as with the Maori Party Co-leader (and their officials) at Mangere Mountain Education Centre, near Ihumātao. The Minister recognises that the value of the area and that it deserves an international visitor / education / research centre because of its unique features and history. SOUL reiterates it wants to avoid occupation of the land and asks again for an independently facilitated process to help resolve the problem. The Minister recommends that SOUL pursue direct engagement with Fletcher Residential Limited over its concerns about the proposed housing development. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>22 April−27 May 2016:</td>
<td>Art Exhibition at St Paul’s Gallery, Auckland City. “Te Ihu o Mataoho” by SOUL supporter and artist Rebecca Ann Hobbs. “Te Ihu o Mataoho” focuses on the Ihumātao peninsula, which encompasses the volcanic features Maungataketake, Otutaua, Waitomokia and, most importantly, Puketāpapa. The exhibition responds to the area’s historic and contemporary geological, volcanic, social and cultural narratives.</td>
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<td>29 April 2016</td>
<td>SOUL meets with mayoral candidate (now the Mayor of Auckland City) and Labour Member of Parliament Phil Goff on the land, to discuss the proposed development. Responding to the pressure of Auckland’s housing crisis, he favours a different kind of housing development on the land. Phil Goff writes to Minister Nick Smith (on 4 May 2016) raising the issue and supports the idea of an independently facilitated process to resolve the problem. The Minister’s letter in reply to Phil Goff (10 May) reinforces that the land meets the SHA designation and that he advised SOUL to engage direct with the new owner.</td>
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<td>10 May 2016</td>
<td>Update given to Auckland Council’s Heritage Advisory Panel who remain very concerned about the proposed development.</td>
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<td>18 May 2016</td>
<td>Following the Auckland Council Zoning Hearing in February, the panel of independent commissioners recommend that Auckland Council approve the plan variation and consents for Fletcher’s proposed development for SHA62. Heritage New Zealand archaeological authorities are required for site development.</td>
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<td>May 2016</td>
<td>SOUL Sundays continue – SOUL hosts regular family-orientated activities on the land such as workshops, working bees and guided tours</td>
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<td>25 May 2016</td>
<td><em>NZ Herald</em> publishes an 800-word Opinion Piece on SHA 62 by two SOUL supporters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 May 2016</td>
<td>A SOUL supporter lodges a written complaint to Auckland Council, regarding concerns about the Chair’s behaviour at the SHA hearing in February. The complaint includes evidence from 10 participants (witnesses and those making submissions), testifying that the Chair’s behaviour created a perception of bias in favour of the applicant. The complaint also documented other concerns related to the Chair’s moderation of the meeting.</td>
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<td>4 and 18 June 2016</td>
<td>Two <em>NZ Listener</em> feature articles by Geoff Chapple, “Ihumātao and the Otuataua Stonefields: A very special area” and “Photo-essay: Ihumātao and the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve” generate public awareness and interest.</td>
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<td>21 June 2016</td>
<td>Auckland Council is asked to provide a copy of the current management plan for the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve. Auckland Council advises that the original 2003 Manukau City Council Management Plan “is still the current document, although with Auckland Council now there may well have been some improvements or departures.” SOUL speaks to archaeologists who express concern about the ongoing management of the Reserve.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 July 2016</td>
<td>SOUL hosts another public meeting at Manukau Rugby League Club in Māngere</td>
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<tr>
<td>July−August 2016</td>
<td>SOUL meets twice with Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse and Councillors Cathy Casey and Mike Lee to explain community opposition to the SHA designation and, in particular, concern about the lack of consultation with mana whenua and community during the process, and to discuss a ‘Land Swap’ proposal aimed at protecting Ihumātao for future generations, while allowing for the housing construction the city needs.</td>
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<td>19 August 2016</td>
<td>SOUL tables a Land Swap proposal at the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board Meeting</td>
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<td>22 August 2016</td>
<td>Fletcher Residential Building (FRL) applies to the Overseas Investment Office to extend the land purchase date, as further resource consents are required. Date of final purchase extended to the 13 December 2016.</td>
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</table>
24 August 2016 | NZ Parliament’s Social Services Committee releases its report on SOUL’s earlier petition and submission. While it “sympathise[s] with the petitioners’ concerns”, it says the SHA designation could not be revoked a) because the Act has an expiry date, 16 June 2016, which has now passed and b) “Even if the status were revoked, development could still occur on SHA 62 under its preexisting zoning designation.” Labour and Green Party committee members express a minority view, reiterating SOUL’s request “to Government and Auckland Council to convene a collaborative process enabling stakeholders to explore alternative approaches to the future use of the site that may resolve the current dispute.” The Committee overlooks the opportunity it had in the months preceding the Act’s expiry date to consider and decide on the matter.

