

## Aohanga Incorporation Candidate Profile – Regan Potangaroa



Aohanga is a significant cultural, agricultural, and financial asset that requires business skills and solid commercial judgement together with a strong cultural connection. I previously served for 7 years on the Committee of Management (COM) of Aohanga when it was chaired by Dubbie Powers, then Hepa Tatere and later Mavis Mullins.

I was the first "non farmer" member of the COM (or at least that is how it felt at the time) and brought a commercial background that was previously not seen. For example, together with friends we set up a forestry venture 30 years ago which we are just now harvesting, and Aohanga should have been doing the same if that strategy had been appropriately picked up by the COM. Moreover, I remember having to fight to protect Papauma Marae from a COM that wanted to let it fall away when plans for the new Marae were first discussed. Hence, my ties to Aohanga run deep with my adopted father Goldie Potangaroa being the first chairperson and the idea of a Māori Incorporation of land led by my grandfather Rewi Tamihana. I have fond memories of going out to Aohanga

as a young boy, so my attachment/connection runs deep.

I am a Professor at the School of the Built Environment at Massey University, and I am involved not only with the teaching and research but the business in terms of strategy, staffing and making a difference. Prior to that I was a Professor at Victoria University in Wellington and before that an Associate Professor at UNITEC in Auckland. My professional background is as a structural engineer with 26 years in practice in NZ and overseas, I have been significantly involved in international humanitarian aid since 1996 but now find myself too old to be deployed like I used to with the United Nation Agencies, and the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent.

I am standing for the COM and welcome the opportunity to return and pick up the work of COMs past, my father's chairpersonship and the vision of my grandfather with a solid strategic and business grounding, plus an understanding of organisational management in business and disaster situations that would be appropriate and relevant to the Aohanga context. [https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/colleges/college-of-sciences/about/built-environment/staff/staff\\_home.cfm?stref=570622](https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/colleges/college-of-sciences/about/built-environment/staff/staff_home.cfm?stref=570622)