

Submission to the Opotiki District Council on their Statement of Proposal in response to the joint request by Te Arawhiti and Te Whanau a Apanui.

My name is Petra Jensen and I have an interest in a beachfront property at Whanarua Bay. This property is described as Lot 7 DP 4651.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

My parents bought this property with my grandparents many years before I was born. My sister and I have grown up with memories of Whanarua and have a photo of our first birthday at Whanarua – that was thirty six years ago.

I also recall our parents talking of selling our family home in Whakatane many years ago – and our clear directions to them – “you can sell the Whakatane home but you must never sell the Whanarua bach”. This is testament to the strength of the memories and the depth of connection we have with Whanarua.

We have only ever known the access down to our bach being via the steep sealed accessway over the reserve which I now know to be Lot 66. My sister Amy and I used to do twice daily sprint training on that hill. Five sprints up the hill in the morning and 5 in the afternoon. At the peak of our training we were running up that hill at the same speed as cars were driving up it. We left blood, sweat and tears on that hill but it earned us a national title at the Secondary School athletics champs.

We were taken fishing from the age of about five and we still fish to this day. These days we are joined by our husbands and our children so the caring and respect for the Bay, the foreshore and the ocean, continues.

## 2. THE ACCESS

I am aware that mistakes were made at the time of Romio Wirepa’s subdivision resulting in a failure to properly create a legal access into Whanarua Bay. I have also seen some of the admissions made by Opotiki District Council staff that the errors were not of our doing.

I was present when hapu members came along and blocked off our access to the beach.

For those reasons it is hard to believe that Opotiki District Council now appears to be trying to wash their hands of those mistakes by handing the accessway and beachfront reserve to another party (iwi) without first fixing the mistakes that they have taken (some of the) blame for.

If Council was to remedy the access failings it would make it easier to provide you with positive support for your proposals.

### 3. MY SUBMISSION

- 3.1. **First Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that seven parcels of land at Whanarua are transferred.

I have no knowledge of the strips of reserve up the stream so I have no submission to make on those lots.

Lot 66 is critical to our access to our properties (via Lot 75) and for that reason must not be transferred as part of a settlement unless the access is legally protected.

- 3.2. **Second Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that the urupa on Lot 80 should be vested in Te Whanau a Apanui as a separate title of land and no longer having reserve status.

I am aware of the urupa because my parents have pointed it out to me and explained that, out of respect, we should not climb over it. My submission is that the urupa on the rocky headland of Lot 80 should be given appropriate respect and protection.

- 3.3. **Third Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that the Recreation Reserve Lot 66 (the roadway down into the Bay) and the remainder of Lot 80 (as well as some other smaller lots) are vested in Te Whanau a Apanui and reclassified as Historic Reserves. The (walking) public rights of access would be as per the Act as is currently the case.

The rest of Lot 80 represents a big part of why we have a property at Whanarua so it doesn't make sense to threaten that by transferring it. If there is a strong argument to transfer Lot 80 then it should only transfer with ODC retaining an administrative role.

Lot 66 must not transfer until access is formalised for beachfront properties.

- 3.4. **Fourth Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that Te Whanau a Apanui would be the sole administering body for the reserves.

This proposal seems to totally ignore the presence of the beachfront properties and proposes to give administration to a group of people who don't live adjacent to Lot 80 or don't have baches adjacent to Lot 80. It also seems to ignore that the accessway down Lot 66 is critical for my parents to get to and from their home.

My submission is that Lot 66 should continue to be administered solely by Opotiki District Council.

My submission is that Lot 80 should be administered by a Joint Reserves Board with Whanarua Beachfront. I know my father has meetings with the local Wirepa Whanau Trustee and it seems to work well for Lot 75.

Staff and Councillors are required to work in the interests of their district. Transferring title to a particular family group (in this instance an iwi or hapu) seems to go against that and doesn't make a lot of sense. Transferring Lot 66 before Councillors have resolved the long standing access issues seems to be a failure of responsibility to your community and ratepayers.



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<b>Whanarua Bay Recreation Reserves</b>	SH 35	<b>1</b>	It is proposed that the seven land parcels comprising this reserve be transferred from the Ōpōtiki District Council to Te Whānau a Apanui.
		<b>2</b>	It is proposed that Lot 80 (urupā) and all of Lot 71 would be vested in Te Whānau a Apanui unencumbered, without any reserve status and without any public access requirements.
		<b>3</b>	The remaining lots being 66, 68, 69, 70, balance of Lot 80 DP 4651 and Lot 3 DP6108 would be vested in Te Whānau a Apanui as historic reserves under the Reserves Act 1977. The public rights of access to those parcels, would be as per that Act as is currently the case. Implementing this part of the proposal would be subject to the Council first being satisfied as to how any existing encroachments are addressed prior to the land being transferred.
		<b>4</b>	It is proposed that Te Whānau a Apanui would be the sole administering body for the reserves.