September 2016 onwards | SOUL initiates Friday lunchtime protests outside Fletcher Headquarters in Auckland – ongoing.

9 September 2016 | A “Community Leader’s List” is established, listing community leaders who support the SOUL Campaign.

11 September 2016 | Installation of a Tohu Whenua (Land Marker) at the centre of the contested land at Ihumātao, with over 200 supporters who gather to peacefully protest the planned SHA62 development.

18 September 2016 | TVNZ Channel One Sunday Programme on Ihumātao: “A Rock and a Hard Place” exposing issues related to the SHA62 development—500,000 viewers. The Sunday Programme website states that it offers “Weekly in-depth current affairs bringing viewers award-winning investigations into the stories that matter”.

19 September 2016 | SOUL receives the Council’s decision on its complaint regarding February Hearing. Auckland Council accepts some flaws in the process and outlines action underway to make improvements to the hearing process. SOUL believes the decision does not go far enough and the investigation process itself has flaws. SOUL begins to prepare a new complaint on the complaint investigation process.

30 September 2016 | ‘Midden’ find on Ihumātao Quarry Road (in the middle of the proposed development) is verified by an archaeologist and calls into question the adequacy and conclusions of a report presented by Fletcher as part of the consent process.

9 October 2016 | • *Sunday Star Times* feature article on Ihumātao
• Ihumātao Heritage Hikoi on the land, led by a cross-disciplinary team with intimate knowledge of the area, including an archaeologist, a geologist, an environmental scientist.

13 October 2016 | SOUL meets with the new City Councillor for the Manukau Ward of Auckland Council, who agrees to call a political summit of local body politicians and the Mangere Member of Parliament to discuss next steps in the political strategy.

19 October 2016 | Archaeologist, Ian Lawlor, produces a “Review of Oruarangi SHA Archaeology” for Te Ākitai Wai-o-Hua and finds that the SHA archaeological report is “limited”, especially regarding “the 19th century drystone walls” and recommends “a more comprehensive and robust approach to the assessment, evaluation, investigation, management, together with iwi consultation”. Lawlor states: “This is particularly important, given the proposal is to destroy rare and unique Auckland region Māori and European historic heritage that pre-dates 1900; historic records (maps, plans and photographs), together with the recorded archaeological sites, suggest that some of the estimated 2.5km of drystone walls planned for destruction date to the Ihumātao Mission period of 1846 to 1863, being early examples of this Maori site-type in New Zealand.”

