

BRF 25-142 Decision on altering the suburb name of Petone to Pito One

Ki / To:	Hon Chris Penk, Minister for Land Information	Rā / Date:	3 December 2024
Priority Level	Priority: Low	Action required by	No deadline

Purpose

To seek your final determination on altering Petone to Pito One, for the Lower Hutt suburb.

New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa Whakapā/contacts

Ingoa/Name	Nama waea/ Contact number	Whakapā tuatahi/first contact
Anselm Haanen Board Chairperson	s9(2)(g)(ii) s9(2)(g)(ii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wendy Shaw Board Secretary	s9(2)(g)(ii) s9(2)(g)(ii)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ngā kōrero a te Minita/Minister's comments

No.

Key messages

- 1 Wellington Tenth Trust and Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust, who are mana whenua for this area, jointly made this proposal to correct the spelling of the suburb name of Petone to Pito One.
- 2 Of particular note is that Hutt City Council, Wellington Regional Council, Petone Community Board | Poari Hapori o Pito-one, Petone Historical Society, and other iwi fully support the proposal.
- 3 The Board accepts that Pito One is the correct spelling of the original Māori name, which was for the pā at the western end of the beach.
- 4 The Board publicly notified the proposal between 6 June 2024 and 10 September 2024 and received 2,843 submissions – 2,081 (73%) in support and 762 (27%) objecting.
- 5 Supporting submissions aligned with the Board's reasons for the proposal including supporting the correct pronunciation.
- 6 The objecting reasons included concerns over the cost of changing the name, why this was being given priority, and potential confusion between the 'one' in Pito One with the number 1 in English.
- 7 At its 15 October 2024 hui the Board rejected the objecting submissions on the basis that the reasons presented did not outweigh the original reasons for accepting the proposal. The Board also noted the significant level of local support for the proposal during the public consultation.
- 8 Because the Board didn't uphold the objections you must now make the final determination on the proposal.¹
- 9 Your final determination will be of considerable public and media interest.

¹ As required by section 20(1) of the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 2008

Tohutohu/Recommendations

The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa recommends that you:			Deadline
1. Me whakakoia/Confirm	the Board's decision to accept the proposal to alter the suburb name of Petone to Pito One.	Agree / Disagree / Different decision	No deadline
2. Me mātai/Note	that if you do not to agree with the Board's decision, the suburb would not be officially named. Confusion and uncertainty are likely to increase with people using either name.	Noted	No deadline
3. Me whakakoia/Confirm	whether you or the Board will publicly announce your final decision. LINZ will work with your office on the content.	Board / Minister	No deadline



Anselm Haanen

Chairperson, New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

Rā/Date: 3 Dec 2024



Hon Chris Penk

Te Minita mō Toitū Te Whenua Minister for Land Information

Rā/Date: 3.12.2024.

Te Horopaki/Background

- 10 In December 2023 the Board received a joint proposal from Wellington Tenths Trust and Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust to alter Petone to Pito One for the Lower Hutt suburb. See **Attachment 1** for the proposal.
- 11 Initially the proposal was for 'Pito-one' with a hyphen and lower case [o]. However, before making the formal proposal the spelling was reviewed to '*give clarification to the meaning and return mana to the name*'. Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) confirmed that Pito One is the correct and standardised orthography.
- 12 A literal translation 'the end [pito] of the beach [one]' is frequently given for the name. However, mana whenua advise that the correct name refers to the pito [umbilical cord] being ceremonially buried in the one [sand/earth] as an expression of their ahi kā [occupation] and mana whenua status, it being a '*symbolic tethering of a newborn to the land and their tūrangawaewae*'.
- 13 Petone is an incorrect spelling or Anglicisation of the original Māori name and is derived from the name of Pito One pā. The historical pā site was at the southwest end of the suburb near the foreshore. The site and place name are of historical and cultural significance, being where senior rangatira Te Puni met William Wakefield and New Zealand Company settlers in 1839.
- 14 From 1840 various spellings were in use with 'Petoni' and 'Pitone' being prevalent. 'Petone' became the established form of the name from 1877/78 with the 'Town of Petone' subdivisions, accompanied by the opening of the railway station, post office and schools.
- 15 In 1930 the Honorary Geographic Board ruled that 'Pito-one' was correct, but it had no statutory powers to enforce this ruling. In 1948 the New Zealand Geographic Board used the legislative powers established under the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 to uphold the Petone misspelling in the official name of Petone Borough, based on it being in long term established use. However, the *New Zealand Gazette* included the remark, '*Pito-one is the correct form*'. In 1951 the Board again upheld the Petone misspelling following a request from New Zealand Post Office for a further ruling.
- 16 In 2007 Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust proposed altering Petone to Pito One as part of cultural redress under its Treaty of Waitangi claims settlement process. That proposal was withdrawn, and a subsequent proposal for a dual name was not supported by the Board. Following advice from the Board, OTS² advised the name wouldn't be included in the settlement.

² Office of Treaty Settlements

The Board's decisions on the proposal

17 At its 30 April 2024 hui the Board accepted the proposal to alter Petone to Pito One (see **Attachment 2** for the *Proposal Report*) based on these key reasons:

- its function to determine the correct spelling of place names, with evidence of the provenance of the name and its correct spelling from the proposers who are mana whenua
- long term use of the spelling as Petone not outweighing using the correct spelling of the original Māori name
- advice from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori confirming the orthography for Pito One is two words, and not Pito-one or Pitoone
- the Board having recognised Petone to be incorrect several times in its past deliberations, notwithstanding that it had previously considered 'Pito-one' or 'Pitoone' to be the correct spelling
- evidence of support from Hutt City Council and mana whenua.

