

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
14 December 2021

Stealth by State Breaches Rāhui to Ringfence Land Before Ombudsman's Report Out - Investigation Ignored by Government

The State defiantly flexed its muscle at 3am this morning purposely contravening tapu and the democratic process by sending in fencing and security guards to Mataharehare Pā site (Dove-Myer Robinson Park).

By 6am after breaching the Rāhui, the government agency defiantly [notified newsrooms](#) across the country of its "early access" to the proposed site of the National Erebus Memorial to commence construction.

The sequencing of the latest move has not only ignored cultural protocols of the Treaty partner, it runs rough shot over the independent, impartial process of the Ombudsman that is currently underway investigating alleged serious wrongdoings of the authorities.

The inflammatory act has drawn the ire of Kahurangi Dame Naida Glavish DNZM, a supporter of the community of protectors opposing the development.

She advises that from a Te Tiriti perspective this premeditated and orchestrated action, committed under the cover of darkness, during a pandemic, is a grave transgression by the government.

"I am disgusted in the Ministry, its Chief Executive and the Prime Minister. Is this the type of protection of our heritage that they offer? The consequences of this action are deep. It is a breach of tapu, a breach of Rāhui, a breach of Tangata Whenua. Consequences that the Ministry for Culture and Heritage has absolutely no concern about," she says.

The proposed construction site endangers Te Hā, a 180 year old Pōhutukawa, that is currently being assessed by Pouhere Taonga – Heritage New Zealand for a wahi tapu listing.

Last month at the request of the Ombudsman, proponents seeking an investigation detailed all the unresolved issues from ecological to cultural reasons that supported why the consent process has not been in its integrity from the start.

Experts advised that the Ministry never took steps to scan or identify the extensive root system of Te Hā. Nor did it engage a Māori arborist or provide information to any design team, or decision maker, throughout the process on the cultural significance of Te Hā.

Recently the "lack of confidence in kaupapa Māori" by staff at the Ministry has been [revealed by the media](#) investigating the Crown agency's cultural competence following an OIA request.

Construction at Mataharehare Pā has been opposed all year by 20,000 people who have signed a petition (digital and paper copies) started by an Erebus family member. The protectors are deeply concerned about the 'more than minor' impact of the proposed 95 square metre steel and concrete structure that will require 132 tonnes of concrete foundation.

Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern as the Minister for Memorials is ultimately responsible for the location of the National Erebus Memorial. Many are now questioning her visibility over the plan to access the site while protectors slept, at a time when the government's own watchdog is investigating her Ministry's conduct.

Mataharehare protectors are gobsmacked and calling for a rethink and a relocation.

ENDS

The proposed site for the National Erebus Memorial is Dove Myer Robinson Park, Parnell, Auckland Central.

www.SOSNZ.org.nz

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MATAHAREHARE – Te Hā the Walking Pōhutukawa

<https://fb.watch/9TvW7GnlCu/>

PROTECT MATAHAREHARE – Peaceful Protector, Shelly Mills

<https://www.facebook.com/ProtectMataharehare/videos/213929644122399>

NOTES



@Protect Mataharehare. Day 76 of the Peaceful Protect. Photo by Johnnie Crawford.



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