Late October 2016 | • SOUL launches a Virtual Occupation of the SHA62 site and, despite computer glitches, generates immediate interest.
• Copies of the original July 1863 Proclamation of Governor George Grey (forcing mana whenua off the land) are posted on billboards around the city with imagined present-day applications, to demonstrate the impact of the original unjust land confiscation.
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<tr>
<td>October–November 2016</td>
<td>Fletcher Residential Limited submits an application for an archaeological authority from Heritage NZ, requesting permission to modify or destroy archaeological sites on the land. Their application is returned because it is incomplete.</td>
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<td>5 November 2016</td>
<td>Kaitiaki Village is established at Ihumātao on the public road in between the two tracts of land known collectively as the Wallace Block leading to the entrance of the Otatua Historic Stonefields Reserve. Peaceful, non-violent occupation of the land begins. This event draws over 100 people to commemorate another NZ peaceful protest at Parihaka following the 1860s Taranaki land wars.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 November 2016</td>
<td><em>TV One News</em> item on Kaitiaki Village and SOUL Campaign to protect Ihumātao</td>
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<td>17 November 2016</td>
<td>SOUL members attend the Fletcher AGM to raise awareness amongst shareholders of company’s participation in SHA 62. A SOUL member, also a shareholder, voices concerns inside the meeting (gathering media coverage in the <em>NZ Herald</em>) and others protested outside.</td>
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<td>28 November 2016</td>
<td>Mana whenua members of SOUL lodge an injunction to the Maori Land Court in relation to the original confiscation of the land. The injunction aims to block any developments on the land until the case regarding Native Title and the Treaty of Waitangi claim have been heard.</td>
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<td>2 December 2016</td>
<td>SOUL lodges its second complaint to Auckland Council concerning the February 2016 Hearing. The new complaint focuses on the investigation process and aspects of the decision in response to the first complaint about the Chair’s behaviour.</td>
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<td>Early December 2016</td>
<td>SOUL meets with Ngāti Whātua elder and leader of the Takaparawha Bastion Point Occupation (1979-82), Joe Hawke and whanau (family members), at Ihumātao, to discuss the SOUL Campaign and share reflections. Joe Hawke extends his full support and encouragement to the Campaign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 13 December 2016      | • Fletcher Residential Building purchases 545-561 Oruarangi Road Ihumātao.  
                         • SOUL Facebook page now has over 4000 followers and SOUL reaffirms to them its determination to continue its Campaign for justice. |
| 22 December 2016      | *Te Wawewawe a Maui (Maui's clever string game)* with Sorawit Songsataya and Salome Tanuvasa. Live workshop exploring traditional string games at the *Kaitiaki Village*, Ihumātao. |
| December 2016         | Senior archaeologist Ian Lawlor reports new information on the stone walls on SHA 62 site. Following a careful review, he argues that many of the large walls particularly on the south of the block were built by Māori as part of their gardening enterprises in the 1850s, well before the confiscation of the land and settlement by Europeans. This review enhances the archaeological value of the land and again calls into question the archaeology reports submitted by Fletcher at the February 2016 Hearing. |
| January 2017          | • SOUL petitions Heritage NZ weekly to ascertain if Fletcher Residential has submitted a new application for an archaeological authority – ongoing.  
                         • SOUL members begin working with Associate Professor of Law, Claire Charters (University of Auckland) and The Equal Justice Project (University of Auckland Law School) on legal options to inform submissions to various United Nation bodies |
<p>| 5 January 2017        | SOUL attends Takaparawha Bastion Point commemoration. |
| 19 January 2017       | <em>Taonga pūoro workshop</em> with Jo’el Komene. Live workshop exploring traditional Māori instruments at the Māngere Mountain Education Center, Māngere. |
| Early February 2017   | SOUL submits an Official Information Request to Heritage New Zealand relating to Fletcher’s application for an archaeological authority to develop the land at 545-561 Oruarangi Road Ihumātao. SOUL also asks how many applications for archaeological authority related to Māori archaeological sites has Heritage NZ received since May 2014 (excluding post Canterbury earthquake-related applications) and how many were granted? |</p>
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<tr>
<td>3 February 2017</td>
<td>Auckland Council stands by the Council investigation into SOUL’s original complaint into the February 2016 hearing. Council says it will make contact with the author of the complaint to discuss the findings, but as of 30 April 2017 there was no Council follow-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 February 2017</td>
<td>SOUL presentation at Te Tii Marae Hui (gathering) held on Waitangi Day – which commemorates the signing of New Zealand’s founding document. The hui focuses on local, regional and national actions. Again, strong support for the SOUL Campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early March 2017</td>
<td>SOUL submits an application to Heritage NZ to upgrade the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve from Category Two to Category One. SOUL is concerned about the failure of Auckland Council to properly manage the reserve and the deterioration of archaeological features.</td>
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</table>
| March 2017       | • Curators at NZ’s National Museum Te Papa are working on a book project focused on ‘Resistance and Protest’ and will include the SOUL Campaign as a nationally significant protest.  
• Victoria University (Wellington) Salient magazine publish a story and video about the SOUL campaign, now on line.  
• Other short documentaries on Ihumātao in progress.  
• A National Geographic story is underway.  
• King’s College Kapa Haka Group create a haka in support of the Ihumātao struggle for justice which is performed at Polyfest, the annual Auckland high school festival of Polynesian music and culture. |
| 13 March 2017    | • Heritage NZ formerly confirms that Fletcher’s application for an archaeological authority was declined in 2015. Heritage NZ found that Fletcher had not adequately consulted with mana whenua groups who have an interest in the land.  
• Heritage NZ, in response to the earlier request for information, also advises that, of 907 applications for archaeological authority related to Māori archaeological sites, 877 were granted. Two were declined but granted on appeal. The remainder were withdrawn by the applicant or returned because they were incomplete. |
| March 2017       | SOUL learns that Fletcher approached Makaurau Marae but the whanau refused to consult because they feel deeply upset about the proposed development and the lack of democracy in the process. The Fletcher development raises again the injustice of the original land confiscation and the mamae (hurt, suffering, pain) felt over the generations and which is still acutely felt today. |
| 20 March 2017    | SOUL invites the Rt. Hon Maggie Barry, Minister for Culture and Heritage, to visit Ihumātao to discuss the SHA 62 proposed development and the future of the Otuataua Historic Stonefields Reserve as a national and international taonga (treasure). SOUL expresses concern that the Reserve is not being adequately managed by Auckland Council. (As of 30 April 2016, the invitation has not been accepted). |
| 23 March 2017    | • SOUL meets with Heritage New Zealand to discuss the possibility of Wāhi Tūpuna (Ancestral Place) status being granted for the land and to better understand the appeal process following the granting of an archaeological application. Other meetings occur in the following weeks. |
| 23 April 2017    | • Hui-ki-Puketāpapa (a gathering at Puketāpapa) held at Kaitiaki Village and a mandate is given for SOUL to continue its efforts to “#ProtectIhumātao”. Approximately 60 mana whenua members attend and a genuine conversation occurs, enabling people to feel better informed about the history of the land and the issues surrounding its sale. The hui a) resolved to report back its discussions to the next Makaurau Marae and b) affirmed the continued support to defend and preserve the whenua in contention until all proceedings regarding it are heard in their respective jurisdictions. This hui (gathering) recognised the great hui held at Puketāpapa in 1858 “to decide upon the fair and proper use of the land”.

