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From: Heather Levack <[heatherlevack@gmail.com](mailto:heatherlevack@gmail.com)>

Date: 26/11/21 18:07 (GMT+12:00)

To: [jadern@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:jadern@ministers.govt.nz)

Subject: Erebus Memorial

Dear Jacinda,

I read the letter you wrote to the Erebus families on the occasion of the 42nd Anniversary of the Erebus Crash.

I am surprised that you are still giving these families the impression that the Erebus Memorial will be built on the land known as Dove-Myer Robinson Park.

As his daughter I am committed to not letting the desecration of his memorial go ahead. In this I am determined. I am 80 years old now and in my lifetime I have accomplished few things, but now I am nearing the end of my life. I can see no better use of it than to follow my father's example and do something brave and forward thinking for the people of Auckland.

My father dedicated his life to Auckland. He fell in love with Auckland when he arrived here from dirty, smelly, racist Sheffield to the clean green and blue of the Auckland harbour. He neglected his wives, and his children for the city of Auckland. I was one of those children. But I inherited his fighting spirit. His struggle to save the Waitemata from pollution is part of our family's heritage. The contracts to pump raw sewerage into the Waitemata had been let, and the big pipes were already being placed when he got the project stopped. His story inspires me, and there is nothing I personally won't do to prevent the Erebus Monument being built on his memorial site.

The Colonial history of Auckland city is only one thread of the arguments against placing the Erebus Monument on this tiny park. There is the ancient Maori history of this land and now the ecological thread that is pertinent to today, a time of pandemic and global warming.

When you spoke to the Team of 5 Million at the change of alert levels and gave us the right to meet out doors with our families, we were encouraged to make use of our city parks as being places that were safe from the Covid Virus. I find it contradictory that you are sanctioning the Ministry of Culture and Heritage to go ahead with building the Erebus Memorial, thus taking away a part of this precious, never to be replaced park. The construction process, were it to go ahead, would have taken 6 months over the hot summer period closing off a great chunk of the park to the Team of 1.6 Million that makes up the City of Auckland. (There would of course be the associated noise and dust that would jeopardise the enjoyment of the rest of the park as well).

Maybe you underestimate the number of people who support us. We stand as protectors of the park, and talk to people who use the park daily about what it is that you and your government are proposing. They come from all over Auckland and beyond, to see the roses and relax in this quiet inner sanctuary. Very few people like the current design of the memorial, people are aghast at the opaque process by which landowner permission was granted, and back us our efforts to save Robbie's Park for them.

My father's ashes were sprinkled into the clear waters of the Waitemata. We saw them float away, followed by a trail of spring flowers. Three years later my cousin, Dame Barbara Goodman and I organised a memorial service for him at his park. The whole extended family was there. We planted a titoki tree and a bench was placed nearby so people could sit and contemplate the sparkling

Waitemata he helped to save. Each year in the autumn I plant daffodils under his tree and for a short period they bloom there and nod at us. This year his 5 year old great-grandson helped plant the bulbs. He had on his little gardening gloves, and with his blond hair and blue eyes and lively spirit, I could see that my father's genes live again in him.

As we await the Ombudsman's report, I think it only fair that you are honest with the Erebus families, and tell them that it is not certain that the building of the Erebus Memorial will go ahead on the Dove-Myer Robinson park, and that they should be thinking of an alternative site on which to build their memorial, one that will more satisfactorily meet their needs and list of criteria.

Yours respectfully,  
Heather Levack.