

**Immediate Release**  
**27 November 2021**

## **Brazen Breach of Rāhui at Pā Site Inspires Installation of Scale Model of Erebus Memorial “Let the People Judge for Themselves”**

Community and Tangata Whenua leaders are stunned by the disrespectful conduct of the government in collusion with Auckland Council at Mataharehare Pā.

They say it has breached a Rāhui, ambushed park protectors with no notice and disregards the current investigation by the Chief Ombudsman into the resource consent process of the National Erebus Memorial.

“The brazen breach of a Rāhui here at Maraharehare on Thursday was done with the consent of the Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern. She is responsible as Minister of National Monuments,” says Dame Naida Glavish who has repeatedly called out the integrity of the process alongside [18,000 others](#) opposing the development.

The transgression of tapu has also come under fire.

“Is it ok to breach the Rāhui that protects the Kauri in the Waitakere? No. It is not up to Auckland Council to decide which Rāhui it honours and which it breaks. These are not the actions of a Treaty Partner. The Elders of Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei have sanctioned the Rāhui. We have the minutes, the transcript and the video to prove it,” says Steve Phillips, Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei Kaumatua.

Yet despite the forceful move by officials issuing a seizure notice, protectors have rallied together removed tents and replaced the camp with a ‘scale indicator’ of the footprint of the Memorial the Ministry of Culture and Heritage are planning to build.

Video here: <https://www.facebook.com/ProtectMataharehare/videos/1033595600765951>

The public is invited to come and judge for themselves. View the size of the proposed structure that will need 132 tonnes of concrete<sup>1</sup> that would destroy the much-loved urban sanctuary and put Te Hā, the largest urban Pōhutukawa in existence at dire risk.

Claire Chambers, an architect believes the Ministry’s widely circulated digital renders may have misled the public. “They foreshorten and minimise the actual impact of the proposed structure. Plus, the associated earthworks on both sides of the memorial completely erase and alter the existing form of the land, which is an ancient headland and Pā site”.

Kaumatua Tautoko Witika advises that the Rāhui was laid to provide protection and allow the space for the Ministry to re-assess its position. He invites them to take this opportunity to listen to the people of Auckland and shift its position.

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<sup>1</sup> Response by Ministry of Culture & Heritage to OIA evidence request by Mr Scott Chalmers on 23 November 2021 – equates to 60 land rover vehicles.

The community of protectors, some of whom are Erebus whānau acknowledge the enduring grief especially this weekend which marks the 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the tragedy.

Margaret Brough who lost her father in the Erebus disaster and organiser of the 18,000-strong petition, asks, “why is the Government not listening? We have been shoe-horned into a small Parnell park where we Erebus families do not want it. Why is the Prime Minister not listening?”

Heather Levack, daughter of long-time Auckland Mayor, Sir Dove Myer Robinson has felt so distressed she has written to the Prime Minister stating her commitment to “not letting the desecration of his memorial go ahead.”<sup>2</sup>

She says that the trampling on this park by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Auckland Council is a violation of everything he stood for. Her father saved the Waitemātā from pollution by raw sewage and was known for creating new parks for the growing city.

Bought by the people of Auckland in 1914, the intention of the park was to be the ‘lungs of the city’.

In the middle of a global pandemic with an increasing number of Aucklanders living in small apartments nearby, the precious value of this greenspace is elevated more than ever.

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For more information go to: <https://www.sosnz.org.nz/> or  
<https://www.facebook.com/ProtectMataharehare> or  
<https://www.change.org/p/the-prime-minister-the-rt-hon-jacinda-ardern-protect-mataharehare>

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<sup>2</sup> Email 26 November 2021 from Ms Levack to the Prime Minister.