• Ōtuataua workshop with Cat Ruka and Tosh Ah Kit. Live workshop exploring power-moves based on the talisman located in the Ōtuataua crater, Whare Tipua at the Kaitiaki Village, Ihumātao. (Under the guidance of Brendan Corbett, Maiti Tamaariki, Raureti Korako and the Ruka whānau with Kiara Ruka and Lucia-Bluebell Kahukōwhai Davison).

26 April 2017
• A delegation from The Equal Justice Project visit Ihumātao to meet the people, walk the land and discuss their research about possible breaches of corporate business ethics pertaining to the purchase of 545-561 Oruarangi Road Ihumātao. Their engagement with SOUL continues over coming months.

26 April – 3 May 2017
• A SOUL delegation and its legal advisors attend the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York and make presentations on breaches of the human rights of mana whenua and failure of Government to act in relation to injustices at Ihumātao. They meet with the Special Rapporteur (who has the authority to engage the government on the issue) and invite her to visit Ihumātao.
• As of 30 April 2016, (in less than a week) Over 85,500 people were reached through a Facebook regarding a video post of Pania Newton’s first presentation to the United Nations, resulting in 32,000 video views, 579 ‘shares’ of the post and 245 comments.

7 May 2017
• SOUL whanau attend Makaurau Marae Committee and discuss the SOUL Campaign and the outcome of the recent Hui-ki-Puketāpapa. The Committee agree to ask the Makaurau Marae Reservation Trust to meet with SOUL whanau to discuss these matters and ways of working together more closely.

9 May 2017
• SOUL hosts a three-hour briefing hui at Ihumātao with NZ Police Maori Liaison Officers and the Area Operational Commander.

16 May 2016
• Fletcher issue a trespass notice at Kaitiaki Village but it is in invalid due to improper issuing procedure.

24 May 2017
• Presentation to Year 10 students at Western Springs College

19 May 2017
• SOUL Protest outside Fletcher Headquarters.
• Pania Newton writes a letter to Fletcher Residential challenging its Trespass Notice and stating the legal reasons why it is invalid

22 May 2017
• SOUL members meet with NZ Police regarding the Trespass Notice.

25 May 2017
• SOUL Protest outside Fletcher Headquarters. SOUL deliver a letter dated 23 May expressing SOUL’s concerns about breaches of international business ethics.

26 May 2017
• Letter to Heritage New Zealand outlining recent SOUL actions, including the mandate received at the May whanau hui, concerns over Fletcher breaches and the trespass notice

27 May 2017
• SOUL lead a hikoi through the Otuataua Stonefields

2 June 2017
• SOUL protest outside Fletcher headquarters

3 June 2017
• Political summit meeting with local MP, Councillors and Local Board at Mangere Mountain Education Centre – to update them on SOUL activities and seek further support. SOUL is advised to put forward a submission and business case to the Local Board as part of its current Long Term Planning process.