Mātanga kōrero/Consultation

18 The Board publicly notified the proposal between 6 June 2024 and 10 September 2024. A number of media outlets also reported on the proposal.

19 The proposal received 2,843 submissions with 2,081 (73%) supporting the proposal and 762 submissions objecting.

20 There was a strong local response with 43% of the submissions being from residents of Petone and Lower Hutt, and 83% from the wider Wellington Region – with 73% of those in support.

21 Wellington Regional Council, Petone Community Board | Poari Hapori o Pito-One, and the Petone Historical Society made supporting submissions. Following a public meeting on 5 September 2024, Hutt City Council made a supporting submission during the public consultation period which was co-signed by:

- Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust & Wellington Tenths Trust (the proposers)
- Te Rūnanganui o Te Āti Awa
- Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika Trust
- Te Rūnanganui o Toa Rangatira.

22 At its hui on 15 October 2024 the Board considered the submissions. See **Attachment 3** for the *Submissions Report*.

23 The main reasons provided in the supporting submissions generally aligned with the reasons why the Board had initially accepted the proposal. Notably:

- that correcting the spelling and restoring the original name accurately reflect its meaning and tells the authentic and unique history of the place to people locally, nationally or internationally as well as being valuable for travellers and tourists

- they considered the proposal to be decolonisation, supporting mana whenua and acknowledging the area's cultural heritage
- they considered that the change is long overdue and there was no doubt as to the correction, given there is plenty of historical evidence showing that Petone is a transliteration/Anglicising/corruption/etc of the original name
- they supported standardisation efforts and correction of Māori place names which elevates the general level of understanding and comprehension (of te reo Māori) for all New Zealanders
- they considered the importance of the correction outweighing any concerns over cost.

24 The reasons in the objecting submissions mainly fell into these categories:

- the proposal is a waste of time and money, and the money could be spent in more useful ways. Similarly, costs to businesses, branded products, schools, etc, who will have to change how their names are spelled
- language and spelling, with several subcategories including:
 - Arguments against the correctness of the proposed spelling Pito One with alternative proposals for 'Pito-one' (and similar) with a hyphen
 - Concern that 'One' will be easily mistaken for the number [1] whether by travellers and tourists, AI and transcription software, or in addressing data and forms
- long term use, in other words that Petone has its own identity after 150+ years, and the spelling 'Pito One' has no connection to this identity. Similarly, arguments that the original name Pito One applies only to the vicinity of the pā and there being no connection to the entirety of the current suburb
- anti-Māori sentiments (that the proposal is divisive, racist, pandering to a minority).

25 Some objecting submitters proposed different names, a dual name (for example Petone/Pito-one) or assigning Petone and Pito One as official alternative names.

Ngā tātūnga o te poari/The Board's decision

26 At its 15 October 2024 hui the Board rejected the 762 objecting submissions as it didn't consider the reasons provided outweighed its original reasons for accepting the proposal, plus these additional reasons subsequent to public notification:

- further evidence of local support, including from Wellington Regional Council, Petone Community Board | Poari Hapori o Pito-One and other mana whenua groups
- no concern that 'One' in Pito One might be confused with the number [1] in English, as 'One' (in Māori) is part of many place names in New Zealand

- a dual name or alternative names comprised of the current and proposed names would be inappropriate, as the former is a misspelling of the latter; and the reasons and support for the current proposal outweigh these alternative proposals.
- 27 The Board agreed that the reasons in the supporting submissions confirmed its initial decision and demonstrated strong local support for the proposal.
- 28 Because the Board didn't uphold the objections you must now make the final determination as required by section 20(1) of the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 2008.

Hīraunga ahumoni/Financial Implications

- 29 Official documents and documents produced for travellers and tourists are required to use official place names. However, there is no legal requirement for businesses, schools, etc to do this, although many will want to or feel they need to. They can choose to use them or not, and when.
- 30 To minimise costs, the Board will adopt a soft approach to compliance by allowing changes to be made over an extended period. For example, road signage can be updated during regular maintenance and replacement cycles.

Hunga pāpāho/Media

- 31 There has been considerable media coverage of the proposal. Media and the public now have an expectation of your final determination. See **Attachment 4** for media articles.
- 32 See **Attachments 5-7** for the Board's bilingual media advisory on the proposal and Facebook posts during consultation.

Ngā Tāwhaitanga/Next Steps and angawā/timeframes

- 33 If you agree with the Board's decision to make Pito One official, it will be notified as required by the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 2008.
- 34 If you do not agree with the Board's decision, then you could decide to:
- leave Petone as unofficial in which case no further statutory action would be taken. Your decision would be communicated to the public. This option is not recommended as it would result in increasing confusion and uncertainty with either name being used for the suburb.
 - make the existing unofficial recorded name, Petone, official, in which case it would instead be notified without further public consultation. This option would require all official documents and signage to use Petone, including those that are currently using Pito One. It is not recommended.

Tāpiritanga/Attachments

Document number	Name of attachment
1.	Proposal for Pito One received from Wellington Tenths Trust and Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust on 21 December 2023
2.	<i>Proposal Report</i> considered by the Board at its 30 April 2024 hui
3.	<i>Submissions Report</i> summarising the submissions that the Board considered at its 15 October 2024 hui
4.	Media articles
5.	The Board's <u>bilingual media advisory</u> issued on 6 June 2024
6.	Facebook post <u>6 June 2024</u>
7.	Facebook post <u>2 September 2024</u>

Te tūwāhi mapere/Location map