9 June 2017
• Fletcher lodged a new application for consent to modify or destroy archaeological sites on SHA62. The following week Heritage New Zealand return Fletcher’s application for Archaeological Authority because it was again incomplete. Inadequate consultation with mana whenua remains a sticking point.

9 June 2017
• SOUL stall and support for Vincent O’Malley talk on Waikato wars held at Mangere Bridge Primary School

11 June 2017
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| 20 June 2017 | • SOUL representatives attend the tangi of Dame Ngāneko Minhinick at Tahuna Marae in Waiuku. Haare Williams, in a eulogy reported on Māori Television, linked her legacy with SOUL’s campaign to protect the land at Ihumātao.  
• SOUL whānau meet with members of the Makaurau Marae Reservation Trust. SOUL whānau are encouraged to continue their efforts to seek justice for Ihumātao. |
| 21 June 2017 | • Following advice received at the political summit, SOUL presents a written submission to the Local Board meeting, proposing that Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board initiate talks with the Government, Auckland Council, Auckland Airport, and mana whenua to purchase the land designated as SHA62 from Fletcher and include the whenua as part of the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve, as promised by the former Manukau City Council.  
• SOUL protest outside Fletcher Headquarters |
| 24 June 2017 | • SOUL stall at Matariki event at Mangere East Community Centre |
| 20 June 2017 | • Letter sent to Fletcher requesting a copy of the two applications it has made to Heritage New Zealand for Archaeological Authority to destroy or modify sites on SHA62. Follow-up request sent on 28 June. |
| 26 June 2017 | • Maori Land Court hearing at Whangarei. Pania Newton and Tuari Hetaraka asked the Court to place an injunction on the whenua to prevent any development until its status can be determined. |
| Late June 2017 | • Members of SOUL attend the first hearing of a Tenancy Tribunal action instigated by Fletcher in an attempt to regain possession of the brick house. The hearing was adjourned for a month. |
| June       | **Other educational presentations and engagements**  
• SOUL took part in an Auckland roadshow with the Science and Citizenship Association, visiting Westlake Girls High School, Kelston Girls College, and Macleans College who also had students visiting from Auckland Girls Grammar School.  
• SOUL hosted our local school Māngere College at Kaitiaki Village (mid-June)  
• Anthropology honours student, Liam Kennedy, of Victoria University shadowed SOUL reps for five days, writing his report on the anthropology of SOUL.  
• A graphic arts student put together a book about the SOUL campaign and gifted it to us |
<p>| 2 July 2017 | • Working bee at Kaitiaki Village |
| 3 July 2017 | • Presentation to the Independent Maori Statutory Board |
| 6 July 2017 | • Meeting with Michelle Mills, SOUL Supporter and environmental consultant, regarding the need for water quality monitoring and management plan for Oruarangi Awa. Michelle’s doctoral studies focused on this Awa. |
| 8 July 2017 | • Protest at Fletcher Open Home at Stonefields Mt Wellington. |
| 8-10 July 2017 | • SOUL members support a hikoi from Ihumātao to Mangatawhiri to mark the anniversary of the expulsion of mana whenua from Ihumātao in 1863. |
| 10 July 2017 | • Kite workshop with Delwyn Archer. Live workshop making kites for Matariki at Māngere Community Centre, Māngere. |
| 24-28 July 2017 | • Maia Fowler, a SOUL supporter, gives a presentation at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education at Toronto, Canada on the struggle for justice at Ihumātao |
| 23 July 2017 | • Craft Workshop at Kaitiaki Village – an opportunity to be with the land |
| 25 July 2017 | • Presentation to Rotorua Lakes High School |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>27 July 2017</td>
<td>• Nga Kaitiaki o Ihumātao Charitable Trust is established to enable applications for funding for legal action and other purposes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Fletcher lodge an application to Heritage NZ for an archaeological authority</td>
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<td>30 July 2017</td>
<td>• Working bee at Kaitiaki Village</td>
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<td>1 August 2017</td>
<td>• Oruarangi Awa – Productive meeting with Marae Committee about collaborations to protect the river.</td>
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<td>3 August 2017</td>
<td>• SOUL Protest outside Fletcher Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 August 2017</td>
<td>• Heritage New Zealand advise that they have reviewed a revised authority application from Fletcher and accepted it for processing as of this date.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 August 2017</td>
<td>• Working bee at Kaitiaki Village</td>
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<td>6 August 2017</td>
<td>• Attendance at Makaurau Marae Committee to discuss concerns about water quality monitoring and pollution in Oruarangi Awa</td>
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<td>8 August 2017</td>
<td>• SOUL welcomes the interest of a Master’s student in Sociology from Auckland University, Shane Malva, who wants to focus on the SOUL Campaign for his housing related research.</td>
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<td>10 August 2017</td>
<td>• SOUL protest outside Fletcher Head Office in Penrose</td>
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<td>14-16 August 2017</td>
<td>• SOUL representatives, Pania Newton and Delwyne Roberts, attend the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Geneva.</td>
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<td>15 August 2017</td>
<td>• Letter to Heritage New Zealand signed by Betty King and six Kaumātua with their objections to FRL process on SHA62.</td>
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<td>17-19 August 2017</td>
<td>• Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tao: St Paul St Symposium. SPSG organised a wānanga for their 2017 symposium based at Makaurau Marae. In the lead-up to the symposium SPSG jointly planned workshops, hīkoi and structured discussions that sanction mana whenua leadership through Qiane’s guidance. The Ipu ki uta, Ihu ki tao program aligned with the SOUL kaupapa, emphasising advocacy for and protection of whenua as well as mana whenua self-sovereignty through resistant and alternative knowledge systems, all of which were key topics of discussion in the symposium. Members of SOUL attend and support.</td>
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<td>August 2017</td>
<td>• Kedgley Intermediate visit Kaitiaki Village and Stonefields Reserve – 70+90 students</td>
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<td>22 August 2017</td>
<td>• Concerns raised after the school visit about inadequate facilities for visitors at the Stonefields Reserve. SOUL will raise the issue with the local MP, Aupito Su’a Willian Sio, and Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 August 2017</td>
<td>• The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issues a report in which it makes recommendations to the NZ Government:</td>
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<td>. . . that the State party review, in consultation with all affected Māori, the designation of Special Housing Area 62 to evaluate its conformity with the Treaty of Waitangi, the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant international standards, and that the State party obtain the free and informed consent of Māori before approving any project affecting the use and development of their traditional land and resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Media release follow</td>
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<td>Late August/early Sept 2017</td>
<td>• Waitangi Tribunal deny the request for an Urgent Inquiry into the Special Housing Area Act and SHA 62 – the Special Housing Area at Ihumātao, South Auckland. The claim remains waiting to be heard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>• Heritage NZ returned Fletcher’s application for an archaeological authority advising that it was incomplete.</td>
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<td>4 September 2017</td>
<td>• Meeting with Mangere MP Aupito Su’a William Sio at his office in Mangere to provide a Campaign update him. He suggests SOUL writes an open letter to the Prime Minister.</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 September 2017</td>
<td>Soul decides that, if Heritage New Zealand grant an Archaeological Authority to FRL for SHA62, then we will appeal the decision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 September 2017</td>
<td>SOUL protest outside Fletcher Head Office in Penrose</td>
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<td>12 September 2017</td>
<td>SOUL meeting with Counties Manukau Police at their request to provide an update on developments.</td>
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<td>14 September 2017</td>
<td>Published in Manukau Courier and entitled “Open Letter to Prime Minister: Follow the advice of UN over Ihumātao”</td>
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<td>17 September 2017</td>
<td>SOUL working group has a facilitated Strategy Hui on the land, with advisers in attendance</td>
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<td>Week of 19 September</td>
<td>Flyer circulated in the Village to raise awareness about the likely impacts of stormwater developments on the urupa and awa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 September 2017</td>
<td>Heritage New Zealand grant Fletcher Residential Ltd archaeological authority to modify or destroy Maori archaeological and historic sites on SHA 62.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 September 2017</td>
<td>Following Council advice, SOUL requests to have speaking rights at the next Environment and Community Committee of Auckland Council to discuss visitor needs at the Otuataua Stonefields Reserve and its heritage listing. SOUL notes that Auckland Council is now promoting the Reserve as a significant landscape to visit in South Auckland. Further emails with Council follow over coming weeks with an eventual decline from the Council on 16 October 2017 regarding our request for speaking rights. Council advises it will review the matter of visitor needs with Council Officers. (As of 21 January 2018, no advice has been received from Council on this matter but visitor needs are ongoing at the Reserve).</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 September 2017</td>
<td>Official Information request released from Heritage NZ on Fletcher application for an archaeological authority</td>
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<td>1 October – 25 November 2017</td>
<td>SOUL hosts Arts and Crafts Workshops at Kaitiaki Village each Sunday in October and November. Led by Rebecca Hobbs, these workshops also feature guest artists including: Richard Orjis, Cushla Donaldson, Janine Randerson and Tosh Monsta.</td>
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<td>13 October 2017</td>
<td>The New Zealand Māori Rugby League Team Camp visited Kaitiaki Village and participated in a hīkoi of Ihumātao.</td>
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<td>18 October 2017</td>
<td>Four appellants lodge an appeal regarding the Heritage NZ decision: Betty King, Kuia of Makaurau Marae; Pania Newton on behalf of members of Makaurau Marae and Ngā Kaitiaki o Ihumātao Charitable Trust; and SOUL</td>
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<td>23 October 2017</td>
<td>Processes for engagement with new government begin.</td>
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<td>24 October 2017</td>
<td>SOUL meeting with Police at Kaitiaki Village. Fletcher AGM discussed. SOUL pledged a peaceful, passive protest.</td>
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<td>25 October 2017</td>
<td>Second Herald Opinion Piece by Soul supporters, Frances Hancock and Tim McCleaner, entitled Heritage settlement’s sad fate isn’t inevitable.  SOUL mount a protest at FRL AGM, which is supported unexpectedly by a shareholder who expresses concerns about SHA 62, and the meeting is effectively closed down.</td>
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<td>28 October 2017</td>
<td>SOUL supported the protest organised by Tamaki Treaty Workers at the Nixon Memorial in Otahuhu to recognise the first National Land Wars Commemoration Day. Colonel Marmaduke Nixon was instrumental in the invasion of the Waikato.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 November 2017</td>
<td>SOUL protest outside Fletcher Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 November 2017</td>
<td>Soul attends the Southern Parks Volunteer Forum to express concern about the management of the Otuataua Historic Stonefields Reserve</td>
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• Kaitiaki Village celebration – barbecue, bonfire and speeches – to commemorate the one-year occupation on the land

15 November 2017

• SOUL invites new Government Ministers to meet on the land. Correspondence follows. Ministers advise they are being briefed by their officials and unable to meet before Christmas. Engagement ongoing.

23 November 2017

• SOUL host the Karangahape Road Lifewise group at Kaitiaki Village.

25 November 2017

• SOUL host a stall at a Hiphop Summit in Mangere East

30 November 2017

• SOUL māngai (spokesperson) Pania Newton receives a Kiwibank Local Hero Award, which she accepts on behalf of the SOUL Campaign.
• Puawai Cairns and SOUL co-founder Qiane Matata-Sipu do a presentation at the New Zealand History Association Conference, entitled: #ProtectIhumātao: Co-collecting Protest in Tāmaki Makaurau.

1 December 2017

• SOUL decide to proceed to mediation with Heritage New Zealand as a first step in the appeal process.

2 December 2017

• Presentation to Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom. SOUL receives offers of support.

5 December 2017

• Stormwater Blockade – Higgins inspection of stormwater development area; peacefully blocked by a group of SOUL supporters having morning tea on the berm!
• SOUL is advised that Fletcher requested that the Marae Committee remove the SOUL whanau from the land. Marae refused all requests.
• New signs erected through the village.

10 December 2017

• Te Karanga a Hape Hīkoi. Attended by over 350 people. A celebratory hīkoi on Karangahape Road connecting that site with Ihumātao by drawing attention to Hape and highlighting the SOUL Kaupapa to a wider Tāmaki Makaurau audience.
• Media coverage: News hub, Spinoff, 95bfm, Waatea News, Vice, Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement, Scoop.

11 December

• SOUL writes to Ministers again inviting them to visit and informing them of the Hīkoi.

January 2018

• 5 January – SOUL attends Takaparawha Bastion Point commemoration.
• Preparation underway for the mediation with Heritage NZ
• 15 January – First meeting of the year with Auckland University’s Equal Justice Project.
• 15 January – Meeting with ‘Archaeological Rescue’ TV Programme makers.
• 18 January – Four appellants including SOUL enter mediation with Heritage New Zealand over its decision to grant Fletcher an archaeological authority for SHA62. There is no agreed outcome, so the appellants decide to pursue a hearing before the Environment Court. A Court date is duly set for 23 July 2018.
• 18 February – Steve Evans (CEO FRL) advised Pania Newton and Frances Hancock that Fletcher had approached Auckland Council and new government seeking to sell the land but neither party was interested.
• 24 January – First Unite Union Officials visit Kaitiaki Village to discuss the Campaign and express support
• 26 January – Public meeting at Manurewa hosted by the Labour Party and attended by the new Minister of Housing and Land Development – SOUL member raises question on Ihumātao and the Minister indicates that action is needed
• 26 January – WILPF Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom write to SOUL indicating their members planned to write to Heritage New Zealand expressing concerns re Ihumātao.
31 January – SOUL sends a follow-up letter to PM and other Ministers again asking them to visit Ihumātao

February 2018

- SOUL return to Waitangi (6 February) to raise concerns about the proposed development
- The Otuatua Stonefields Historic Reserve and the SOUL Campaign to Protect Ihumātao become the subject of a Heritage Rescue Special Documentary to be aired on Television sometime around August 2018. Filming is spread over five days (7-11 February), including a working bee on 9 February, and culminates in a poroporoake on Makaurau Marae, including SOUL members.
- 16 February – SOUL protest at Fletcher Headquarters.
- 20 February – Soul writes to the Deputy Prime Minister (Leader of New Zealand First) to bring his attention to the issue and copies in other Ministers
- 20 February – A Teacher and HoD of Santa Maria College joined the SOUL Working group meeting and presented an internal assessment resource focussed on Ihumātao for NCEA L2 Geography; NZ Issue. The resource will be disseminated to schools of Ak through Geography Teachers Assn. And schools will be asked to give koha to SOUL Givealittle page in lieu of payment.
- 3 school visits
- 21 Feb – SOUL delegation presents a detailed written report to Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board Meeting raising concerns in relation to Ihumātao and seeking intervention. The Board again expresses its support for the Campaign.
- 22 February – Pania Newton appears on TV 3 the Panel
- 23 February – New Zealand Human Rights Commission produce a video including Pania Newton speaking about why SOUL went to the United Nations to raise its concerns (56,000 views)
- 24 February – Heritage Rescue Filming Reveal Day – event at Kaitiaki Village attended by over 60 people.
- Ongoing hui in relation to Oruarangi Awa and concerns of existing pollution as well as further pollution and stormwater runoff from the proposed development.
- In February a new SOUL website is launched.

March 2018

- 2 March -Baradene College and Sancta Maria College make school visits (250 students)
- 3 March – SOUL meeting with local MP Aupito William Sio who remains completely committed and is working hard to engage Ministers. He provides valued political advice. he advises he has received a letter from Eugenie Sage (minister of Conservation) on Ihumātao and will respond in writing and face to face.
- Week of 3 March – Whenua warriors working bee at Kaitiaki Village
- 14 March – Following many requests over many months, the Local Board negotiates with City Care (Council Company) to install two portaloos near the entrance to the Stonefields for use by visitors – a small triumph.
- 13 March – Presentation to new Mangere Bridge residents on the Campaign
- 17 March – SOUL sends letter to Minister/Associate Minister of Justice seeking intervention in response to UN recommendation from CERD
- 17 March – Pania Newton returns to the United Nations in Geneva, fully funded by the UN, to raise concerns at the 63rd session of the International Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights. She presents evidence and arguments concerning Crown and Fletcher breaches of mana whenua economic, social and cultural rights as enshrined in this convention. 18 March – Working bee at Kaitiaki Village
- 20-22 March New coverage on UN visit – Newshub, Waatea News and Maori TV
• 21 March SOUL receives correspondence from Ministers through Hon Eugenie Sage in response to repeated invitations to visit the land and discuss the issues. The Minister recognises SOUL is party to an appeal before the Environment Court, acknowledges the length of the campaign, recognises important values present and the concerns raised by the community, regrets limited options for protecting the land given its financial value and says a meeting to discuss the matter is not possible in the near future. The Minister includes a handwritten note saying she will try and find time for a meeting when she is in Auckland.

• 21 March 2018 – FRL CEO Steve Evans, in an extraordinary move, sends a letter to the UN challenging the information presented by SOUL.

• 29 March – MIT 10 photography students visited and had a guided tour

• Ongoing hui in relation to Oruarangi Awa and concerns of existing pollution as well as further pollution and stormwater runoff from the proposed development

April 2018

• Early April – Emory Douglas, Black Panthers revolutionist, and Tigilau Ness, Polynesian Panthers, and activist Chris McBride visit Kaitiaki Village to express their support

• 6 April – two groups hosted by SOUL at KV: Tāmaki College (23 students) and AUT (20 students)

The campaign continues – Watch this space
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